

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.

MY, HOW TIME FLIES

Following 14 years in a wide variety of roles in a wide variety of industries, I entered the worlds of entrepreneurship and consulting 20 years ago. Experience and many of you have taught me a lot over those years.

My Dad, who hated his job but couldn't leave it with 4 hungry kids to support, taught me to never be in the position he was in. Live in a way where you always maintain freedom of choice on everything important to you. With that knowledge, I left the "safety" of traditional employment for the "uncertainty" of running my own business, and have never looked back. For each of us, real security is in our skills, knowledge, work ethic, and respect for others. It is not in the hands of anyone else.

My first clients taught me that I didn't have to know everything; I only had to be honest with myself about what I did and did not know, and willing to learn about the latter. They helped me understand that client and consultant are a team working for common purpose in a mutually beneficial alliance. Any other relationship between client and consultant is simply wrong. I will never forget that.

Professional associates along the way taught me new ways to think, to interact, and to learn. They've helped round out my skill set in ways that continue to benefit both me and my clients. I am a much better person and professional today than I would have been without them.

Every client helped, every plant visited, every workshop and conference attended, every "you ought to know him/her" meeting, and every volunteer role accepted has further developed my vision, awareness, empathy, and listening skills.

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Twenty years into this adventure, I thank each of you, while eagerly moving toward the experiences yet to come. I hope your ride is as enjoyable.

JOHN WOODEN, TEACHER

Sports just lost one of its greatest leaders when John Wooden passed away on June 4, 2010. Widely considered the best college basketball coach ever, Wooden was given the moniker, much to his chagrin, "The Wizard of Westwood," referring to his amazingly successful UCLA coaching career.

Even if you hate sports, take the time to become familiar with the life and thinking of John Wooden. It takes more than luck to achieve all that he did. It takes great leadership.

Just a few elements from his famous "Pyramid of Success" illustrating 12 lessons in leadership:

- Good Values Attract Good People
- Call Yourself a Teacher
- Little Things Make Big Things Happen
- Make Greatness Attainable By All
- Don't Look At The Scoreboard

If you are familiar with Deming, Shingo, and Ohno, these sound very familiar. The concepts aren't complex; living them sometimes is. But we can all at least try.

FINISH STRONG®

The Starting Pistol

Attributed to many, from Chinese Proverb to Steve Jobs:

"Time goes by so fast, people go in and out of your life. You must never miss the opportunity to tell these people how much they mean to you."

The Tape

Rebecca Morgan:

"To all my clients, to all those who have helped me grow personally and professionally, I cannot thank you enough. But let me thank you anyway."

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