

## Happy August 19

### Congratulations

My apologies to our participants that have changed careers, I promise that the news of your career changes will be covered in the September newsletter.

### 2013 – 2015 - Seminars

#### Executive Management Program

##### Class 45

##### (CLOSED)

► **Week 1 – Aug. 26 – 30, 2013** ◀

Week 2 – Nov. 18 – 22, 2013

Week 3 – Mar. 10 – 14, 2014

Week 4 – Jul. 21 – 25, 2014

Week 5 – Oct. 06 – 10, 2014

##### 2014

##### Class 46

► **Week 1 – Feb. 10 – 14, 2014** ◀

Week 2 – May 19 – 23, 2014

Week 3 – Aug. 11 – 15, 2014

Week 4 – Nov. 17 – 21, 2014

Week 5 – Feb. 16 – 10, 2015

##### Class 47

► **Week 1 – Jun. 16 – 20, 2014** ◀

Week 2 – Sep. 15 – 19, 2014

Week 3 – Dec. 08 – 12, 2014

Week 4 – Mar. 16 – 20, 2015

Week 5 – Jun. 15 – 19, 2015

##### Class 48

► **Week 1 – Oct. 13 – 17, 2014** ◀

Week 2 – Jan. 19 – 23, 2015

Week 3 – Apr. 13 – 17, 2015

Week 4 – Jul. 13 – 17, 2015

Week 5 – Oct. 19 – 23, 2015

(To enroll participants in any class or to obtain detailed information please contact Tom Stevens at [inmco@mindspring.com](mailto:inmco@mindspring.com) or call 865-458-3429.)

#### Chronological Calendar – 2013 - 2014

##### 2013

EMP 41/5 – AUG 12 – 16

EMP 43/3 – AUG 19 – 23

► **EMP 45/1 – AUG 26 – 30** ◀

EMP 42/4 – SEP 16 – 20

PSP 13/3 – SEP 23 – 27

EMP 43/4 – NOV 11 – 15

EMP 45/2 – NOV 18 – 22

EMP 42/5 & PSP 13/4 – DEC 09 – 13

##### 2014

► **EMP 46/1 – FEB 10 – 14** ◀

EMP 43/5 – FEB 17 – 21

EMP 45/3 – MAR 10 – 14

EMP 46/2 – MAR 19 – 23

EMP 46/2 – May 19 – 23

## An Enjoyable Two Hours

*The eye surgery was a success!* I want to thank you for your best wishes and prayers – as we say in TN – *“You done good!”* Some of you might remember that I had my left hip replaced in 2006. I wrote about that experience in a piece entitled – *“A trip to Hell!”* In 2008, the same surgeon replaced my left knee however, he had changed hospitals. I wrote about that experience in an article entitled – *“A visit to a Spa!”* Because of my occupation, I looked at both operations from the viewpoint of a customer buying a service and/or a product. As you can imagine from the titles both experiences were 180 degrees different. In both situations, I spent several days in the hospital.

My report of the eye surgery is entitled *“An Enjoyable Two Hours!”* Let me explain why. My guess is that when you heard I was having eye surgery you winced and thought, *“Better him than me.”* None of you thought – *“that will be an enjoyable, pleasant and nice activity.”*

The surgery was necessary to sew up a tear in what is called the Bleb. The day before the surgery, I received a phone call from a lady who identified herself as Carol the Pre-admission nurse. She said she had been with the hospital for six years and her job was to go over some pre-admission information. She explained what she wanted and why. Any allergies, high blood pressure, did I have a living will, who was going to drive me to the hospital, etc. She made sure I knew the location and asked me to arrive at 8:30 am on Tuesday, July 30.

My daughter Deb drove me to the hospital. We went to the second floor where we found another pre-admission nurse who identified herself and told me she had been with the hospital for seven years. She checked my photo ID, had me sign three forms and put an identification bracelet on my right wrist *“in case I got lost.”* Then I met Vickie, the pre-operation nurse. She had been with the hospital for eight years. She told me her job was to make a final check on what was to be done, make me comfortable on a bed that would double as the operating table, to insert an IV needle in my left arm for use by the anesthesiologist and answer any questions I might have. She apologized that I would feel the prick of the needle as she thumped my arm with her fingers. I finally asked her when she was going to insert the needle and she said she already had.

She then explained that it was a private hospital owned and operated by twenty-eight ophthalmologists in and around Knoxville, TN. They had four state-of-the-art operating rooms, eight pre-op cubicles and handled forty-six to fifty eye surgeries a day. She helped me on to the bed and adjusted my knees, legs, back, etc. until I was very comfortable.

