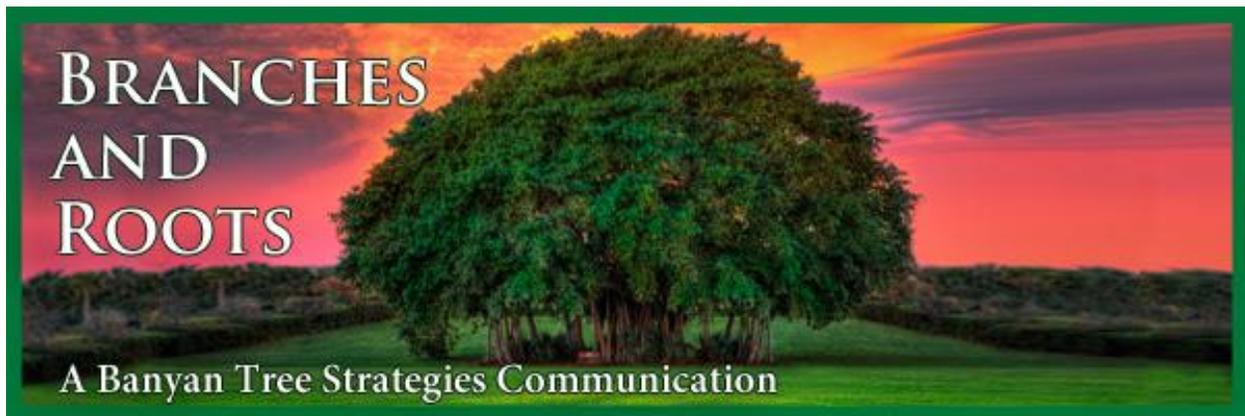


2015 – VOLUME 2 COMPLETE EDITION



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





Branches & Roots: V2:E1, A Moment of Inspiration for You and Your Team

1/4/2015

We wanted to pass on to you a short poem to spread some optimistic and uplifting thoughts as we start 2015.

We will check in with more thorough insights on the 45's during the year.

Drew & Sara

There Is Something

There is something awesome about standing at the base of a mountain.
A 365 day climb.
The question before you is which route shall you take?
Is there a new path to consider?

There is something refreshing about standing at the base of a mountain.
A chance to do it just a bit better this year
The question before you is what will you stop doing?
A curious mindset could help.

There is something risky about standing at the base of a mountain.
Past climbs have taken a toll.
The question before you is will you let past risks scare or hone.
Now is a time for going.

There is something unknown about standing at the base of a mountain.
Adventures abound at each fork.
The question before you is will you revel in that moment?
Seek those who have zeal.

There is something honorable about standing at the base of a mountain.
Your gifts were given.
The question before you is how will you share them for the benefit of all?
It is time to climb.



Branches & Roots: V2:E2, Got Grit?

2/16/2015

Good evening, tomorrow is Presidents Day, a national holiday here in the United States and a very convenient 45 day milestone for you to reflect on how the year has started. It is also right on schedule for us to share some of what we have seen in heard so far in 2015. Have you noticed anything different about you and your team so far this year? Are the new behaviors starting to sink in and become habits, or have you and your teammates found road blocks both external and internal to be more of a challenge than you had imagined?

We have three “on topic” items for you that are tied into recently published books and white papers that have been of great use to us as we help companies scale. We hope they might benefit you with your team. Motivation, and how most people misdirect and diagnose it is topic number one, Culture, as in where you are from and how it impacts who you are is number two, and we finish with Resiliency which may just be the secret ingredient to individual and team success.

It wouldn't be a Branches & Roots Newsletter without some golf, so we close with Tiger Woods and Nick Faldo and some thoughts about your short game.

Motivation

Susan Fowler has a new book, “[Why Motivating People Doesn't Work...and What Does](#)” in which she smartly addresses the challenges with using extrinsic motivational systems within groups. We shared a bit about this last year with our “Tree of Performance” (below) and believe all leaders should be well versed in the 6 levers they can pull to guide a team in this area. Publicly many leaders joke that they expect all members of their team to be “self-motivated”, but privately the best understand how to create a culture where peoples need for Autonomy, Relatedness, and Competency are being met.

