

An opportunity in the jungle

Once you know where you're going, things will begin falling into place

It's an old story but still so true today.

During the 1800's, when Africa was being colonized by Europeans, two salesmen left home to do some exploratory market research in the jungles of the dark continent. Both men were adventurous, but they represented different companies and had very different perspectives on the shoe business.

Shortly after arriving, one of the salesmen sent this telegram to his company: "RETURNING ON NEXT SHIP NO OPPORTUNITY HERE NATIVES DON'T WEAR SHOES"

The other salesman sent this telegram: "URGENT! SEND MILLIONS OF SHOES, ALL SIZES! NATIVES ARE BAREFOOT!"

Contrasting viewpoints like this are comical, and if they only occurred once in a while, we could have a good laugh and then forget them. But they occur frequently. One man will look at a vacant lot and see a convenient place to secretly dump his garbage. Another will see that same lot with a great hotel on it, and he'll make his vision a reality. Two women will go to a job interview. One will walk away thinking: "That job would be a drag." The other will say to herself, "I'd really enjoy a career with that company," and she'll end up as president. WHY?

Seneca, the Roman statesman and author, explained it. He said, "When a person does *not* know what harbor he is heading for, no wind is the right wind."



Opportunities are unlimited. Which ones you see depend on where you're going. But the person going *nowhere* will see no opportunity.

To recognize an opportunity you must know where you want to go and what you want to accomplish. The salesman who saw the barefoot natives as ideal prospects must have had a goal. He must have expected to sell lots of shoes. The other salesman probably didn't expect to sell many shoes. Maybe all he wanted was a month away from home, which is fine, but as a result, he didn't see any business opportunities.

Even the person who wants to go someplace won't see any opportunities, unless he commits himself—unless he actually starts going. That first step makes all the difference.

Until you're committed, there is hesitancy and the chance to draw back. But the moment you commit yourself, providence moves with you. You see all sorts of possibilities that you wouldn't have otherwise noticed.



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"Dedicated to helping you tap your unlimited potential."

A stream of opportunities is set in motion by your decision—incidents, meetings, even material assistance—none of which you would have anticipated before you took action!

So, would you like more opportunities? Then choose the harbor you want to set out for, pull up anchor and set sail.

Establish clearly defined goals and boldly commit yourself to them. Follow the advice of Goethe, the German philosopher, who wrote:

“Whatever you can do, Or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.”

Here’s what you can do: Instead of thinking about opportunities you’ve missed, concentrate on the unlimited opportunities that lie ahead. Look at your world as an undeveloped continent. Every time you see or hear anything calling itself “problem,” say to yourself — GREAT OPPORTUNITY!

Why don’t we see unicorns any more?

Value time, yours and others’ — and be punctual

Being late can have some dire consequences. More often it’s just an inconsiderate waste of time—a habit that can easily be replaced by a new habit—the habit of being punctual.

By being late you’re actually telling others they’re not as important as you are—that they can just wait for you.

What about your meetings, for example—do they start on time? If not, you’re telling those who made the effort to arrive early, “It’s too bad, your time isn’t that important. We’ll wait for the latecomers.”

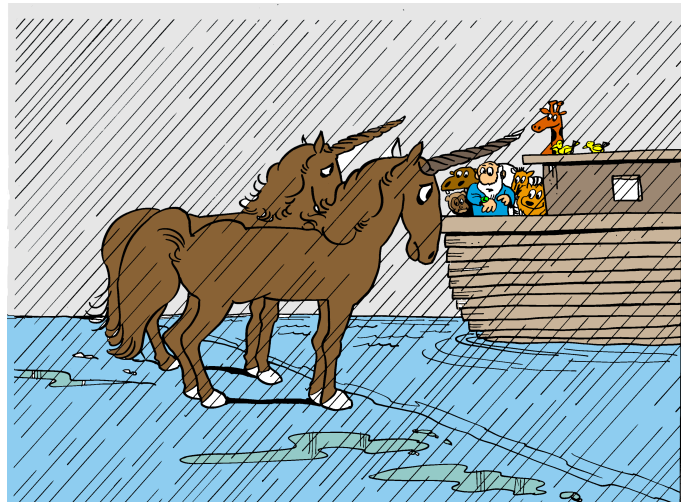
But one company we know actually locks the meeting room door at the appointed starting time. They really mean it when they say, “If you’re not early, you’re late!”

How long will you wait for someone else? Thirty minutes? One hour? All day? How about 15 minutes? Just decide up front, and then stick to it.

Sure there’s a risk, but what is your time worth? If you put a value on your time, others will too.

Develop “time awareness.” Knowing how long things actually take is one way to become more punctual.

It takes two thousandths of a second for a balloon to pop; one second for a hummingbird to beat its wings 70 times; one year for light to travel five trillion miles.



How long does it take YOU: to get ready for work? To travel to work? To write a letter? To eat lunch? To pay your bills? To read *The Unlimited Times*?