An orderly, Harold, arrived. He had been with the hospital for twelve years and explained his job was to

hook me up to the various monitoring equipment – blood pressure, heartbeat, oxygen and several other electronic devices and to make sure Vickie did not mistreat me. At that point Richard, the anesthesiologist arrived. He was in his fifth year at the hospital. He explained he would use the IV needle to put me to sleep for about ten minutes at which time the surgeon would inject local painkillers around my eye. He assured me I would not feel a thing.

On cue Dr. Price, my surgeon, arrived and told me I was next on his “dance card.” He said he had already done two cataracts. After me, he had two more cataracts and three glaucoma operations. He introduced the three nurses that were going to assist him. Lavern, who had been with the hospital seven years, Peggy, who had been with the hospital eight years and Phyllis. Phyllis explained that this was her second day on the job. Dr. Price asked if I would mind during the operation if he explained in detail to Phyllis exactly what he was doing, why he was doing it and what he expected the assisting nurse to do. I told him I had no objection and that I would personally find it interesting to listen. I asked why three nurses? He replied – two to assist and the third to turn the pages of “Bleb Surgery for Dummies.” (Dr. Price and I have developed an excellent relationship over the past twenty years.)

I fell asleep. When I awoke, Vickie told me it was time to be taken to the operating room and to hold on, as she and Harold would transport me. Just prior to being delivered to the operating room Vickie told me, they kept it very cool and she covered me with a heated blanket.

Dr. Price and the nurses again welcomed me and told me the surgery would take about 45 minutes. One of the nurses put a rubber gadget over my left eye. Dr. Price told me he used it to rest his hand and to hold it steady. Then the operation began. I felt absolutely nothing and heard everything. Because I was awake I could even ask questions – which I did. Suddenly he said it was finished and that it had taken only forty-one minutes because only three stitches had been required instead of four. Phyllis said it was the nicest cross-stitching she had ever seen and they gave him a round of applause. He told me he would have to put a bandage on the left eye and because I have no vision in my right eye, I would be “blind as a bat.”

The nurses wheeled me down to the Recovery Room where I met Carol and my daughter. Dr. Price explained to Deb that the surgery had been remarkably easy and there were no complications. He said he wanted to see me in his office the next day at 11:00 am and told her the bandage could be removed in the morning. Carol, the recovery nurse told me she had been with the hospital for nine years and that her job was to unhook me from the monitoring cables and remove the IV needle. After that was completed, she remarked that I was probably hungry, as I had not been allowed to eat the night before or that morning. She asked what I wanted to drink. I replied, “A very dry martini.” She laughed and told me that Dr. Price and the nurses had stolen her pitcher of martinis and

had drunk them during my operation. She said all she had left was soft drinks, orange juice and a fruit bars. I opted for the orange juice and fruit bar. She helped me off the bed since I was blind, got me comfortable in a lounge chair and gave me the juice and fruit bar.

She then said that the Vice President for Transportation would take me to the first floor. Tina arrived, introduced herself and said she had been with the hospital for three years. She got me settled in a wheel chair, told Deb to drive the car to the front door where she would meet her at the first floor entrance. Out of the room we went and Tina said there were two ways to get to the first floor – “down the stairs or by elevator.” I opted for the elevator and Tina said I was a “Spoil Sport” and not “adventuresome at all!” Tina helped me in the car and reminded me that I was to see Dr. Price at 11:00 am the next day. It was 10:30 am when we pulled away from the hospital. All in all a very “enjoyable” two hours!

Wednesday, July 31. Bandage removed and visit to Dr. Price’s office. Gave me eye drops and a plastic shield to wear at night so I wouldn’t poke the eye. No leaks, stitches in place and everything looking good. No pain at all. Come back Monday, August 12 to have the stitches removed. Dr. Price indicated that my vision would be blurred until the stitches were removed.

Monday, August 12, Dr. Price removed the stitches in his office. No pain. No leaks. He asked me to think about answers to the following question. “What could they do better?” Vision still blurred but he said it would get better each day now that the stitches were removed.

The next day I received a call from Joan who said she was the follow-up nurse and had been with the hospital for twelve years. She asked if I had time to answer four questions? I did. Question #1 – “Did Dr. Price ask you to think about what we could do better?” Answer – “Yes.” Question #2 – “What could we have done better?” Answer – “Nothing.” Question #3 – “What didn’t we do that you wish we had done?” Answer – “Nothing.” Question #4 – “How would you describe your two hours at the hospital?” Answer – “Very enjoyable!”