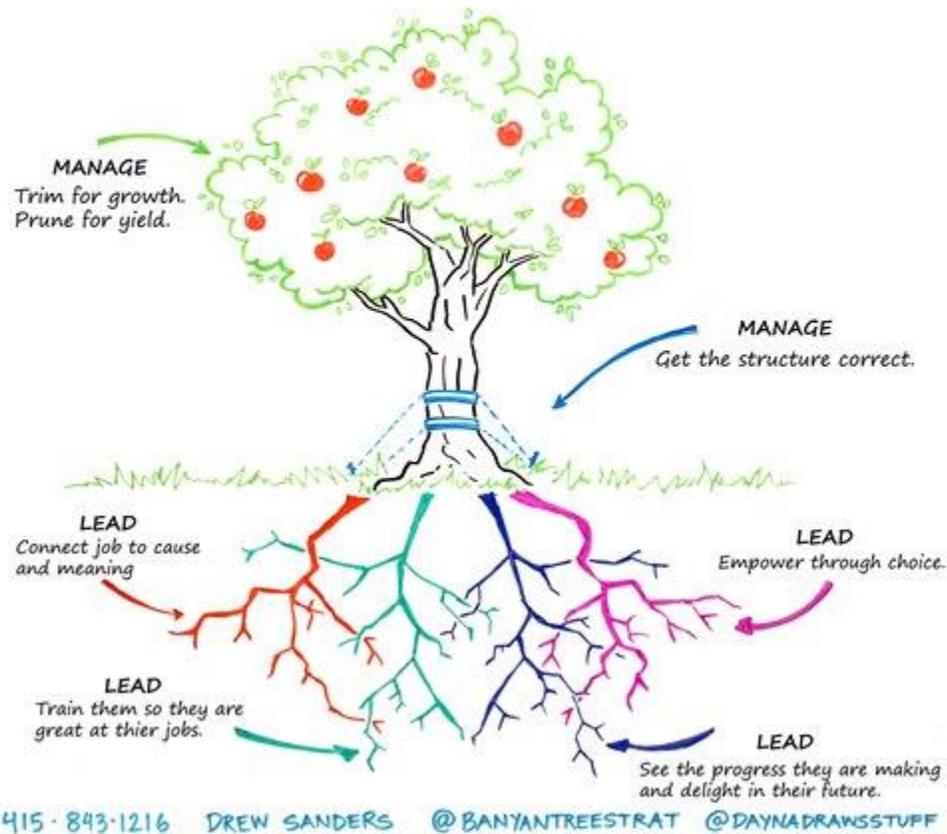
Digging Deeper:

A recent client assignment had us diving further into this topic and how the topics of “Productivity” and “Engagement” can come into play. Engagement is something that does not show up on an income statement relative to other competitors and is elusive to track. Productivity is much easier to track and can be a game changer quarter to quarter. Managers track productivity, they drive productivity, they demand productivity, and this is where the Carrot and Stick extrinsic motivators reign. The challenge is that with every short term effort put in by management to move the productivity needle, a long term engagement withdrawal occurs. In nutritional terms, extrinsic motivation is like a sugar and intrinsic motivation is like a protein. The sugar may work in the short run, but you may crash later, while the other leaves you with fuel to keep going.

We created a few thesis statements around these thoughts and would [love your feedback](#) relative to your experience with your team whether it is at work, sports, or in a family setting.

- “Short Term Productivity from Extrinsic Motivators can lead to a bump in output, but often causes a drop in engagement.”
- “Long Term Productivity comes from Intrinsic Motivational needs being met and leads to higher and longer engagement.”

YOU LEAD THEIR ROOTS, YOU MANAGE THEIR FRUIT.



Culture

Erin Meyer released “[The Culture Map](#)” in 2014 and it sat in my stack of books for a few months or I would have written about it sooner, for anyone working with an international team this book has the keys to team building heaven. It turns out that in the midst of the United States trying to make amends for past sins in the “you and I are different” category, the rest of the world has known all along that a French Chef beats a British one and that Indian executives are much less worried about timeliness than the Germans.

Meyer has created a global relative scale for culture differences in 8 different categories ranging from timeliness to persuasion to performance review evaluation styles. The results are striking and will allow you to have a better chance of getting to “yes” with your teams once you learn how to look for certain culture “cues”.

Digging Deeper

On a recent client assignment, we had been tasked with helping a company deliver a large project on time with team members in Russia, India, and the United States. Inside the United States we had people who had gone to high school in France, Great Britain, Russia, India and the United States. Skype and WebEx may bring us all together at the touch of a button, but not everyone read “The Little Engine That Could” growing up, and referencing “Glengarry Glen Ross” when trying to get everyone’s attention does not work either.

It turns out that things like how long a culture was isolated by geography (like Japan) has a deep impact on how subtle their communication style can be. In Japan, much of what is important in a message is signified by what is left out. Contrast this with the new United States with a short history and a consistent flow of other cultures coming together to build our cities, and you get a culture that leaves nothing out of the message. In the U.S. if you didn't spell it out and repeat it three times, it was not important.

