

2017 – VOLUME 4 COMPLETE EDITION



**"Branches & Roots": A Look at Strategy and
Competition through the Lens of Business and Sport**





Branches & Roots: V4:E1, Moving at the Speed of Your Values

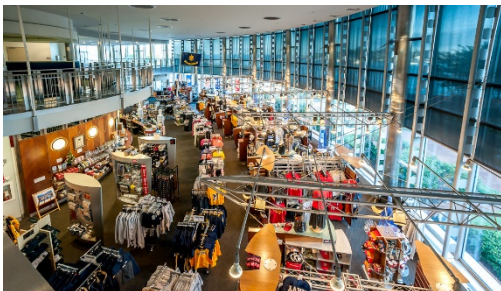
1/4/2017

Moving at the Speed of Your Values

The last 45 days had us watching a series of human systems move either quickly or slowly through challenges. We started to notice a few common threads in the efficient teams. They had a language for resolving conflict, and had a structure of values that helped them answer questions without stopping to talk with the authority figures. **Those values helped each team member gain confidence, which developed their character.** This last part on developing character stuck out to us because of some common perceptions on character being a fixed trait. The perception is that character falls into two camps: you either have it or you don't. Most people don't know how to teach it, they just know it when they see it. This leads us to the question that is the title of our next section.

Can You Develop Character?

We started to notice that the right human system can build and develop character with a series of commonly held values, that allow all of the members to build daily momentum with good choices. This crystallized for us when visiting the Naval Academy in November with our 12 year old son, Ryan.



We were 90 minutes away from the Academy, and with a free afternoon couldn't pass up the chance to check it out. The midshipmen have positioned the book store right next to the security gate, so our first step was to pick up a few souvenirs for Ryan's sister and mother. A favorite pastime of ours is to buy a magnet for the fridge to commemorate past travels. Within

minutes a coffee cup, exercise shorts, a sweatshirt, and the magnet were easily secured. Navy had just beaten Notre Dame at the football stadium that day, so there was a bit of a line, and we passed the time looking out the windows at the ships bobbing up and down. Soon enough it was our turn and we chatted with our attendant, got our receipt, and were off.

Twenty feet away from the counter and halfway out the doors Ryan turned to me and said with a surprise, **“Dad the magnet is in my pocket!”** We were literally inches away from stealing a \$2.99 magnet on federal property. We did a quick about face, and went back to our attendant just as she finished with another customer.

With chagrin we presented our honest mistake and paid for the magnet. I remarked that the honor code at the Naval Academy was really important. And here is the moment that hit me. She smiled and said,

“It makes you feel really good.”

It, being the honor code, the values that cover every situation that a person could encounter while at the Naval Academy, made her, an attendant at the book store, feel really good. Wow. Now that is a large human system that can move with speed. Their values are dynamic and all encompassing.

Turning to our 2017 hopes and dreams, one of them is that you and your teams will be able to align your interests and values in such a way that you effectively navigate the conflict and tension that accompanies worthy challenges and goals. With that in mind **we have created a DIY alignment exercise for you** to use with your teams. Click on the documents below or download [HERE](#). We compiled it from a variety of sources and if you use it, [let us know](#) how it went.



Branches & Roots: V4:E2, The Message Matters

2/21/2017

The first 45 days of 2017 have been active. Who is going to do what and by when are the main topics. Our work had us either **facilitating for a team**, **engaging in dialog** with an individual, or **observing a company** in action. In all three of these settings we became aware of a key differentiator in performance tied to a specific moment and hope by sharing it with you that it might stimulate a discussion with your team.

The moment of influence is when your product offering, or service comes in contact with the customer, and things are not going as scripted. What gets said and how both sides are left feeling appears to have a large impact on customer satisfaction and employee engagement. We also noticed that when a leader sits down with their team and helps them jointly craft what to say at these moments, and ties them back into the teams internal values, you have the potential to tap a powder keg of productivity. These have been 'aha' moments for us, and we are excited to share more detail on this below.

Flying the Friendly Skies Vs. the Feeling of Love

A recent business trip had us back on United Airlines instead of Southwest, and we noticed a great example of how the flight attendants on Southwest have just the right language to handle a frequent conflict point, and the team at United does not. On the evening United flight home there were 10 bags that had to be checked at the gateway. This changes the duration of the flight by an average of 30 minutes for the person who now has to go to baggage claim. United had increased the flight time of the passengers on that flight by 300 minutes. As I put my sport coat into the bins that must have been packed I was dismayed at how much room there was. In one striking example a ladies

white handbag was all by itself.