On questioning Joan, I discovered the following – All nurses and orderlies spend one day every two weeks manning the follow-up phone desk. Currently three other nurses were doing follow-ups with Joan. All comments were written up and circulated to every employee and the surgeons on Monday morning. All comments were discussed in the regular department meetings. Did they have many negative answers? No. The negatives came from remarks the person who had brought the patient to the hospital had made to the patient. “They wished there was a coffee shop to go to while they waited and they wished there were more parking places in front of the hospital.” Joan said both issues were being looked at but they involved the availability of physical space, which was limited.

**QUESTION** – if you asked your customers how they felt about their transactions with your organization would they describe them as enjoyable? Do you even ask them? I spent two hours purchasing a service – eye surgery – and a product – better vision. In that two hours I had come in contact with ten employees who truly enjoyed their jobs and were proud of the part they played in the process. Because of this, they tended to be long-term employees. Another secret to their success is that they do not delegate customer care to a department – everyone is accountable and involved. The morning after surgery, when I was in Dr. Price’s waiting room, I met a lady from Athens, TN that had cataract surgery the day before. I asked her what she thought of her experience – she replied, “A very pleasant experience.” **How is your Customer Service?**

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### **John’s jottings**

This is a different customer experience. This experience is with a much larger, multinational, well-known company.

It started with an advertisement. Sign up for this product/service and “always have access to your documents and spreadsheets whenever you want, from wherever you are. Only \$99/year. Always the latest version of the software. Documents stored on the web.”

I’m a small business. My sales, administrative, IT, manufacturing, credit departments, etc., all consist of two people, total. In addition, one of them does not get paid!

Anything to simplify life is welcome - this product promised simplification. I could get out of the software business for good. Not worry about document storage, updates, and security. Sign me up!

The \$99 package sounded like it filled the bill. So, I pressed “buy now.” Although I had my credit card in hand ready to enter, I needed an account. Even though I was going to pay and be done with it for a year. Part of the account process required an email address. This simple process took about twenty minutes. Thought I was ready to go. Account and email address got linked.

Software downloaded. Said it was installed. I couldn’t figure out how to use it. Watched tutorials, etc. None of which showed screens that looked like mine. I could get email from my home computer, but not from portable tablet. Called a friend in the software support business. He couldn’t figure it out either. Said there was a free trial period so he would go home and play with it over the weekend.

Long story short, he called back and said the product I bought wouldn’t do what I thought it would. Agreed the ad was a little misleading. Said I needed a more sophisticated package, naturally more expensive.

So, I thought, I’ll just upgrade. Couldn’t find out how. One of the blogs said to buy the upgrade first, then cancel the original. OK.

Bought the upgrade, got it working. Had to open a new account, email address, etc. Was relieved. Then I started out to cancel the original package. Found a way to do it - I thought. Did it. However, the confirming message said I could still use the package for another eleven months, even though I had just upgraded from the same company!!

I searched and searched for a phone number. Finally found one. Called it and explained to the person on the other end what I was trying to do. They asked for my name, phone number, email address and a concise description of the problem. I complied. They gave me a case number.

After the preliminaries, they said they could not help me - I needed to talk to someone in another department. I said I now have two accounts, two charges and wanted to get rid of one account and get a refund for the first charge. Who did I need to talk to? The person with the hard to understand foreign accent said I needed to talk to at least two different people but he could only transfer me to one. I said, “Transfer me.”

The new voice came on the line and asked for my name, phone number, email address and a concise description of the problem. I said, “I just gave that to the person who transferred me to you.” They said they needed it all the same. I was transferred three other times before someone answered who said they could help with the charges. Each one, however, asked for my name, email address and phone number - then transferred me.

The fourth person did help. I ended up with a refund for the total first charge. (So far, I had spent more than an hour and a half on the phone.) However, he couldn’t help me with the double account issue. I needed to talk to still another person.

I was transferred a total of six times. On the last transfere, I was cut off. Now, having provided my name, email address, and phone number SIX times, I thought I would get a call back. NO, SIR!!

I still have two accounts - but one of them is not costing me anything – I hope!. I’m afraid though that one of these days it will cut off and everything in it will be lost.

This company’s customer service people did NOT listen - they did not take the time to understand, they anticipated, incorrectly, I might add. They were experts at passing the buck. I’m frustrated.