Using the advice from “[The Culture Map](#)”, we brought the leaders of the team together and walked through how we all viewed the timeline, gave the less powerful communicating cultures room to speak and ended up with a much better idea of how long the final delivery was going to take.

If you have had any experiences like this, [please let us know](#) so we can compare notes.

Resiliency

Are you resilient? Why? Do you know enough about your own resiliency process to pass it on to a teammate or a loved one? When presented with the first question, we find many people will answer yes, when asked the latter two, many including us start to stammer. Our research into this topic showed that most of us attribute the characteristics of grit, determination and pluck as God given gifts that you either have or you don’t. Worse yet, they are often portrayed as those things you build while taking a beat down of rejection either socially or on a sports field. This struck us as odd and that while rejection may help you build a nice pile of coal in your stomach to use for building your own fire, the output of stress on your system and the smell of your smoky exhaust doesn't really make us want to be around that person. Think Russell Crow yelling at the crowd in Gladiator, “ARE YOU NOT ENTERTAINED”. He may be interesting to watch on TV, but do you want have lunch with that person or tell your son or daughter this is the pathway to building resiliency.

It turns out as in most social science areas, research has been funded to study the extremes on the human curve which then affords us in the middle a few nuggets from which to learn. Dr. Wayne Hammond from the University of Calgary has been working with segments of the population with severe disabilities, and senior citizens recovering from the loss of a spouse all with an eye for helping them adapt and build a resilient foundation. In recent years he has worked with the Province of Alberta to [create a mentor program \(click to view\)](#) to assist family members of all ages to engage in a healthy way to mentor. (It is nice to think we may have more tools in our belt than

“that’s OK Jimmy, suck it up, it’s good for you.) Recently Hammond has brought to market an offering for parents called [Strengths Based Parenting](#) which allows parents to screen for resiliency in their children and then gives them an improvement process to follow. You can also take a look at a [short white paper](#) and let us know your thoughts.

Our interest in this topic is a combination of helping our own children develop and unfold into functioning adults, and in response to a disturbing trend we are noticing with the flagging performance of young adults in the ages of 19 to 25. With respects to the 6 year sub cohort of the Millennials it would be hard to suggest they haven’t been praised enough. So where is the grit, where is the drive, where is the joy in doing something hard? We don’t have the answers, but are charged with finding the answers as our clients work places are filling up with young professionals and someone else’s problem has just become our problem. If it takes a village then let’s form one and team up.

Golf Thoughts: What You Have in Common with Tiger Woods

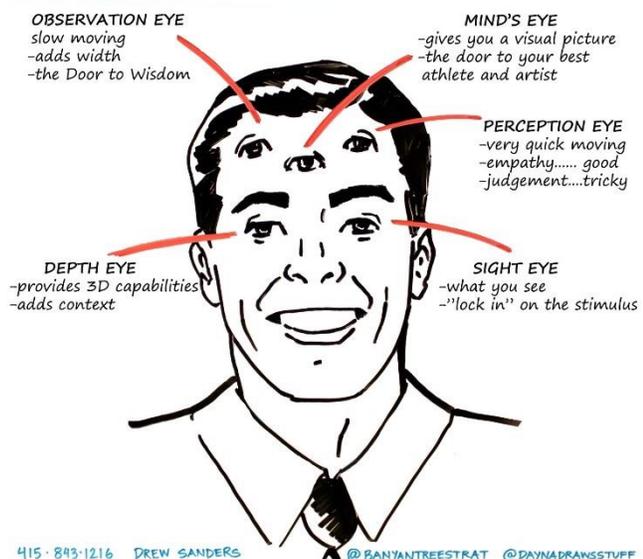
Tiger’s gluts have received enough coverage in the past few weeks so we will leave his ailing back alone. What we do want to bring to your attention is that what Nick Faldo shared right away on Tiger’s first hole at Torrey Pines two weeks ago.

[CLICK FOR VIDEO](#)

Nick talked about what Tiger was focused on with his chips and pitches and as you head into your golfing season see if you can take his advice with you as it is worth at least 4 shots per round. The word focus is difficult describe in print which is why we drew our 5 eyed man (below) to help you understand that the focus Nick is

describing isn't your eye’s focus on the ball, you still have to “look” at the ball if you want to hit it, but you need to have your “mind’s eye” or what Nick calls your “focus” on the trajectory of the shot you want to hit. The moment your focus is on the ball with short shots is the moment you start to play like Tiger Woods. It may seem easy, or incredibly hard, but it should change how you practice and how you think every shot you play. Is your focus on the ball (bad idea), or is your focus on the trajectory of the shot you want to hit (good idea). All things aside, this latest chapter of Tiger’s career is fascinating to watch, and when he adds a dash of humility to his communication, he may end up with the entire golfing world rooting for him to win another major championship.