Compare this to the flight on Southwest the next week -which was just as full - and there were no bags checked. I witnessed a similar hand bag being pulled out by the flight attendant, and then with the tone of grace and the firmness that

comes with her uniform she asked the owner to place it in the seat in front of her so other travelers could get their luggage up in the bins.

Our perspective is that the training Southwest puts their team through to handle the common conflict points is not just good for the customer, **it really empowers the employee as well.** The crew at United were very friendly, they were hustling, and they have a long list of things to get accomplished. Yet it was clear dealing with the issue of how people shirk when in groups, and not having bags checked was not something they had prioritized or practiced. When you have a team member in a position to work with a customer of any kind consider carefully the language you have empowered them to use. **If it isn't practiced, you are leaving up to chance the satisfaction of both the customer and your employee.**

The Three Leader Laments That Are Killing Your Culture

It may not be a welcome point of view, but a haunting reality started to appear to us about what happens when a leader laments, or complains. It guts the commitment of almost everyone on your team. We identified three of these culture killers and share them in the hopes that you may check yourself in your efforts to improve. The first lament comes in the form of getting off focus. This occurs when you take different courses of action that are in your head and start to leak them to your task-oriented team. **Your team wants to know what you need and what is the plan?** If you are winging it or juggling multiple strategies and thinking it doesn't matter because they don't tell you about it, think again. They are not going to tell you, almost

instinctively they will cut their commitment by 30% immediately.



The second lament comes in a moment of frustration when small items are brought back to you by the team. The questions are low level, off topic, and drive you nuts. Your response appears to be a clarifying statement, but it also stops your team in their tracks. “**I Don’t Care**” about this or that the leader says and admonishes the person for bringing them something small or trivial. But wait, if your direct report cares about it, and you the leader say you don’t care, then why should they care? These are just the wrong words. Leaders can’t say them. They are a sign that the team is struggling solving a problem and they don’t have the language or the latitude to resolve an issue. This is a teaching point for the leader and the team at the right time. We all have said, “I don’t care” at one time or another and we meant no harm, but harm is done right down to the very core of your teams engagement. **The leader has to care.**

The third lament of a leader that guts the engagement levels of your team is allowing people to share the stories of how people have lost their jobs. Myth and story are life staples for humans and it is only natural for bad news to be shared inside human systems. Yet some companies don’t realize how much damage **aculture of fear can have to employee engagement.** Leaders can’t dictate what is and isn’t said on every topic, but they can model the right behavior by not joining in the stories and by sharing with the story tellers what the consequences are on both sides of the telling the “people get fired around here” stories. If you are looking for your front line to think and move with purpose you want them to feel empowered to make decisions and communicate. **They need to be able to make mistakes of commission while moving towards the goal.** When a leader allows the fear to reign, they cannot then expect people to think for themselves. It is just a bad bet for the employee and leads to the worst kind of person, the one who quits but keeps showing up to work.



What A Trip to Mt. Vernon Can Teach Anyone About the Pace of Sales Dialog

We recently observed a sales meeting for a software company and were asked to listen to a new inside sales rep role play to learn what to say to a prospect. The tone and confidence were there, **but we didn't get the sense that the conversation was going anywhere**. When asked for feedback I wanted to come up with an image that wasn't tied to sports, so asked the new employee if they had ever been on a house tour like Mt. Vernon where George Washington lived. She replied in the affirmative and so I asked, do you think the tour guide is in sales? From this question a nice dialog ensued where I was able to get my point across that different types of dialog

have **different pace** to them almost like a **music score**. In the case of Mt. Vernon, the tour guide needs to keep us moving on the treadmill so the group behind us can view the room, and they want us to connect with the house so we spend money at the book store.

The image of the house tour resonated and so we broke out the stages of a sale into different rooms of the house and started sharing it with other companies. We have been calling it "**House Tour Theory**" and are enjoying how it applies to a range of institutions. Non-profits, professional services, and software companies have



all been able to tweak the conversations in the different rooms, yet they agree that the conveyor belt should always be moving forward. Feel free to use the image below for your customer acquisition and success processes. [Please share with us](#) how it works or needs tweaking for you.

The three moments of maximum influence: a customer service conflict point, a leader lamenting, and the salesperson keeping the deal on the conveyor belt. In all three, **The Message Matters!**



Branches & Roots: V4:E3, Your Humble Mo

4/2/2017

Leaders drive the key initiatives in their own lives as well as those entrusted to their care. This past Friday marked the end of the first quarter of 2017, and if you put your ear to the ground you can hear the wheels of commerce spinning at high speeds. Ending Q1 with some momentum is a big deal. How was your Q1? Did you nail it? We hope you did and are going to focus on how to keep your momentum going in this edition of Branches & Roots.

