

Happy January 1st

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYBODY

We've closed the books on 2014. "*Don't cry because it's over – smile because it happened!*" Today is the first day of a new year – it's never been lived before. Think what you can do with this day and especially with this New Year! "*Every time you tear a page off your calendar, you have a place for new ideas, contributions and, progress.*" Charles Kettering

Congratulations

"If it is to be – it is up to me!"

ALP = Advanced Leadership Program
CLP = CommScope Leadership Program
ELD = Enterprise Leadership Development - CommScope
EMP = Executive Management Program
IMP = In-house Management Programs
MCG = Managing Change Workshop
NEG = Negotiation – CommScope Program
PSP = Professional Sales Program

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My Apologies - Stevens

November 25 I went to the hospital and came home December 1. During that week my two daughters attempted to send out birthday greetings and the December newsletter. You might not have received either. If you missed the December newsletter please let me know and I will send it to you. If we missed your birthday I am sorry – it was not intentional. **Happy Birthday!** On pages 3 and 4 you will find out why I decided to take a vacation at two of our local hospitals.

Health insurance

A man suffered a serious heart attack while shopping. The store clerk called 911 when she saw him collapse to the floor. The paramedics rushed the man to the nearest hospital where he had emergency open-heart surgery. He awoke from the surgery to find himself in the care of nuns at a Catholic Hospital. A nun was seated next to his bed holding a clipboard loaded with several forms. She asked him how he was going to pay for his treatment. "*Do you have health insurance?*" she asked. He replied in a raspy voice, "*No health insurance.*" The nun asked, "*Do you have money in the bank?*" He replied, "*No money in the bank.*" "*Do you have a relative who could help you with the payments?*" asked the nun. He said, "*I only have a spinster sister, and she is a nun.*" The nun became agitated and announced loudly, "*Nuns are not spinsters! Nuns are married to God.*" The patient replied, "*Perfect - send the bill to my Brother-in-law.*"

2015 → 2016 Seminars

Executive Management Programs

CLASS 49

▶ **WEEK 1 – FEB 09 – 13, 2015** ◀

WEEK 2 – MAY 18 – 22, 2015

WEEK 3 – AUG 17 – 21, 2015

WEEK 4 – NOV 16 – 20, 2015

WEEK 5 – FEB 15 – 19, 2016

CLASS 50

▶ **WEEK 1 – JUN 08 – 12, 2015** ◀

WEEK 2 – SEP 14 – 18, 2015

WEEK 3 – DEC 07 – 11, 2015

WEEK 4 – MAR 07 – 11, 2016

WEEK 5 – JUN 13 – 17, 2016

CLASS 51

▶ **WEEK 1 – OCT 12 – 16, 2015** ◀

WEEK 2 – JAN 18 – 22, 2016

WEEK 3 – APR 18 – 22, 2016

WEEK 4 – JUL 18 – 22, 2016

WEEK 5 – OCT 17 – 21, 2016

(To enroll participants in any class please contact Tom Stevens at inmco@mindspring.com. We need their name, title, phone number, and email address.)

Chronological Class Calendar

2015

EMP 48/2 – JAN 19 – 23

▶ **EMP 49/1 – FEB 09 – 13** ◀

EMP 46/5 – FEB 16 – 20

EMP 47/4 – MAR 16 – 20

EMP 48/3 – APR 13 – 17

EMP 49/2 – MAY 18 – 22

▶ **EMP 50/1 – JUN 08 – 12** ◀

EMP 47/5 – JUN 15 – 19

EMP 48/4 – JUL 13 – 17

EMP 49/3 – AUG 17 – 21

EMP 50/2 – SEP 14 – 18

▶ **EMP 51/1 – OCT 12 – 16** ◀

EMP 48/5 – OCT 19 – 23

EMP 49/4 – NOV 16 – 20

EMP 50/3 – DEC 07 – 11

2016

EMP 51/2 – JAN 18 – 21

EMP 49/5 – FEB 15 – 19

▶ **EMP 52/1 – FEB 22 – 26** ◀

EMP 50/4 – MAR 07 – 11

EMP 51/3 – APR 18 – 22

EMP 52/2 – MAY 16 – 20

▶ **EMP 53/1 – JUN 06 – 10** ◀

EMP 50/5 – JUN 13 – 17

EMP 51/4 – JUL 18 – 22

EMP 52/3 – AUG 15 – 19

EMP 53/2 – SEP 12 – 16

EMP 51/5 – OCT 17 – 21

Stevens Statement

Focus on Contribution

The question “*What should I contribute?*” gives freedom because it gives accountability. Peter Drucker

A great majority of executives tend to focus downward. They become occupied with efforts rather than the results. They worry over what the organization and their superiors “owe” them and should do for them. In addition, they are concerned about the authority they “should have.” As a result they render themselves ineffective. The effective executive focuses on contribution. They look up from their work and outward toward goals. They ask - what can I contribute that will significantly affect the performance and the results of the business I serve? They stress accountability and contribution.