Do You Have An EYE For That?





Branches & Roots: V2:E3, Split Times

4/4/2015

Good Morning, we hope the second 45 days of 2015 have been fruitful and have you looking for continued success in April and May. Like many athletes or competitors who divide up a race into small sections, we have found that breaking the year up into 45 day “splits” allows us to better focus on improving our performance. “Split times” allow you to carry momentum throughout a longer race and keep your edge.

In looking for and trying to keep that edge we noticed a few things with respect to teams and leadership and are curious if you are noticing these trends as well. The first trend is how much faster teams are created for a single purpose and then disbanded almost as quickly, adapting to this trend requires a quick and agile mindset. Second we noticed that having a deep bench on a team for when it really matters late in the season requires getting all players on the floor during the season and the correlations to the workplace are intriguing. Finally we identified a rare and subtle culture killer. Read more to make sure you don't have this virus flowing through your team or company.

Speed

Everywhere you look companies and teams are looking for speed; foot speed, communication speed, and speed of delivery of goods and services. Recently we started to notice a correlation between teamwork challenges and the duration of the team itself. In youth sports the average season is 16 weeks long, an eternity for the player, but a blip on the screen for an adult. In work environments temporary workers are the standard for most Global 1000 companies and they even have different color badges for all to see. The need for speed has created an environment where leaders can fill the room with people, but one layer down all parties are looking around the room to gauge the commitment to the group and the duration and type of contract.

Regardless of your position on one of these new “iTeams”, factoring in the length of the time the team is to be together should help you work well with all parties. If you are the leader missing this key dynamic can be costly to your performance especially with the lowest power participants. Often times the lower power groups will never communicate their frustration, rather they will find a way to hit a personal “release” valve that subtly kills the team culture. It can show up in their engagement level, they are present, but not clicked into the team's goal. Often times they vote with their feet, by not showing up at all. Dr. Suess's “[Yertle the Turtle comes to mind here.](#)”

As you build your teams, keep a special eye out for your different groups and don't overlook the short duration participants, they often times have long duration commitments elsewhere (spouses and children) that if tended to correctly can make a big impact on how they perform on your team. If you don't, one named “Mack” may burp and like Yertle your team may end up flat on its back.

Adaptability

The Golden State Warriors haven't just taken the NBA by surprise they've knocked it completely on its side. From our vantage point it is another example of highly adaptable Bay Area executive talent deploying a winning strategy, and we would like to share one element that you can use with your team. The NBA's history of success has been Jordan as the star with a Pippen on the side, Larry Bird as the star with DJ or McHale on the side, or LeBron with a strong second in Wade even won a title. Yet coming out of San Antonio over the past 10 years is a different way and it is less about the one star and more about a fully functioning team of 9 to 10 players getting meaningful minutes throughout the entire season.

There may not be a "Money Ball" book out yet on the this strategy, but the ownership of the Warriors brought Steve Kerr in to run a system similar to the Spurs and it works on many levels. The correlation to your business that we would like to highlight is that you should be taking more people out on sales and service calls. Nothing is more painful than watching a loyal bench warmer thrust on the court at crunch time because they haven't seen the light of day for months. The ball is moving differently than in practice and the heat of the moment melts them on the spot. Have you not seen this on your work teams, the back office person is left stammering because the prime time player is out on vacation or is sick.

We view this as a mistake by leadership to not develop all members of the team to be able to "leave the building" and go see a client or customer. It doesn't have to be an everyday occurrence but having a system in place to keep all team members on the court will do wonders for your company. We hope the Warriors go all the way this year. Just remember, get the ball in as many people's hands as you can during the regular season so they won't drop it in the playoffs!



Culture Killer “Hakuna Matata”

Several client engagements have us focusing on culture and we have started to catalog a few subtle Culture Killers. One particularly subtle virus we picked up is the “I am too cool to care”, or “it’s just a game” attitude. Have you ever noticed this on any of your teams? It typically shows up when things start to really count, it is in its simplest sense a pressure release valve for the individual. “Hey, at least I have my health...” The problem is that attitudes are contagious and at crunch time this virus spreads like crazy and right at the moment you need your team to focus you have them looking for the exits emotionally. We have tagged this challenge The “Hakuna Matata” (translation ‘don’t worry, be happy’) virus and like a grease fire you can’t use the normal tactics to snuff it out, or you will come off looking like a jerk.