Momentum's Recipe

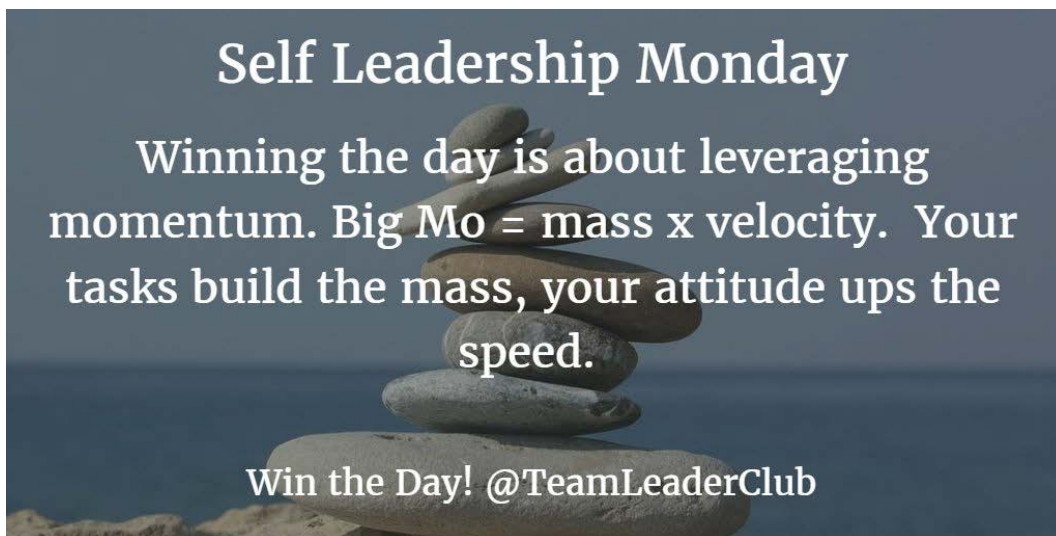
Way back in 2013 we released a [golf story](#) about momentum, and have been students of the discipline ever since. Our recipe includes three targets with three correlating hazards.

- At the start, present yourself humbly before your task, and be mindful that expectation is not your friend.
- Treat ups and downs with a similar hand, and don't let your mind drift ahead while in the middle of your race.
- As the crescendo builds, pursue your best performance for the performance's sake, and allow the darts of the wicked and your own doubts fall upon a tin ear.

Thinking about 2017, we are entering the middle of longer days and rotating schedules, while people balance the tasks of progress and accomplishment with the escapes that allow for silence and reflection. A hard winter is capital's friend, while summer provides a pleasant distraction.

The past six months we have posted a daily image in five leadership theaters to build

out a micro-brand by the name of [The Team Leader Club](#). The genesis of the club came from a client who wanted to offer her team a daily boost of leadership encouragement. Everyone is a member of the TLC, and it reinforces that we are all leaders in different settings, and that each situation often requires a different style of leadership. To keep your momentum going for 2017 we offer three images that hopefully will help you as you lead yourself, your family, and your work team.



Work Leadership Wednesdays

Knowing when to leave the group and go it along as a small team takes guts. Following always appears the safer course. Remind yourself to not get lost in "group think" and have a few truth tellers on your team.

Crowds r wise, Groups r Slow, & Teams...Win
@TeamLeaderClub

If things are not going the way you want them, or you are looking to change things up a bit, consider a ten-day micro sprint where you re-prioritize things to make one task or issue number one for you and the team. This process allows other issues to rise to the surface, and it can potentially lead to flushing out a buried conflict that is distracting your team. Charles Duigg writes about this in his best-selling book [The Power of Habit](#). Read a few pages in the preview to start changing up habits.

If you have a method or recipe for team momentum we would love to [hear from you](#). Thanks and have a great next 45 days. Keep the Mo going!



Branches & Roots: V4:E4, Contented Cows

5/19/2017

Contented Cows? Be True to Your..Company? Do Your Job! Team Flow.

Welcome to the middle of May, a time of great energy and action, with a hint of distraction in the air. Memorial Day looms and quickly beyond lies...summer. Sharing what we find of interest every 45 days has been a challenge in only that we have to narrow our selections. Options abound. Longtime readers will know that the study of performance as both an individual and a team is what we metaphorically call our “Soup,” with our interpretations of it offered to others being our “Art”.

In this edition we turn our attention to employee engagement. Tension exists around the topic of how to get the most yield from an employee. In this issue we share a series of articles that discusses what is working at places ranging from a dairy farm in Indiana, to the halls of Facebook, to the locker room of the New England Patriots.