The focus on contribution is the key to effectiveness in a person’s own work. Its content, its level, its standards and its impact in their relations with others – their supervisors, their co-workers, their direct reports, and in their use of executive tools such as meetings and reports. The focus on contribution turns the executive’s attention away from their own specialty, their own narrow skills, and their own department and toward the performance of the whole. It turns their attention to the outside, the only place where there are results.

You cannot keep a committed person from success. Place stumbling blocks in their path and they will use them as stepping-stones on their way to greatness. The person who succeeds has a program that determines their course of action and they adhere to it - they lay plans and execute them - they go straight to their goals. They are not pushed this way and that every time a difficulty is thrust in their way. If they can’t go over it, they go through it!

ACTION PLAN – What did you contribute in 2014? Was it enough? Could you and your staff have contributed more to the success of the business? Call a staff meeting for the purpose of answering and reviewing that question. Ask each of your direct reports to come to the meeting with an answer to the question – “*I am personally proud that we contributed in 2014!*” Call another staff meeting in a week with each direct report prepared to answer the question – “*We can and should contribute in 2015.*”

In 2015 maintain a constant focus on the contribution you can and should make to your organization. Do you know precisely what you and your people can contribute? If not, this is an excellent time to put it in writing with a 2015 **Accountability Plan!**

“Success is not a function of the size of your title but the richness of your contribution.” Robin Sharma

“Success? Odd as it seems, you will achieve the greatest results in business and your career if you drop the word achievement from your vocabulary and replace it with contribution.” Peter Drucker

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John’s Jottings

You probably already know that January is named after a Roman god, Janus. According to Wikipedia he is the god of beginnings and transitions. He is also associated with gates, doors, doorways, passages and endings. He usually has two facial profiles, one looking to the left, and the other to the right. Presumably one is looking backwards, the other looking forward. Hmmm, I wonder which is which!

However, the point is we should consider at least two perspectives. What can we learn from the past? What can we anticipate about the future? Our knowledge is about the past; our decisions are about the future.

I suggest there are two other perspectives to consider. One is looking inward, the other is looking outward. Here’s what I mean.

Looking inward, consider what your team did well last year. Consider what strengths your team demonstrated. How would you describe those strengths? What types of problems did you solve last year? How would you articulate the problems you showed expertise in solving?

Still looking inward, list the results that did not come up to your expectations. Note the actions that did not have the outcomes you expected. In other words, where do you need to improve? In addition, how do you need to improve?

Lastly while looking inward what types of problems did you have a difficult time solving last year? How would you articulate them?

Looking outward give thought to the needs of your customers. What needs do they have that you and they both know you can solve? Make sure everyone on your team knows. Be sure you keep up the performance on these.

Also consider what needs they have that you can solve but they don’t seem to know you can solve them or they don’t know they have the problem. The answers to these two questions drive different strategies, both of which should result in increased sales.

While continuing your look outward, ask yourself what your weaknesses in the market place may be. How should you address them? How can you turn them into strengths that the customer is willing to pay for?

Finally, while still looking outward, what threats are out there you and your team need to be aware of? You know, those issues that keep you awake at night. Decide what you are going to do about these.

Janus, the god of transitions - play like you are Janus. Do it well and 2015 will be a better year for you and your business! Times of transition are strenuous. They are an opportunity to purge, rethink priorities, and be intentional about new habits. Happy January 1st!

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? KNIHT-DECEMBER-ANSWERS-THINK ?

Unusual Word

There is an English word in which the first two letters signify a male, the first three letters signify a female, the first four letters signify a great man, and the whole word signifies a great woman. What is the word?

ANSWER – Heroine

Rearrangement

How would you rearrange the letters in the words “new door” to make one word?