Telling someone that they can’t be happy go lucky or try to take the edge off of a situation is a poor tactic bound to get you labeled as a “no fun” or “all work, no play” leader. An alternative might be to recognize that the person expressing this attitude is leaking and that you should seek to flush out their hopes and goals in a safe setting. Many of your people who leak this attitude are actually your leaders in the making. They see the goal, they have stress around it, and therefore they seek to calm others and themselves. What really is missing are facts and reassurance from the leaders to that individual explaining that your company has a culture where it IS “cool to care” about the goal and the community of people who make up that group.

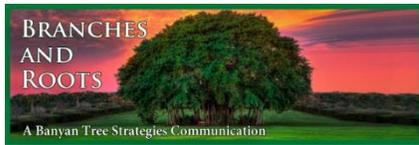
The Hakuna Matata virus was well cataloged in Disney’s “The Lion King” and young Simba rose to the challenge. We hope this helps you identify the potential culture killer and that you can use it to develop some potential future leaders who might just be adjusting to the heat of the battle.

Closing Thoughts on Three Lives That Lasted 300 Years

The past 30 days brought the end of 3 lives that struck us as significant. Irving Kahn died at 109 years old and was a value investor who made his first stock trade in 1929, he was an example of having a life’s work that kept him active mentally for years. We wish this for all of you. Lee Kuan Yew died at 91 having fundamentally altered the country of Singapore and how small countries in Asia can thrive. His optimism and vision changed a nation and his views on the future of the region were expressed in his book [The Grand Master's Insights on China, The US, and the World](#). Of particular note is that he sees China struggling to be the center of commerce in the world due to the fact that the world is not adopting its languages in their commerce. Finally, Cecilia



Blackfield died at 100 and left in her wake the hills of Diamond Head on the island of Oahu. Mrs. B was a mentor and life-long example to us of having a cause centered life. When you see the hills of Diamond Head in their natural state, you can thank her and others who won the battle to make it a protected area. We hope that, like us, you can find inspiration in the lives of others and pass on their values into your current team environments.



Branches & Roots: V2:E4, Does Your Year Have Swing?

5/16/2015

The final 45 days of the first half of the year are here and as we gear up to sling our way into the second stanza of 2015 we wondered if your year had any “Swing” to it? Before you start down a dancing or golf path with the term, allow us to share that we are using the rowing meaning of the word. Swing in crew parlance means maximum synchronicity of effort among the boat members which turns into highly efficient movement for the boat. Getting a team to a “Swing” state in or out of the water is our focus today and we look forward to hearing your thoughts and recollections of your best teams.

We will be specifically diving into the team mystic, how to build and coach teams, and have a review of the very popular “Boys in the Boat” book by Daniel James Brown. We will finish with a confession that one of us is now a 15 handicap and what we are doing to improve and how it might help you as well.

Why is Getting to a “Swing” State so Hard and Why Do We Long for it?

Quick, think of the best team you were ever on? Now think about the next group of teams that you were on that were also amazing? Take those two groups, add them together and now divide them into the total number of teams you have been on since you were 5. Chances are your percentage of great teams is less than 10%. Now don't feel bad about it, this doesn't make you not a “team player”, rather it speaks to just how frequently we are on teams and how hard it is to get into a “Swing” state.

It turns out that getting into a Swing state with others is not only rare, it is also valuable because time and again history points out to us that hard fought victories on battlefields, cures to vicious diseases, and yes even youth sports championships are the result of teams working in seamless synchronicity. The millions of pages devoted to the accomplishments of these teams litter our libraries with their praise. Yet who amongst us has the true recipe that will work every time, and why have so many of our team experiences been lessons of patience and resiliency?

One enemy to Swing that we have identified is a differing level of time commitment to the team, another is the communication challenges that exist within teams based upon personality traits and now with globalization, culture clashes. We also believe that the length of time the team is together will also have a great impact on its ability to gel. We have personally been on a relay team that was crossing the Maui Channel that was supposed to take only 4 hours. Being a team was supposed to be easy, but things changed in a hurry when a 15 foot Tiger Shark was spotted less than a 1000 yards from our boat!

A solution we think you might consider is addressed by Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha in their book "[The Alliance](#)". They have a simple approach to building your organization in the midst of these team headwinds that we think is relevant for today's ever mobile workforce.

What Do I Do if I Have a Team Member Who is Killing Our "Swing"?