Are you habitually late? Then decide now to be habitually early! Don’t get left behind—like the unicorn!

Here’s what you can do:

1. Honor your time commitments.
2. Get a watch with a timer on it to remind you of appointments.
3. Develop time awareness.
4. Recognize the simple truth that, if you’re not early, you’re late.
5. Plan on being 10 minutes early for every appointment. Use that time to relax, plan, think, read, listen to music or — just look for unicorns!

The station

It will come soon enough

Imagine you and I are on a long trip that spans the Continent, travelling by train. The train rushes by many beautiful scenes—children waving, cattle grazing on a distant hillside, row upon row of corn and wheat, mountains and valleys, rolling hillsides and city skylines.

But uppermost in our minds is the final destination. On a certain day and at a certain hour, we will pull into the station. Bands will be playing and flags waving. Once we get there, so many wonderful dreams will come true and the pieces of our lives will fit together like a completed jigsaw puzzle.

How restlessly we pace the aisles— impatiently waiting for the station.

“When we reach the station, that will be it” we say. “When I’m 18 ...When I buy a Corvette. When I put the last kid through college ...When I’ve paid off the mortgage ...When I get a promotion...When I retire ...Then, I shall live happily ever after!”

Sooner or later, we must realize there is no station, no one place to arrive at once and for all. The true joy of life is the trip. The station is only a dream! It constantly out-distances us.

“Relish the moment” is a good motto, especially when coupled with Psalm 118:

“This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

It isn’t the burdens of today that drive men mad. It is the regrets over yesterday and the fear of tomorrow. Regret and fear are twin thieves that rob us of today.

So stop pacing the aisles and counting the miles. Instead, climb more mountains, eat more ice cream, go barefoot more often, watch more sunsets and laugh more. Life must be lived as we go along. The station will come soon enough.

Here’s what you can do: *Each new day is a gift. Live it to the fullest. Nobody has a ticket to tomorrow.*

Don’t focus on the black spot

Leader says “Look for the good”— managers learn to find it

Speaking to her department managers, a young, dynamic executive tacked a huge sheet of white paper on the wall behind her. Then, with a felt-tip marker, she made a black spot in the middle of the paper.

“What do you see?” she asked someone in the front row.

“A black spot,” came the reply.

She asked the same question of every manager, and received the same answer each time.

Quietly, slowly, and with great emphasis, she then said, “You’re all correct, there is a little black spot up there. But not one of you mentioned the big sheet of perfectly clean, white paper! And that is my speech.”

She went on to guide her organization from near collapse to record profits. Best of all, she helped her people develop positive attitudes toward themselves, their company, and their customers.

She attributed her success to the practice of requiring each manager to submit each Monday morning a report of all the good things that happened in their department during the preceding week.

Here’s what you can do: *Be on the lookout for what’s right. Encourage the people on your team to do the same. Initiate a cycle of positive attitudes, thoughts, ideas and action that will make it easier to handle the “black spots.” When you find something that’s good, recognize and reinforce it.*

Business card magic

**Don't just give prospects your card.
Give them something they'll never forget.**

Reach into your purse or wallet, right now, and take out one of your business cards. Look at it. If you have a few cards that others have given you, look at those too. Now answer this question: Is yours different from the cards of others — so different as to be memorable? Probably not. Most business cards are quite similar. Many, although functional, are just plain ordinary.

The creative person will make sure his or her business card has an unusual, perhaps even magical quality about it, because it's little things like that that make a big difference.

One creative person, a financial advisor, has made her business card "magical" by simply printing a number — 43,800 — in the lower-left corner.

When prospects ask her about it, as they inevitably do, she says, "That's the number of meals you and your spouse will be eating *after* your 65th birthday, assuming you both live a normal life expectancy. Even if each of those meals costs no more than \$5, you'll need at least \$219,000 to pay for them all! Would you like to take a few minutes to discuss some retirement investment opportunities?"

More often than not, the answer is "yes."

And that's just one way to conjure up some business-card magic!

Another way is to make your business card something other than the standard size of stiff paper. That's what we've done with the "Can of Success." It's a heavy eight-ounce can with a label that reads, "**Success comes in cans, not in cannots.**"



And instead of filing it away, or worse, throwing it away, people typically keep it right on their desk where they can show it to their friends and associates, reminding them how important attitude is — that whether you think you can or you can't, you're right!

Obviously, you don't have to be a magician to conjure up your own business card magic. Just think creatively and be unique! Look at what everyone else is doing, and don't do it! If you think creatively, there's a good chance you'll find something unique and different!

Here's what you can do:

1. *If you stay with the typical business card, get it reprinted on paper that's double or triple the thickness. When people comment on how thick it is, say, "Yes, it is, because I plan to be around for a long time."*

2. *Add a message on the back of your card, giving an added reason for people to save it. Things like calendars are common, but how about a list of holidays, flag hanging days, important local phone numbers or a creative puzzle or riddle. Then add: "Call me for the answer — and so much more!"*

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