ANSWER – ONE WORD

Eleven Years of Growth

A six year old hammered a nail into a tree to mark her height. Eleven years later, when she was seventeen, she returned to see how much higher the nail was. If the tree grew by six and a quarter inches each year, how much higher would the nail be eleven years later?

ANSWER – Exactly the same height. Trees grow from the top up.

? KNIHT-JANUARY-THINK ?

Missing Letters

Below are ten 6 letter words, however, every other letter is missing. Can you determine the words?

__S__E__D __P__A__G __R__F__R
__Y__R__D __R__F__E __A__B__N
__A__E__A __O__D__G __S__F__L
 __I__S__E

Cruise Ship Sinks

A cruise ship sank in the Pacific Ocean. The survivors landed on a remote island. There was enough food for the 229 survivors to last three weeks. Six days later a rescue ship appeared. Unfortunately, the rescue ship went aground and sank leaving an additional 55 people stranded on the island who had to share the food. The food now had to be rationed and everyone was put on one-half of the original rations. How many days in total would the food last from the day of the first sinking?

ANSWER

Rolling Dice

If you roll two normal 6-sided dice the probability of rolling a total of 7 is 1/6. What would the probability be of rolling a total of 7 if both dice were 7-sided? How about 8-sided? 9-sided? 10-sided?

ANSWER

Always Learning

In an effort to keep our readers updated on the latest medical trends I am writing a narrative of my recent hospital experience.

I thought I was coming down with the flu. Fluid in my chest and a hacking, gurgling cough. Monday, November 24 my daughter Cheryl arrived for Thanksgiving and greeted me with “you look like Hell let me take you to the hospital.” In my usual cooperative and cheerful manner I replied “No way!” Tuesday morning however, I awoke, dressed, and begged her to take me to the hospital.

We arrived at the Ft. Loudon Medical Center Emergency Room at 9:15 am. While Cheryl answered questions posed to her by three admissions volunteers I took a corner seat in the waiting room. Cheryl finished the interrogation and joined me. A grandmotherly type entered, called my name, and put two wristbands around my right wrist – one with my name and the other with my birth date. I was then ushered into the Triage area – a medical term for separating the living from the dead and almost dead.

A nurse asked me what my name was and my birth date and then scanned the two wristbands. A doctor introduced himself and I was attached to monitoring equipment that checked my vital signs. Pulse rate, body temperature, respiration rate, blood pressure, and oxygen content. With his stethoscope at the ready he listened to my heart, chest, and stomach while observing the monitoring equipment. He ordered an EKG and an Echo Cardiogram and announced I was experiencing Atrial Fibrillation – (extreme erratic heartbeat.)

Two nurses appeared and began removing my clothes. I was soon dressed in a fetching blue hospital gown, slit down the back, and held together by ties. I was placed on a bed with wheels. During this time Cheryl was being questioned by two nurses with computers on wheels. When I asked what she was doing I was informed that the Emergency Room computers did not talk with the admitting computers.

Off I went to the EKG/ECG room. Here I had a number of very cold electrodes stuck to various parts of my anatomy and was given an ultrasound. They also asked my name and birth date and the bands scanned. After those tests, I was advised I had won a stay in their Critical Care Unit. I now had – low oxygen saturation, congestive heart failure, an enlarged upper heart chamber, and a leaky heart valve. I was rolled out of the ER area and down the hall to a private room. I then discovered that those of us in Critical Care had our own hospital gowns and wristbands. I was changed into a yellow gown with snaps instead of ties to preserve modesty. All the wires were unhooked and new wires attached to a small unit that rested in a pocket in the front of the gown. We had gone wireless. Cheryl was deep in conversation with another set of wheeled computers. You guessed it – Critical Care computers did not talk to Emergency Room computers. I surmised that the difference in

gowns was so that during the evening cocktail and social hour we could recognize fellow Critical Care companions.

A series of tests or protocols including x-rays, kidney, bladder, and liver ultra sound were next. I finally learned that my Ejection Fraction – (how hard it is for the heart to pump blood) – was “pitifully low.”

The vampire process was next where everyone seemed to want some of my blood. At one point I thought I recognized our local 7-Eleven clerk standing in line with a square needle. I was told that under no circumstances could I get out of bed by myself. I was given a hand held unit that when pressed summoned aides to my room. After one sneaky attempt I was caught and hooked up to a unit that sounded an alarm if I tried to get up by myself. I was virtually a prisoner of the 3 x 7 ft. “bed.”

