

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.

These brief articles, list of events, and amended quote will make you think. Go ahead: test us

HERE WE GO AGAIN

We are 3% into 2012, 97% to go.

Resolutions lay broken and scattered as gyms, health-food and exercise equipment retailers finish depositing the well-intentioned payments received just last week.

Some of you have not yet finalized budgets for 2012, too busy finishing year-end reports and analyses. Others have finalized budgets that are already wrong.

Why do we feel compelled to make plans and commitments we know will change?

Self improvement and running a business should not need the kick-start of an event, especially one as irrelevant as the date on a calendar. When you feel the urge to make yourself healthier, or a better person, start working on it regardless of the date. If you believe you need solid estimates of future financial performance, why not update budgets continuously as facts and the business environment change?

False deadlines often create a flurry of activity, with no valuable outcome. Every day is a good day for reflection and improvement, without the drama of “it’s a new year.”

CULTS, CONVICTION, AND CONCEIT

Eli Goldratt was the “father” of Theory of Constraints (TOC), beginning to share his concepts widely with the publishing of *The Goal* in 1984. Because of his

strong personality and consummate conviction about the power of TOC in improving profitability, TOC was considered a cult by many.

That didn’t mean Goldratt was wrong.

Kiichiro Toyoda founded Toyota Motor Corporation in 1937. His company slowly and quietly began developing the approach to manufacturing and to business that is now commonly referred to as “Lean” and the Toyota Business System (TBS). It was developed out of necessity, and reflects an unwavering commitment to the value of people. While for decade after decade American manufacturers ignored what was happening in Japan, comfortable in the conviction that they knew best, the evolution of the concepts of the TBS continued.

That didn’t mean Toyoda was wrong.

Contrary to the conceit communicated by extremists in any arena, be it religion, politics, or business, no one has all the answers. But that doesn’t mean that everyone doesn’t have some of the answers.

The wisest among us know how to overlook the personality, the source, the apparent contradictions and our own conceit to listen and to think. The answers are all around us. Goldratt, Toyoda, and Henry Ford were all great thinkers.

And more importantly, great listeners.

FINISH STRONG®

The Starting Pistol

Thomas Jefferson:

“Reason and free inquiry are the only effectual agents against error.”

The Tape

Rebecca Morgan:

“..so welcome the discussion of challenging questions with your employees and trusted advisors.”

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