

WORKPLACE WISDOM NEWSLETTER

A Fork in the Road

Decisions! Decisions! Decisions!

August 24, 2005

Sometimes we're so bombarded by decisions that we feel like we're drowning.

Some decisions are small ones like:

- * "Shall I mow the lawn today or Saturday?"
- * "Shall I invite Mary or Sarah to go to the movies?"
- * "Will I eat french fries with my hamburger tonight?"

Some decisions are so serious they shape our future.

- * "Is this the girl I'll ask to marry me?"
- * "Shall I angrily address this situation with my boss -- or let it go?"
- * "Will we relocate to Montreal or remain here?"

The smaller decisions, occur daily -- even hourly. And we get pretty good at the small stuff.

But the big decisions are FORKS IN THE ROAD.

Earl Nightingale spoke of *river people* and *boat people* in one of his famous speeches many years ago. Some of us *river people* simply take life as it comes, and we "let the river of life carry us" in its current. Some of us *boat people* "steer the boat", Nightingale said. He meant that if we're *boat people*, we make the best decisions possible with the limited amount of visibility we have.

I like his analogy because none of us can see around the bend in the river. Therefore, our decisions to steer (and make our decisions) are based on limited information -- even at best.

If we can't see *around the bend*...

and if we can't know for sure what the outcomes of our decisions will be...

THEN, HOW DO WE LEARN TO MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS?

Is there a formula to follow? No, not exactly.

**But FIVE VERY SIGNIFICANT ATTRIBUTES must be used
when we find ourselves at a FORK IN THE ROAD.**

What are the FIVE VERY SIGNIFICANT ATTRIBUTES for decision making?

- * **COMMON SENSE** -- I believe this is "Number One". Think! Think! If it's not logical, be careful.
- * **CONSCIENCE** -- Is it "right or wrong"? Is it ethical? Does this decision hurt me or others I love and care about?
- * **EXPERIENCE** -- Have I been here before? Have I seen this before? Have I been in this mess before?
- * **IMAGINATION** -- This is your ability to visualize a scenario beyond today. Where will this lead in the future?
- * **SELF-AWARENESS** -- Examine your emotions and moods. They can be exhilarating but also deadly deceptive.

When you hear someone say, "It just FEELS RIGHT", remind them that they are only using 1/5 of their Decision Making Attributes! There's a whole lot more to making intelligent decisions than using the old adage of a "gut feeling". Get busy evaluating the other 4/5 of the decision!

How do you make good decisions?
USE ALL OF THESE ATTRIBUTES LISTED ABOVE.
Work them together.
Omit none.

Well-thought-out-decisions reap positive and invigorating results for us. How fun it is to venture down new pathways.

A FORK IN THE ROAD is a true pivotal point.
The results of these big decisions will be long-lasting and far-reaching.
Take your time.
Use all five of the DECISION MAKING ATTRIBUTES listed above.

Sow a thought; reap an action.
Sow an action; reap a habit.
Sow a habit; reap a character.
Sow a character; reap a destiny.

So you see, your destiny is determined, then, one quality decision at a time!

Wow!

I wish you great courage as you make those FORK-IN-THE-ROAD decisions
...and a life that reaps the benefits of all your diligent deliberation!