

If you know a company — customer, supplier, friend, or your own — that could benefit from improved operations, let us know.

Your best interest is our best interest.

The Finish Strong® monthly e-newsletter is for business leaders who recognize Operations as a strategic function that creates competitive advantage, profitability and brand loyalty in the marketplace.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

It seems that we want more, faster, cheaper, and in many cases, smaller. We also like automated, so we don't have to think. The market is working hard to meet those wants. My iPhone, your Android or Blackberry are easy examples.

As designers work to make us brain-dead couch potatoes, at our urging I might add, complex solutions to very simple problems have evolved. I want to change the channel, and talk harshly to my remote when it doesn't work right. Companies want their software to answer every possible question, but complain when they have to go to two screens to get it.

The recent Airbus engine explosion over Singapore led to a rush to discover how the impossible could happen. Current indicators are that a simple oil leak was the cause. Many control systems on the plane were damaged, leaving the pilots with a stream of computer generated messages scrolling by faster than any human could consider them. The pilots manually flew the plane to safety using their experience. Now there is talk of pilot training including more emphasis on actual flying over reliance on computer systems.

As we try to be all things to all people, we add complexity. And we add unintended consequences. Anyone can create complex solutions. Often there are very simple solutions to complex problems. It takes the best, the brightest, and patience to find them.

As Mark Twain said, "I didn't have time to write a short letter so I wrote a long one instead." Ask for the simple solution, give the time it requires, and minimize unintended consequences.

FREE OFFSHORING COST ANALYSIS

Many companies have decided to procure offshore from low wage countries, believing that it is financial insanity to bypass the savings available. They may be right, but some decisions to offshore may have been insane also.

A simple excel spreadsheet tool helps you consider all the costs of offshoring and ensure that your decisions make financial sense. While this free model only considers China at this time, it is fairly accurate for all far eastern sources. Go to www.reshorenw.org for access to the Total Cost of Ownership analysis tool.

If you are a supplier whose customers have replaced or supplemented you with offshore options, look at the model; then help your customer understand the Total Cost of Ownership.

FINISH STRONG®

The Starting Pistol
Franklin D Roosevelt:

"Men are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds."

The Tape
Rebecca Morgan:

"Open your mind to all the ways that you can lead your organization forward."

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