A recently published book "[The Weekly Coaching Conversation](#)" by Brian Souza touched on this very issue. Business Schools such as Harvard have shown a real focus in the area of career development and the term "coach" is evolving within corporations. Souza recommends a regular check in session with your direct report to assess not only their performance, but also check in on softer metrics as well. We would like to add to this article with some of our own findings and offer a few tools for you to use with your team. We would love your feedback on how to improve any of these tools after you have worked with them.

Whether your check in meeting is quarterly, monthly, or weekly, having a template to work with as you are getting started can be a big in facilitating dialog. It will also allow the direct report to speak more than the boss which is of particular importance if the boss is an extrovert and the direct report is not.

Our experiences have shown that a regular check in on areas such as your team members Soul, Fuel, Work, Fun, and Community Service will quickly identify the area that is distracting them. A simple listening exercise along with a specific question on what steps they will take to remedy the concern can go a long way. We have been amazed at how well these templates work when it comes to getting what is in a person's head out in the open, proving once again that "your head is a horrible place for a discussion". Here is [one of our new templates](#) to try and [let us know](#) how it goes.

Book Review is Back!

In short, this story is "Chariots of Fire in a boat" and we could leave it at that, but having never read Chariots of Fire and since no one has yet made a movie out of "[Boys in the Boat](#)" we encourage you to pick up a copy and dive into the hard scrabble times of the pacific northwest in the depression and look through the eyes of protagonist Joe Rantz.

Rantz is abandoned by his own father and step mother at the age of 15 and left to fend for himself. They couldn't afford to feed him, his mother was dead and with a new mom who had children of her own to feed he was left behind when they moved. Many may have already read this book, yet we share it to inspire those of you who are leading teams to dive into the nuances that rowing in the early 20th century has to teach us about working with your people to get their "Minds in the Boat".



How Did a Pair of Scratch Golfers End Up With a 15 Handicap?

Luckily neither Sara nor I are shooting in the high 80's these days, but we did stumble across a mental acuity application that currently has us ranked as pretty much a pair of bogey golfers. This has led us to share the phrase, "Maybe your brain is the weakest club in your bag".

Well even if it is, we now have a way to work on it with Tim Suzor's "[ThinQ Golf](#)" application for your computer or mobile device. We have been working with it for the last 2 months and it has taken us 8 minutes a day. Think of it as Lumosity for your athletic mind. Each day we work through 5 tests that challenge us greatly and it has had an impact. So rather than tell you the secret to how Jordan Speith makes everything he looks at (we have no idea by the way) we thought we would pass along to you a very cool piece of technology that should help your focus on the course. Give it a try and let us [know what you think](#).





Branches & Roots: V2:E5, What's Your Team Type?

7/4/2015

Independence of thought and action and freedom of will and mind are in the background this weekend as we participate in parades, attend barbecues, and build relationships with our friends and neighbors. The 4th of July is a time of new beginnings for many as the college graduates hopefully have new jobs and adventures to pursue. For others with more established careers it is often a time to take a pause at the half way post for the year and check your team's vital signs and widen the aperture on your lens to see if you need to make any adjustments for the future.

If you are fortunate enough to get a 5-minute pause over the next few weeks, we hope you will enjoy some of our findings below:

- We share a 3 step process for helping your team assess and then improve their own performance.
- Does your team have a 'TYPE'? We have the beginnings of some really interesting feedback that you have given us on Teams.
- Banyan launched several new products in Q2.
 - The "[Next Gen Almanac](#)" is a workbook for recent college graduates to help them turn their new boss into their coach,
 - The [Banyan YouTube channel](#) is up with our "Culture Killer" series currently being broadcast all over the country on www.coachesaid.com.
- We consumed several new books and have a few good ones for you to consider.
- We end with a golf tip which may help you develop a 'third eye' that all great players have.

Gimme Three Steps

"Sanders, can't you just give me the quick 3 steps for me to take to get my team on point"? This is something we hear quite often from managers who don't have time for long drawn out explanations and philosophy. Your world is impacted for time and it has to be simple for it to transfer through a human system. With that in mind, here are the 3 steps you and your team might consider this summer. We call it the "**RE**" exercise.

You start by **reflecting**, go back in your mind 18 months and take a look at what has transpired. The key action here is to "**ponder.**" Get to the side of your life river and look back up stream and ask yourself, "what did I learn, and what does it mean"?

