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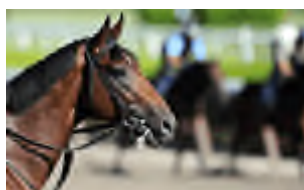


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No Sure Things

Big Brown failed to deliver in the Belmont, as jockey Kent Desormeaux eased him down the stretch, signaling something wasn't

Ideas For Success | June

I'm writing this early Sunday morning...fresh off a late-night arrival home after attending a wedding at the University of Notre Dame. Having co-founded a travel company there years ago, I've experienced many times the frustrations of journeying from Texas to South Bend, Indiana – whether in the dark of winter or on a bright summer day. Post-midnight bus drop-offs following missed flight connections are pretty much the norm for me. However, there are always opportunities to learn, even amidst travel frustrations.

One time I found out why those Fighting Irish gold football helmets always look so good on television: a student crew spray paints each one the day before every game. That's attention to detail, and something essential to every organization.

On another visit, when we twice missed the runway trying to land in a snowstorm, I discovered that traveling on the same flight as a famous local resident carries blessings. After we touched down safely on the third attempt, the passenger seated in front of me stood and said in a thin voice, "I had faith." I didn't – having envisioned headlines of "Muhammad Ali and 19 others perish in crash." If the Greatest has faith, shouldn't we all?

This latest adventure unveiled two lessons. First, no matter how many years pass, within 10 minutes of reconnecting with old friends, you quickly return to those "Glory Days" and reminisce about wonderful times. Second, \$4 per gallon gasoline (actually \$4.29 near O'Hare) has everyone's attention – from struggling college students, to highly successful professionals – and people are adjusting their personal habits and business decisions to compensate. That's going to have an impact on your business sooner than later.

A New Day With Barack Obama or John McCain assured of inheriting the economic challenges, this country is entering a different era. In seven months someone not named Bush or Clinton will go to bed in the White House as our nation's president for the first time in 20 years. That means anyone who turned 18 after Ronald Reagan was reelected on November 6, 1984, has never voted in a presidential election where one of those names wasn't on the ballot.

Drilling down further, Millennials – those ages 18-29 – represent 44 million eligible voters. That's one-fifth of the electorate, and the largest and most ethnically diverse generation in U.S. history. In the primaries and caucuses they turned out in record numbers, and similar action is anticipated on Election Day. A recent poll conducted on behalf of *Rock the Vote* revealed the top issues among this group are: jobs; Iraq; healthcare; college costs and global warming.

A strong constituency is ready to play a part and speak its collective

right with the big bay colt. The streak continues of no Triple Crown winner since the Carter administration. I've watched probably 90 percent of those races the past 30 years, and truly believed Big Brown was the chosen one. However, there are no safe bets in horse racing. "That's why they play the game," said legendary trainer Nick Zito, who saddled the 38-1 long shot winner Da' Tara. Good lesson to remember in life and business: Never take anything for granted.

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We will never release, sell or give a subscriber's name or e-mail address to any other party or organization. Our subscribers will only receive e-mail messages that contain requested information, articles or

voice. On the *Rock the Vote* web site it says: "We're not going to take politics as usual anymore, and we won't be ignored. We're taking the country into our hands." Sounds like the summer of '68 all over again.

Walt's Wisdom This month's magical idea from my encounters with Disney cast members is about your team taking pride in the role they play in your organization:

"I'd much rather work at Walt Disney World Resort than Bob's Pretty Good Theme Park."

Are you leading the way – setting an example – to make your business world class?

Instructions Included My former travel company partner hosted a day-after-the-wedding function for those who were staying through the weekend in South Bend. My wife and I had to leave beforehand, and when we stopped by their house to say goodbye, they put us to work.

I was about 20 minutes into the highly unskilled labor of gathering sets of a plastic knife, fork and spoon, and wrapping them diagonally in paper napkins, when someone said, "Oh, we aren't including spoons." I quickly responded, "Hey, there was no training with this position." To which a loyal reader observing the exchange replied, "I guess this will be in your next newsletter." Well, Kim, you were right. Thanks for the inspiration.

Even the most mundane tasks turn out wrong if instructions aren't clearly communicated upfront. So remember the spoons – and be sure to take time to explain what you expect, if you expect to receive what you want.

Personal Note The wedding was for a longtime friend who finally said "I do" just short of his 39th birthday. Over the past two decades he: 1) served as my sideline assistant on some of the biggest college football and basketball games I produced; 2) became the first person hired when we opened the Notre Dame office in 1991; and, 3) booked me to work with their team leaders soon after we started Success Handler – even though we'd sold our half of the travel company seven years earlier. He also ranks atop the list of the happiest people I've ever met.

So here's to you Patrick Walsh...may you and Jill enjoy many decades together! I'll be back on June 6, 2033 to celebrate your 25th anniversary. Pick me up at 3:00 a.m. at the bus stop on campus.

Until next month, continued success in all things.

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