I’m not an IT expert, just a customer who thinks he could benefit from their product that they also target in their advertising. Their instructions and support capabilities do NOT meet that customer’s typical needs. They aim at Joe Doe in their advertising, but design all instructions, processes, etc. for IT experts. I don’t think they understand their customer.

Is this a description of how your customers might respond? Are there any similarities in how I was treated with how your customers are treated? Do you even know? It was not an enjoyable experience.

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## **Who is John H. Barnes?**

Not all readers of the INM Newsletter are familiar with John Barnes who became President of INM January 1, 2013. I first met John in 1985 when he was a participant in an eight-week Executive Management Program. At this time, he was employed by Provident Life and Accident Insurance Company, Chattanooga, TN. He was their first participant in this program.

John founded Barnes Consulting Services – (BCS) - in 2004. Prior to founding BCS John served as Administrator and CEO of Bradley Memorial Hospital in Cleveland, TN, a private acute care, 251-bed hospital, serving the citizens of Bradley County and surrounding counties in southeast Tennessee. He was also Chairman of the Galaxy Health Alliance, a consortium of 15 hospitals in southeast Tennessee, northeast Alabama, and northwest Georgia.

John also served as Executive Vice President, Managed Care of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Hospital Authority. His duties included directing the activities of a provider sponsored health plan, representing the Hospital Authority in its relationships with all the hospital's payors, providing executive oversight for a large home health agency, a durable medical equipment company, a retail drug chain and a physician support services organization. The Authority operated the largest tertiary care hospital with several one-of-a kind specialized healthcare capabilities within a radius of 150 miles of Chattanooga, TN.

John also served in various positions with the Provident Life and Accident Insurance Company, Chattanooga, TN including Senior Vice President and Chief Officer of the Group Insurance Division. (In 1993 John and I team taught 60 of his 2,500 North American employees in a customized Executive Management Program.) This division had a \$3.2 billion volume of business providing group life and health coverage for over 2 million individuals. During his leadership, the return on equity - (ROE) - grew from 9% to more than 20% and new sales from \$90 million to \$428 million.

John has also served as the Chief Officer of a small case group life and health insurance unit and the Chief Officer of the largest writer of non-cancelable and guaranteed renewable individual long-term disability insurance in North America. This product was distributed through more than 40,000 insurance agents. He has also been the Chief Business Officer of a private liberal arts College and General Manager of a large mailing facility.

John has served on several committees of the Health Insurance Association of America and has chaired its Disability Insurance Committee. He has served on

the Allocations Committee of the United Way of Chattanooga, TN and has been a member of the Alumni Advisory Board of Covenant College.

He earned a Masters degree in Business Administration from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN and a Bachelors degree in Philosophy from Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, GA. John is a Certified Life Underwriter and a Fellow in the Life Management Institute.

John is married to the former Janette LeRoy of Bismarck, ND. They have four grown children – (3 boys and a girl) - plus seven grand children, ages 2 → 15.

John is a licensed private pilot holding ratings for single and multi-engine land airplanes, and instrument certification. He is also a licensed glider pilot and ham radio operator. He recently took up sailing and has completed several American Sailing Association courses including ASA 106, Celestial Navigation. He is owner and skipper of a Catalina 22 sailboat, which he plans to race on Lake Chickamauga in Chattanooga, TN. John designed week five of the Executive Management Program – Finance for Non-Finance Managers. He and his wife live at 3 Turnberry Lane, Lookout Mountain, GA 30750.

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### **Did You Know?**

- The Great Smoky Mountain National Park in TN draws nearly twice as many visitors each year as the second most visited park, the Grand Canyon.
- Alabama's coastline is only 53 miles long.
- Alaska's coastline is 6,640 mile long – longer than the coastlines of all the other states combined.
- The lowest point in the western hemisphere – 282 feet below sea level – is located in Badwater, Death Valley, CA.
- Main is the only US state that adjoins only one other state.
- Hawaii is the southernmost state.
- New York City's Central Park is nearly twice as big as Monaco – the world's second smallest country.
- In 1803, North Carolina was the site of the first US gold rush. North Carolina supplied all the gold coined for currency by the Philadelphia Mint until 1828.
- India and China account for more than half of the world's production of peanuts.
- Oklahoma has more tornadoes per square mile than any other US state.
- Lake Tahoe in CA is the deepest – (1,645 feet) – and the largest mountain lake in North America.
- Missouri has more than 6,000 surveyed caves.
- Ruby Falls in TN is America's highest underground waterfall open to the public.