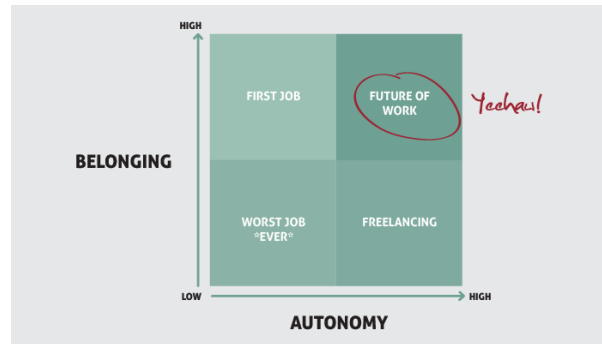
Contented Cows?

It turns out that the software engineers of the Silicon Valley have some competition when it comes to perks at work. The dairy cows of Kelsay Farms in Indiana may not have Foosball tables and free lunch every day, but they do have waterbeds, custom back scratchers, and cool air blowing on them. Why all the fuss? Because a happy cow is a productive cow, especially with some of the milk going for \$14 a gallon direct to consumers. Now, a cow can't talk and who knows at what point there is a diminishing return, but the amount of milk per day produced is pretty easy to track. As of today, it appears the “encouragement” camp is working on our bovine.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSiWM32iU7U&feature=youtu.be>

Be True to Your...Company?

Most will know the Beach Boys song from 1963 as “Be True to Your School”, yet current research being done by [Adam Grant](#) at Facebook has started to show that pride in your company can have a large impact on the amount of work the average employee will produce in a day. It can graphically be represented on an axis of belonging and autonomy.



People love to have choice, and they also love to belong. When they feel that their company's purpose aligns with their own values they take more initiative. The new haunting question for leaders may become: are you proud of our team? What a powerful yet challenging question for many work environments. I can just see several of my earlier bosses falling out of their chairs in laughter. Does this mean we need plenty of circle time and not challenge each other? Is the chain of command completely broken and the inmates are running the asylum? Not necessarily, as discussed in this [article from the May edition of Fast Company](#).

Do Your Job!

Now here are some words that maybe a few more of us are used to hearing. Do your job. This is the sign posted in the New England Patriots locker room. With recent history as example, it appears they players are listening. The usual reluctant public communicator coach Bill Belichick agreed to sit down [with a CNBC reporter recently](#) and talk leadership, as well as the concept of getting the highest performance



out of each player. The principles are sound, the behavior needed is clearly defined, and with a game that hasn't changed its boundary lines or ball size recently the basic strategy can be deliberate. In this scenario the life time production of the player relative to the contented cows may seem similar, as both have water treatment facilities, yet with

the average tenure of an NFL starter coming in under three years, we are guessing the rules and leadership strategies might reflect the duration of a performer. Regardless of tenure, the players on the roster are under Belichick's care, and even this apparent hard liner speaks to caring about his players.

Team Flow

We close by bringing it all together with a man with the hardest last name in the world to spell. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi was a young boy in Europe at the start of WWII and has spent a lifetime studying the highest of performance states, FLOW. His research has been the bedrock for most of today's top sociologists. We all know when we have it, we all know when it is gone, and as leaders the challenge of obtaining it as our numbers increases grows. It is the Leaders Challenge and as always [any insights](#) into how you have been accomplishing Team Flow are most welcome. His Ted Talk is linked below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TzPky5Xe1-s>

FLOW, the Secret of Happiness



Branches & Roots: V4:E5, Productive Solitude

7/1/2017

The Halfway Mark

Happy 4th of July weekend and welcome to the half way post for 2017. Summer affords us the chance to reflect and recreate. While enjoying a post dinner stroll, consider asking this: what did we learn in the first six months, and what does it mean? Our walks, conversations, and readings in the last 45 days have led to some learning in the areas of: leading yourself, your family, and your team at work.

The Power of Productive Solitude

What framework or structure have you set up for thinking? Where do you think best? Many people don't know off hand, but after a minute or two might share that they think best when alone. We recently stumbled across a book on leading yourself, and have been enthralled from the very beginning. "[Lead Yourself First](#)" by Ray Kethledge and Mike Erwin is a qualitative study of how past leaders have used productive solitude to make key decisions.

We are now 10 years into the era of having a super computer that is in your pocket. 1.2 billion Apple iPhones have been purchased, and our new behaviors around them are only just becoming understood. It could be stated that one of the outcomes we all feel is some sort of attachment to the devices. Just as the washing machine replaced the scrub board and freed up hours of our week, so has the super computer in our pocket made our lives easier. Amidst the ease might be another driver, in terms of connectivity to others as the home-run app; whether it is via text, email, or a social platform like Facebook. Belonging feels great.