The second step is to **recreate** by putting yourself in a fresh environment. Recreation is often associated with long trips away and those trips are very impactful, but watch what happens to you when you go to a different coffee shop, stop at a different park and sit on a bench for 20 minutes and observe your surroundings. Your new environment will take your brain off of auto pilot and it is at this very moment that we encourage you to "**Dream.**" Try to piece all the things you have

been processing in your mind together and give yourself a moment to have a crazy thought. When your entire team is empowered to dream and then share what they thought about you will win in 2 areas. First you will get a major boost in employee engagement because freedom of choice and thought is a prime intrinsic motivator and second when you allow them to share their thoughts the diversity of ideas will inevitably help the team. Ideas of out “Left Field” don’t work at the time crunched Monday meeting, but having a process to share them over time should have a positive impact on your culture.

The third step is to **redirect** your focus and the key action word here is “**Drive.**” Now that you have looked back and dreamed about a better future, what are the key initiatives and correlating tasks? We have noticed people are much more inclined to hit their tasks with vigor when they have been given even 30 minutes to reflect and recreate. The half way point in the year is a great time give the “**RE**” **exercise** a try and for many of our clients we implement it every 45 days.

Does Your Team Have a “Type”?

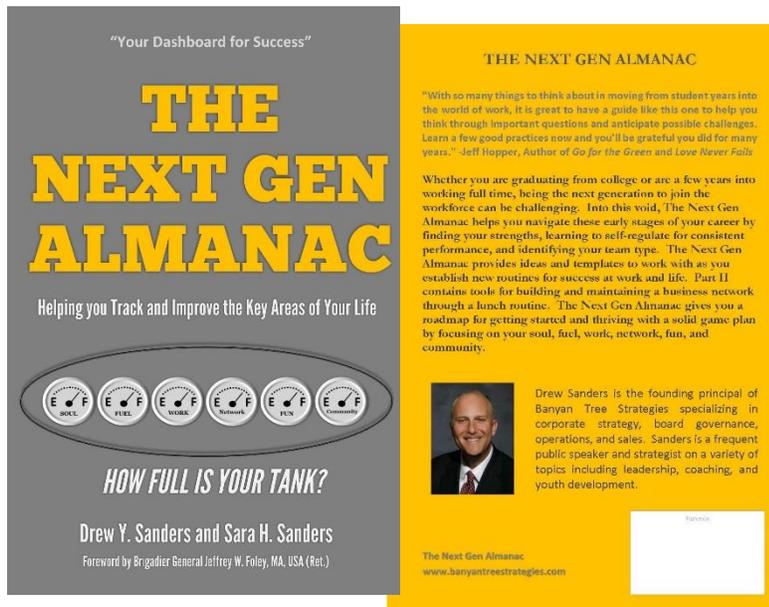
Most of us have learned what our “DISC” profile is, self-analysis tools that have their roots in 1940’s research and have been marketed to companies for decades. Fraught with angst that somehow the test will reveal a hidden dark negative trait, job applicants have answered the formulaic questions and then the results are shared with the candidate. Then, if hired, a copy ends up in the HR file. Whether shown to you on a circle, triangle, or square the 4 quadrants always emerge and you learn how to share what the Greeks and philosophers like Plato coined “Know Thyself.” Yet all of us know that environment has a massive impact on our performance, regardless of type. This has led us to start quizzing you about the attributes of your best teams, the results of which we will compile in a future white paper. These results so far are leading us to hypothesize that teams can have “types,” and as professionals you will be wise to understand these types as you position yourself for future success.

What goes into a team type? We would like **your thoughts** to add to what we are considering. We think the length of time that the team is together has a big impact on how the individuals behave. A 5-hour swim on a relay is completely different team than a 16-week youth sport season. Similarly, the tech start-up with 18 months of capital is a different team than working for a utility like PG&E. We also have noticed that how teams describe themselves makes a difference. “We are a tight team” is an often heard phrase. Is this a warning, a boast, or a self-assurance that the team is worth the effort it takes to be “tight”? Sales teams often have a completely different style of communication than engineering or research teams, misjudging that can lead to all kinds of unintended consequences.

While some of this may appear self-evident to you, we are eager to tease out of the data the relevant points for the next generation of workers to help them enter and contribute to our workplace. The more efficiently we can accomplish this task, the better our economy will be as they build coffers of disposable income. Teams are fluid, evolving systems and we have noticed

the average duration is shrinking. In dance terms they are moving from a waltz to a cha-cha, please [share with us your thoughts here](#).

The Next Gen Almanac



In line with our theme on integrating the Millennials in to the workforce we have released our 4th publication and first workbook called [“The Next Gen Almanac.”](#) The driving force behind this project is that recent college graduates are stumbling as they seek to integrate into corporate cultures. The rhythm of being a student and working for a company are vastly different. Sadly, many well-meaning new workers lose critical style points by just not having the basics of life down and are cast aside for “not being an adult” yet.

