

Our source of new business is referrals from friends and clients. If you know a company – customer, supplier, friend, or even your own – that could benefit from improved operations, please forward this e-newsletter to them using the “forward” button at the bottom, or ask us to contact them directly. Your best interest is our best interest.

The Finish Strong™ monthly e-newsletter is for business leaders who recognize Operations as more than an execution tool. If you value Operations as a strategic function that creates competitive advantage, profitability and brand loyalty to the marketplace this newsletter is for you!

Finish Strong™ helps you think about operations as strategically as you think about marketing, branding, and leadership, and then execute flawlessly. Your company cannot afford to be sloppy if you want it to be great.

THE REDEEM TEAM

USA basketball’s Dream Team stormed away with the gold medal in the 1992 Olympics, the first year professional players were allowed. USA dominance was a foregone conclusion.

Unfortunately, USA players and coaches reached that same conclusion. They didn’t concern themselves with how the rest of the world was improving, how the game outside their immediate frame of reference was changing, nor how a team of good players could defeat a collection of great ones.

The 2004 Olympic bronze medal woke up American basketball. Sure, we had excuses. The other teams played together longer. The other teams had more experience with international rules. But the bronze convinced the sport’s American leadership it was time for a change. This year the Redeem Team pursues the gold without the assumption of foregone conclusion.

“They” don’t have to comply with EPA and OSHA, their government gives them more support than ours does,

they can’t make the quality we can, their workers are so inexpensive,

Who will be on the manufacturing redeem team?

NOTHING LASTS FOREVER

Between 1950 and 2007, manufacturing jobs as a percentage of all jobs in the United States fell from over 30% to about 10%. A huge shift. During that same period, manufacturing productivity increased from under 25% to about 115%, with 2002 indexed as 100%. A huge improvement.

Think back to when the US shifted from an agrarian economy to an industrial one. People moved to the cities for jobs as farm productivity rose so much that it became harder to make a living as a small farmer.

Years from now someone will be writing about the upheaval created by the shift from a service economy to whatever comes next.

But even then someone will still be growing food in North America, someone will still be manufacturing things there, and someone will still be providing services. It just won’t be all the same people doing the same thing in the same way as today. That doesn’t make it bad. As a matter of fact, those who remain are likely among the best.

FINISH STRONG™

The Starting Pistol

Peter Drucker:

“Enterprises are paid to create wealth, not control costs. But that obvious fact is not reflected in traditional measurements.”

The Tape

Rebecca Morgan:

“When improvements increase your capacity, increased sales can be very profitable. When improvements reduce headcount, they are limited by the number of heads you can cut. Retrench if you must, but position for profitable growth.”