Counter to our need to belong is our need to be alone. This natural tension between

autonomy and belonging has been dealing with a new actor for the past 10 years, and it appears that alone time is shrinking. We now have to choose to be alone, and **“Lead Yourself First”** comes along at an interesting time, making the case that in order to lead and make a contribution to others, you need to be able to think for yourself first.

Which brings us back to our question of: what framework or structure do you have to allow you to collect your thoughts? If you have a free minute and enjoy this topic, please **share with us here** how you build your thoughts to make key decisions.

HAGS

The school yearbooks came home the other day with both kids smiling from ear to ear and ready to show us all the wonders within. Thirty years have passed since that bound accumulation of all our relationships, both good and bad, were in our backpacks, and it was pleasing to see that it still held its attraction with today’s youth.



Inside the cover amidst the longer messages from the good friends was an abbreviation that has stood the test of time. H.A.G.S. As adults helping guide the family through life, the notion of having a great summer has a different connotation. It comes down to making sure you have a summer at all, that you can stand there on Labor Day and say, yes we actually had a summer and it was great! We took the time to get away and let rashes and skinned knees appear and even allow some wondering and boredom to present themselves.

Making a contribution to your family's great summer is a curious challenge no matter what your role. We doubt it will require great

amounts of funds or an amazing destination, it may just be instituting a regular game of cards or figuring out which board game everyone enjoys playing. Whatever you choose, having a great summer leads to a fantastic fall, so try and do something different and distinctively unique this season. If you were headed back to school, after this summer would you be able to write an epic edition of that timeless teacher faithful, “what did you do this summer?”

The Consequences of Mediocrity

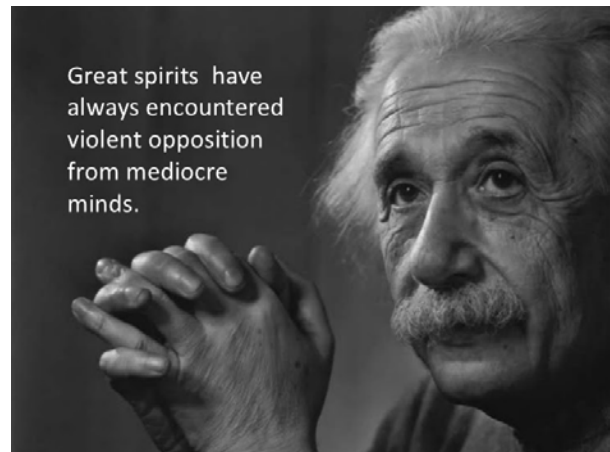
One of the major headwinds to a great summer is if you are only 50% of the way to your annual goal by now, you are actually behind the number, because you will lose ground in Q3, and may not have the time to catch up in Q4. Being below goal is not a happy place, and could even be considered mediocre. If you are the leader it is easy to blame your people, but in a recent article by Joseph Grenny he articulates why it might be the leader's fault, and he shares a couple of ways to bring the big middle of your team up a few notches. Grenny is the co-author of one of our favorite books “[Crucial Conversations](#), tools for talking when the stakes are high”. In [this article he wrote](#) for the Harvard Business Review he shares several ways to help the team visualize what their indifference could cause.

We think this hits the spot when it comes to larger group activities. The big middle is too easily swayed by the 'who cares' crowd, and the costs to change the bias by those in the middle is too great socially. As a consequence, a status quo of “slow it down” vs. “pick it up” is established. The ability to stimulate a “let’s pick up the pace” mindset rests with the leader, and Grenny shows us how to tease out the inner hard worker in your workforce. No one wants to be average, and yet by rule there always is an average. However, one of the synonyms for mediocre is the word forgettable, and seldom seen is the human who when presented with the option of being remembered or being forgotten won’t choose the former. Once convinced and bought in on being

remembered, the leader then shows and teaches the tangible steps and behaviors that lead to success. Pretty soon your group may start acting like a team, and as the leader you may start to feel that surge that comes when humans care together at scale.

Like all people puzzles it may be hard, but it's worth it.

H.A.G.S





Branches & Roots: V4:E6, Prioritizing, Publishing, Mentoring

8/22/2017

Prioritizing, Publishing, Mentoring

Most of the summer vacations have now concluded and the rapid pace of fall meetings and events are right around the corner. We heard many tales of great summer trips and experiences and we hope you were able to use the longer days to recreate yourself and reflect on what matters most to you and your closest relationships.