There then appeared to be a nursing convention being held in my room. One young woman introduced herself and advised she was my Day Nurse. Another identified herself as my Assistant Day Nurse, followed by Nurses Aides. All personnel wrote their names and titles on a large white board affixed to the wall. My Cardiologist arrived and asked what had happened. In June he had examined me, including an EKG and pronounced my heart was in excellent condition.

A discussion was then held with the doctor covering what was planned for me during the night. Blood pressure checks, medications, oxygen, and being weighed twice a night.

Tuesday our other daughter Deb showed up. I now had both daughters to defend me from the evil doctors and their “angels of mercy.” I should also point out that my dear wife – “what'shername” - decided to catch the flu and spend my weeklong hospital stay in bed at home. Wednesday I felt much better. Blood pressure lower, erratic heart beat more steady, oxygen stabilized. Friday morning my Cardiologist decided to move me to the Park West Medical Center – the local heart hospital – for further tests and an evaluation by a surgical heart team.

An ambulance was called. I was transferred to a gurney and loaded in the ambulance. I had been unhooked from the monitoring equipment. In the ambulance a Paramedic radioed Park West that he was hooking up the patient and I heard a “Roger that.” Wires came out of the side of the ambulance and were hooked to the wireless unit that we had just stolen from the Loudon Center along with my yellow gown. Seconds later the radio crackled – “what's your ETA!” Response – “just arrived, we're outside.” A very quick trip. Inside I went and was transferred to a rolling bed and a new room. Here I discovered that Park West had its own dress code and I was changed into a light blue gown and another set of wristbands. Once again Cheryl was talking to the rolling computers. Of course, Part West computers did not talk with Loudon computers. I then went through a Cardiac Catherization. Confirmed diagnosis was now – con-

gestive heart failure, leaky heart valve, enlarged upper heart chamber, 70% blockage of one artery, 30% blockage of another artery, small calcium deposit in a third artery and a bladder stone. YAHTZE!

Saturday and Sunday were days of rest with no tests. On Monday I was scheduled to have a TEE – (Transesophageal Echocardiography) – high frequency sound waves produce a graphic outline of the heart's movement. An ultrasound transducer positioned on an endoscope is guided down the patient's throat into the esophagus. This provides a close look at the heart valves and chamber without interference from the ribs or lungs. The cardiologist told daughter Deb this would be a good time to shock my heart back into a steady rhythm. She agreed and said, “Go for it!” She then signed the authorization papers.

Later that day they inserted a wire with a camera on it into my Femoral Artery and sent it on a journey to look at my heart again. End result – this was the last test of my hospital stay. The rest of Monday I relaxed and Tuesday the girls sprang me and we went home.

Observations – I am amazed at the number of tests that have been devised to look inside the body without cutting you open like a Thanksgiving turkey. At no time during any of these processes did I feel any pain. Everyone I met was sincerely interested in my welfare. Everything I experienced was thoroughly explained to me ahead of time.

Meals – I am convinced that someone in the hospital is responsible for delivering food just prior to taking a test and you are not allowed to eat. They cheerfully respond with “we'll save it for you.” When you return the food is cold and you are not that interested in cold mashed potatoes, meat loaf and, green beans. I lost eight pounds in seven days. The method they have devised to feed you is diabolical. You sit up in bed with the tray four inches below your chin. Then you lean back and try to eat. There isn't a culture in this world that eats their food leaning back. The wires hooked up to your finger tips tend to be dragged through your food.

POSTSCRIPT - It has been five weeks since my hospital adventure. I am taking ten pills a day and have given up swimming across the Little TN river every morning. My cardiologist gave me an exam plus an EKG this week and advised my heartbeat is regular, blood pressure is back to normal and, Ejection Fraction much improved. I will live long enough to plague you with many more newsletters! In a month he will decide what to do with the arteries. I never did make the cocktail or social hours!

I sincerely hope that when the bureaucrats take over our health care system they won't screw it up. Knowing the “muddled management” of the political class I am not very optimistic. When was your last check-up?

“A hospital bed is a parked taxi with the meter running.” Groucho Marx

Did You Know?

The earliest known New Year celebrations were in Mesopotamia and date back to 2000 B.C. (*It is not true that I attended!*) New Year's is the time when many people traditionally make resolutions to break bad habits or start good ones. In the U.S. "Auld Lang Syne" is traditionally sung at midnight on New Year's Eve. "Auld Lang Syne" was written by Scottish poet Robert Burns in 1788 and means "times gone by."

