



CREDIBILITY

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Editor

Last week while embracing the change in seasons accompanied by the songs of spring birds, ice out on Pleasant Lake, the germination of knotweed along a few cart paths and the boil of my final batch of maple syrup I looked behind me and realized I was being followed by my past. Solidly in my middle years of life I had never fully appreciated the fact that as one grows so does their individual history. Not unlike a shadow revealed with the sunrise, its gradual presence and prominence can be quite apparent.

While a younger man I lived my life with limited thoughts of the impact I had had upon much more than the present while making plans for the future. Indeed living in the moment and looking forward with anticipation has its own rewards, yet only by looking back will an individual appreciate their true significance.

Often as a youthful father, I pledged to be a better Dad to my kids than mine had been for me; always busy with work day and night through the week, selfishly spending his Saturdays pursuing a game of golf with his buddies and then sharing

Sunday with his children... but only after church. Or so I thought. For years I never appreciated how his perspective of life eventually determined my own.

It took me a long time of living to realize that he was just as ordinary as any other father of his generation. In reality he was always present. We shared family vacations, sit down dinner each night at 6:30 as a group, camping, hunting, boating, golfing and quality time in bits and pieces crafted around his dedication to provide me with a lifestyle he didn't have growing up. The Great Depression, World War II, the Korean conflict, recessions and a country torn as it too grew quickly; my father was and still is today the best that he knows to be.

His past, and position as a leader in my life, brought great significance to who I am today. My father's guidance in times of challenge and examples of compassion, diligence and optimism will always inspire me to greater reflection upon how my life will directly or indirectly help guide other's.

As a superintendent responsible for many acres of property and a dedicated green staff I have great expectations of what I can do. But what about the hope others have placed in me? Blind faith requires assurances that opportunities will be fulfilled. My employees trust me to pay them for their efforts and expect me to be a fair and tolerant leader. The members of my club and their guests rely upon my knowledge and skills to implement my best laid plans to provide them with exceptional entertainment opportunities. The past that follows me assures those lives I touch that I am a reliable individual.

My history is full of experiences; lived and learned, positive and negative, enriching and demoralizing. I have been a schmuck, snake, stooge, goon and at times sort of mean. On the flip side I have also been considerate, compassionate, generous, forgiving and uplifting. I would like to think that the good has outweighed the bad realities of my past and that in general I am thought upon with good credibility.

Credibility isn't gained through promises yet credibility is the bearing upon which I will be judged. Historical performance is the only way to measure my success and learn from my failures. Although perhaps failure is too harsh of a term as I was not born with a guide book to lead me down an industrious and positive path. Mistakes I have made are lessons learned; hopefully not to be repeated. And in retrospect a decision poorly made is often the only way to gain knowledge.

Why am I the manager I am today? Can I, through introspective consideration, improve upon the individual I portray myself to be? How do I change to be a better person? What can I do to begin a new chapter in my life that reflects a more enriching outlook? I want to be a better superintendent, spouse, father and leader...where do I find the material I need to implement changes in my life?

Look to my past of course! Through my career I have had two incredible mentors, one great General Manager, several dependable peers, numerous solid friends, an intelligent and inspiring spouse and four children who have grown up and are amazing me with the positive choices they have made in their young adulthood. Each individual has set specific good examples for me to practice. By emphasizing the best elements of each relationship I can build a foundation for self improvement.

On the course if I listen closely I can hear the raspy throated call of a Sand Hill Crane. Like a ventriloquist I know not where the sound emanates. By searching high enough, far enough and long enough I will surely see the bird on the horizon.

If I apply myself to reviewing my past relationships, evaluate the beneficial aspects of each one and apply them to my future I create a different history become a better person, employee, father and spouse.

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