We enjoy sharing our learning every 45 days with you in the hopes of stimulating interesting discussion between us, and potentially between you and others. In this edition of Branches and Roots:

- We analyze how constraints develop your skills
- How LinkedIn can help you amplify your career even when you have a great job
- What being a mentor can do for the second half of your career?

Got A Template For That?

Building off the great reaction we received from our post on [productive solitude](#) we started to notice that in many of our work conversations we were asking leaders how they were organizing their thinking and in what format. Were they using a computer, a phone, a note pad, or a bound notebook? When did they collect themselves and organize? Who did they share it with, and how did they share it?

Once you have written down your tasks you can then share it with others. If you are the manager of others, consider using this template as a tool to help them develop their own way of thinking on how they are allocating their time. There are plenty of smart people who are horrible at allocating their time, and it is hard to coach them on this without appearing overbearing. Asking them to complete the template will give you a window into what they think is most important and could foster some healthy dialogue around their choices.

Constraints have long been used by athletic coaches to help players practice longer, and to develop a certain piece of the puzzle. When we are helping someone with their putting in golf we often have them putt with just their right or left hand to increase their awareness of a specific part of the stroke. **Similarly, having a direct report complete the above template could build awareness around the importance of allocating their time tied into their team's needs relative to their own.**

The Long Tail Game and How LinkedIn is Helping You Build Your Brand

It was front page news in 1982 when IBM announced it was laying off employees, the security of lifetime employment with Big Blue was in doubt. The undertone to others was this meant that almost no private sector employee was safe. From moments like that 35 years ago to today, the idea of a personal brand and its cultivation have been forming. You, the individual, have the ability to create what the brand marketers will define as a 'promise wrapped up in an experience' and LinkedIn has been building a platform for your brand since its founding in 2002.

In the last five years LinkedIn has not only been a great place to store all of your contacts, it is a great place to share your thoughts and perspectives. In a business world where almost all employment contracts are “at-will” (which means you are working

week to week at the whim of your boss), it is increasingly important to have a place to share what you have to offer an industry or marketplace.

There are several key actions to consider when it comes to publishing on LinkedIn. The first is to share what others have posted and add your comments. This is easy lifting and benefits the person who created the original content. The second is to set up a writing schedule and some topics you like to cover and start sharing your own thoughts. This content will live online for a long time, and can be referenced by you on other websites. The power of written content for your career has a very long tail.

The most recent development from [LinkedIn is the ability to share a video](#). While this may seem like the last thing any of us want to do, it will have an impact on how we learn, and what we expect when meeting new professionals. If you were looking to hire someone and they had a short clip about themselves, it could be of great use to see how they communicate and handle themselves in front of a camera.

Two generations removed from 1982 the relationship between corporations and individuals has evolved into a measured marriage. **Individuals now have the option of creating and maintaining a professional store front on LinkedIn, a place to store not only contacts but their work product.** You own your career and we see LinkedIn as a valuable partner.

Allowing Wisdom to Rise

Having a trusted friendship with a person years older or younger than you is a true gift. We often refer to these non-familial connections as mentors or mentees. The roots of the word go back to ancient Greece when Mentor who was a friend of Odysseus was entrusted with the education of Odysseus' son Telemachus.

Relationships that are strong have certain elements that help them build. Affinity, time,

shared experiences all are ingredients. One of the outcomes from a strong cross generational relationship is that it can allow the subtle gift of wisdom to present itself. **When wisdom arrives it means the mentor has built up enough trust with the younger party to share their best insights and perspective.** Often times this can be life changing for the mentee.

Yet for all its benefits, great mentors are in short supply. Why is this? It may have something to do with the all-important shared experiences. The generations don't always do things together, and thus it is hard to form the bonds. Technology hasn't helped. Then there is the hubris of youth always thinking there has to be a better way than it was done in the old days.

We share this as a preamble to what we think is a great new mentoring system that has been built by the team at [Instaviser](#). **It is an internal mentoring engine that institutions can use to allow the younger generation to connect with the**



alumni. We were introduced to it through our involvement with Cal Athletics. Instaviser branded Cal's system with the name **Golden Ties** and Drew was asked to be a mentor. On several occasions a Cal student-athlete was able to find Drew's profile on the password protected site and book a 30 mentoring session.

In both situations the common connection of having gone to Cal was enough to allow an easy conversation to ensue, and the beginnings of a relationship were born. The student-athlete had questions about work and job opportunities, and I was able to offer some thoughts and people for them to meet.

So many of our work and nonprofit institutions have a treasure trove of wisdom locked

up in the minds of its elder participants. We will all benefit as it is transferred to younger generations. Hopefully solutions like the one Instaviser has built will gain traction inside the institutions you care about, and we will be able to pass down the principles and values to tomorrow's leaders.