The first rooftop celebration atop One Times Square was a fireworks display in 1904. It was produced by The New York Times to inaugurate their new headquarters in Times Square and celebrate the renaming of Longacre Square to Times Square. The first ball dropping celebration atop One Times Square was held on December 31, 1907. The original Ball weighed 700 pounds and was five feet in diameter. It was made of iron and wood and was decorated with 100 25-watt light bulbs. November 11, 2008 a "new" New Years Eve ball was introduced. This ball is a geodesic sphere, 12 feet in diameter and weighs 11,875 pounds. It is built to withstand high winds and fluctuating temperatures. The ball is made of Waterford crystal.

Japan – The New Year is the most important holiday in Japan, and is a symbol of renewal. In December, various "Bonenkai" or "forget-the-year parties" are held to bid farewell to the problems and concerns of the past year and prepare for a new beginning. Misunderstandings and grudges are forgiven and houses are scrubbed. At midnight on December 31, Buddhist temples strike their gongs 108 times, in an effort to expel 108 types of human weakness. New Year's day itself is a day of joy and no work is to be done. Children receive otoshidamas, small gifts with money inside.

Spain - The Spanish ritual on New Year's Eve is to eat twelve grapes at midnight. The tradition is meant to secure twelve happy months in the coming year.

The Netherlands - The Dutch burn bonfires of Christmas trees on the street and launch fireworks. The fires are meant to purge the old and welcome the new.

Greece - In Greece, New Year's Day is also the Festival of St. Basil, one of the founders of the Greek Orthodox Church. One of the traditional foods served is Vassilopitta, or St Basil's cake. A silver or gold coin is baked inside the cake. Whoever finds the coin in their piece of cake will be especially lucky during the coming year.

Australia - In Australia they celebrate the New Year on January 1. This day is a public holiday and many people have picnics and camp out on the beach. They have parties that start on December 31 and at midnight they start to make noise with whistles and rattles, car horns and church bells.

Britain - In Britain the custom of first footing is practiced. The first male visitor to the house after midnight is supposed to bring good luck. Usually they bring a gift like money, bread, or coal, which is done to ensure the family, will have plenty of these things all the year to come. The first person must not be blond, red-haired or a woman as these are supposedly bad luck.

Brazil - In Brazil the lentil is believed to signify wealth, so on the first day of the New Year they serve lentil soup or lentils and rice. Priestesses of the local macumba voodoo cult dress in blue skirts and white blouses for a ceremony dedicated to the goddess of water, Yemanja. A sacrificial boat laden with flowers, candles, and jewelry is pushed out to sea from Brazil's famous Ipanema beach in Rio de Janeiro.

France - Jour des Étrennes or Day of New Year's Presents. In France dinner parties are held for the entire family. People exchange presents and greeting cards.

China - The Chinese New Year - "Yuan Tan" - takes place between January 21 and February 20. The exact date is fixed by the lunar calendar, in which a new moon marks the beginning of each new month. For many families, it is a time for feasting, visiting relatives, and friends, but in the cities spectacular parades take place.

The celebrations are based on bringing luck, health, happiness, and wealth to the next year. They clean their houses to rid them of last year's bad luck before the celebrations begin. There are parades where thousands of people line the streets to watch the procession of floats. Dancing dragons and lions weave their way through the crowded streets. The dragon is associated with longevity and wealth. Inside the costumes are 50 dancers, twisting and turning the dragon's long silk body and blinking eyes.

They also go to the markets to buy plants and flowers that will bring them good luck for the New Year. The Kumquat tree is considered to be the luckiest because its name is a play on the word lucky. The Tangerine is lucky because of its bright color, but odd numbers are unlucky, so tangerines are always given in pairs. Lucky money is given out in red envelopes with the family name and good-luck message written on them in gold. They are given by relatives, but only to the unmarried and the children of the family.

Italy - In Italy, food is very important in observing the Italian New Year. Sweetbread or cake is served in most parts of Italy. This food item symbolizes prosperity and hope for the New Year. Lentils are considered very lucky and are consumed with the New Year traditional meals. Black-eyed peas are a fortune bringing food item. They symbolize money and since, they are green it is really auspicious. Pork with fatty sausages signifies fattening wallets.

What are your traditions on New Years?