If you have an interest in being a mentor on any topic, please [email us here](#) and we will do our best to get you connected with the right team



Branches & Roots: V4:E7, Visions and Attitudes

10/1/2017

Welcome to October and the fastest 45 days of the year. The first six weeks of the 4th quarter are a doer's dream, no matter the setting the players are playing. If it is going to get done in 2017 action is required. A challenge that arises with all this activity is what to do first, and how to work with others when accomplishing larger tasks. These choices fall right in line with the conversations we have been having with leaders for the last five years and sharing with you in Branches & Roots. A lot of it comes down to this question: who is going to do what by when, and whom are they going to tell about it?

Our most recent conversations have been centered on **visions, budgets, attitudes, and energy**. We hope these summaries are helpful for you as you lead yourself and others through this short six week season.

Does Your 2018 Start With a Budget or a Vision?

We have found the answer to this question changes depending on the location and altitude of the person you are asking. What about in your own life? Do you start with a set of numbers, or with a dream? Your financial position is a vital component of your decision making process, money has rules and realities that are as consistent as the law of gravity. What you can afford to do and how to allocate your resources is a vital constraint you should have a handle on for 2018.

In the context of business, we have had a similar conversation several times in September. What does the budget look like for 2018? Who is getting more, who is getting less? It keeps your eyes down and it kills creativity. In this scenario you grab as big a budget as you can, and then justify how you are using it during the year to help the unit, and your compensation for overseeing the projects. We have come to call the people adept at this tactic **BUDGET HOUNDS** because they can smell the scent of a budget a mile away and think of little else once on the trail.

Our observation is that being a budget hound maybe good in a crisis when you are just trying to get to the next year, but if you want to get somewhere different and better, you need to learn how to dream. We all need to practice dreaming, and then writing those visions down and turning them into action.

Jeff Foley is a retired Brigadier General and a friend. In 2015 he gave a Ted-X talk in Augusta, Georgia where he walked the audience through how to script out a vision for the next five years.

Five years from today is **October 1, 2022**.

- Where do you want to be on that day?
- Who do you want to be on that day?
- How do you want to feel on that day?
- With whom would you like to be with on that day?

Your budget will help you get there as a constraint for financial discipline, but without a vision and a written out target your chances of meeting those goals are slim. Enjoy Jeff's video where he talks about Character, Attitude, Vision, Excellence, and Relationships and how they can all fit nicely on a yellow pad of paper.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhjraIk9Rpw>

Attitudes and Energy

- Attitudes are contagious, is yours worth catching?
- The person most committed to their attitude wins.
- You had better shape up that attitude or ship out.

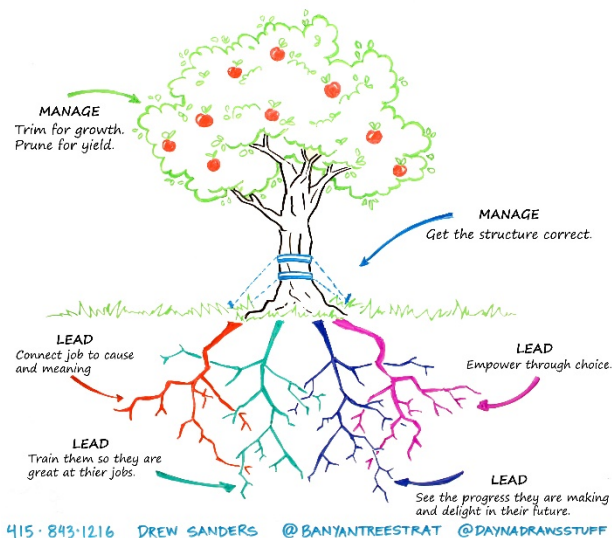
These are the mantras I heard growing up and have continued to share into adulthood. Few people would contest the fact that attitudes matter; it's just such a pain to changing them in others. Most of the time we just move on.

Recently, we encountered a situation where a leader couldn't move on. They had a team that was mostly bulletproof from a job standpoint, and it was the manager's job to improve the productivity for the company. Blowing off the attitude was no longer an option. What to do?

Through research and interviews we started to tease out how attitude and energy (or what some might call productivity) are highly correlated. From a science perspective this is not a ground breaking discovery, most parents have come to the same conclusion. The learning came from just how quickly we could turn attitudes around, and tap into the hidden energy reserves with some well-timed listening and consistent leadership behavior.

The simple science: Miserable people do not outperform optimistic people. Optimistic people are distracted less and stay on task. They are optimistic because they know the answer to the question: why am I here, and why does this task matter to me and others?

YOU LEAD THEIR ROOTS, YOU MANAGE THEIR FRUIT.



The learning: To get a group of miserable workers to become optimistic when you don't have the ability to pay them more, or even make their work day that much different comes down to understanding how to use gratitude as a trigger for changing attitudes. You then identify the influencers and listen. Mark when and where they are either leading the team higher or lower from an attitude standpoint. Do some careful study work with the influencers, away from the group, and find the key intrinsic motivators (see image below)

that matter to them and the group. You should be able to meet some of the intrinsic needs of choice, autonomy, progress and competency within the construct of the required tasks. That combined with gratitude as an agreed upon foundational value

of the group, has proven to turn a group of miserable adults with a boss into an optimistic team with a humble leader.

New Branches

Banyan is working on its own 2018 to 2022 vision and we will be testing out a few new micro-brands. **“The Team Leader Club”** and **“Leadership Hub”** are both concepts we will be sharing as we create content and learning offerings for people in the five theaters of self, family, work, community, and your network. Our current thinking is to offer our expanded network of 3100 followers a series of member benefits for being under the canopy of Banyan Tree Strategies. You are a member, you belong. Several questions we have been noodling on are:

- What do you need?
- What do you want to learn more about when it comes to leading yourself and others?
- Who in your organization or family has needs and how can we meet those needs with our offerings and tools?

As a member, we welcome your thoughts and ideas [here](#).



Branches & Roots: V4:E8, Thankful For You

11/15/2017

Welcome to the last days of 2017 and our final communication of the year. We have a few observations from the previous 45 days of October and early November hustle, and hope they will help you in some way prepare for the holidays and their inevitable bustle. In this edition we have a top ten list question, an eight touches a year idea, and a 397 year old connection.

Who Were the top 10 Most Interesting People You Met This Year?

This idea was formed when we shared with someone in an email that they were one of the 10 most interesting people that we had met in 2017. It was a true statement, but we hadn't really thought of the other nine yet. However, upon reflection, we knew any list we created would have that person in the top 10, so we thought they would like the encouragement.

This got us thinking that at the time of year when people gather with family and old friends, that you might have some fun thinking about a list of the new people that you really enjoyed meeting. What made them interesting to you? Were they as interesting to others? Was it that they had power and influence or talents you appreciated?

Consider making a list and then reflecting on not only who they are, but why they were interesting to you. Compare it with your close friends and then have a fun discussion on what the list says about both the admired and the admirer. Looking ahead to the holidays, this idea might make some of your old hat family dinners a little livelier than in the past.

Is It Time To Kill All the Golfers...?



We thought we would inject a little humor into a tough subject that is often associated with the end of the year. **Reaching the annual sales target.** The idea came out a series of discussions with business owners and suggests that this can be a good time of year to remove a certain type of lead that is clogging up the funnel.

These aren't the clients or the deals that have momentum. There are plenty of deals getting done prior to the end of the year, and Dec 31st is a wonderful impending event to create tension and focus for both buyer and seller.

These are the potential business relationships that just make both sides feel awkward. They look and sound like this: [CLICK HERE FOR FULL TEXT](#)

In Caddy Shack terms....you are killing all the gophers!!

The Five Kernels of Wisdom 397 Years Later



Here you can see the wandering of The Mayflower around Cape Cod Bay until it finally rests in Plymouth.

November 15, 1620 witnessed The Mayflower at anchor near the shore in Cape Cod Bay. Four days prior they had arrived and were now assessing the best place to build their colony. The first few years saw them face immense hardship from the seasonal conditions and tremendous friendship from the Native American's. There also was an ill-timed and named visit by the ship The Fortune in the early years which didn't bring much needed supplies,

just more colonists and professional sailors looking for clothes and sustenance.

As a way to remember the famine and lean times the lesson of the 5 kernels of corn and their significance was created in the early 1800's and has since been shared throughout thanksgiving tables across our country and a [copy for your ready reference is here](#).

Today there are [tens of millions of descendants](#) who are alive because of the fortitude

and resolve of those early settlers. Over the course of the next three years as we reach the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrims of Plymouth Rock we will share with you in the final edition of each year the stories that are told as America reaches this new milestone.

Kernels can be like pearls, associated with wisdom and this is our hope for each of us as we age. The ability to learn from the past and share it with others. When you think about what you want passed on to your family members this Thanksgiving, what is it? What are your hopes and dreams for them? 397 years later is it that much different, the wish of a mother or father for their children?

We thought it would be only fitting after writing about the Mayflower to thank you for your ship, more specifically your readership, mentorship, and friendship in 2017.

See you in the New Year!

Drew & Sara