Into this growing problem we have built a 6 week bound workbook that walks the reader through a way to take inventory of their life each week and also gives them key tips on how to turn their boss into their coach. [The Next Gen Almanac](#) will continue to grow in size as we build out more modules and if you are a frustrated employer of this demographic please [share with us](#) what you want them to learn.

What Do You Do with a High Value Team Member Who is a “Culture-Killer”?

We are excited to announce a recent partnership between Banyan and Coaches Aid where we have been asked to author a “Learn to Lead” Video series. Our [YouTube channel](#) has 8 short videos where we address the hard problems that leaders and coaches face. Leaders care about culture, yet know that the creation of culture comes from every member of the team. Getting the culture soup just right is a true quest and if you have something you would like us to add to this series please share [here](#).

[Coachesaid.com](#) is an online broadcasting company that films youth to semi pro sports events all over the US. Here's a sample of one of the productions.

Book Review is Packed

Worthy Fights by Leon Panetta

No Higher Honor by Condoleezza Rice

Duty by Robert Gates

Any one of these three books will give you an insight into the dynamic times of running the United States before and after September 11, 2001. As our country went about healing from the loss of life, thousands of government employees focused on fast changing landscape of national and global security. None of these are easy reads, but all three left us with a feeling of gratitude towards their service to our country.

How Champions Think by Bob Rotella

The field of Sports Psychology is new relative to its companions and many of the original round-table participants are still with us writing and advising the future of the discipline. Bob Rotella has been a prolific contributor and as such his works are compulsory for the team at Banyan. The line of the book for us was when the author writes of an experience where he wants to tell an audience member who was challenging a statement that Jack Nicklaus had made that “Jack Nicklaus doesn’t need to know what you think, it should be the other way around.”

That line shares with us one of the true challenges of life, with all of the chatter on the airwaves, online, and in classrooms, what should you listen for, and who should you listen to? Having the right filter today matters and in this book Bob Rotella shares with you how to set up your own filter. We highly recommend you know how to build and maintain your filter.

Where Did Jordan Spieth and Mariah Stackhouse Get Their “Third Eye”?

In the last 2 months two different world class golfers have putted with their eyes closed with a championship in the balance. We find this stunning. Can you imagine Stephen Curry closing his eyes on a free throw? For several years Jordan Spieth has on occasion closed his eyes on certain short putts and he did so in both his wins at this year’s Masters and U.S. Open. In addition, Mariah Stackhouse had a 15 foot putt to send the women’s NCAA golf championship to extra holes. If she missed Baylor would win the title, her birdie putt went in and one hole later she and Stanford were NCAA champs for the first time! In a great camera shot the Golf Channel caught her closing her eyes seconds before she took the putter back and then as the feeling of impacting the ball came into her body her natural sight returned and she followed the ball into the hole. It was a true “gamer” moment, the stuff of dreams. (This is now where Sara insisted on inserting "Go Stanford!")

So what is going on that two performers under the age of 22 are apparently removing one of the 5 senses at a most critical moment and how could it benefit you? Our thought for your consideration is that they have been building out a different equally powerful sense that we call the

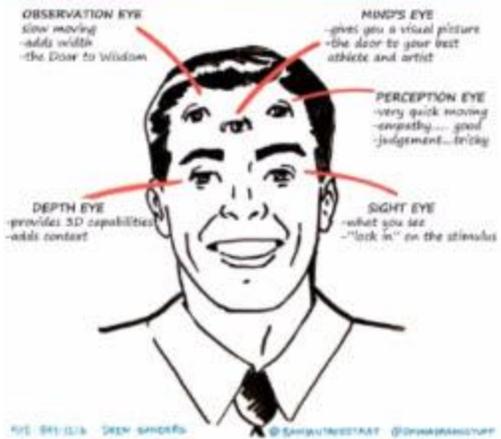
“mind’s eye”.

These young athletes spend the time in training to trust their performance and most of us don’t have the time so maybe we should keep our eyes open, yet the concept of training your mind to be out in front of you and not over the ball is something you can work on even when you have 30 minutes before you play.

We would like to suggest that you consider the action of breathing as your ally in this challenging exercise. Once you are physically warmed up enough to hit some full shots (10 minutes or so into your pregame) see if you can produce a few low release long breaths out through your mouth. 5 seconds should do the trick. Do this 3 times slowly and then stand behind your ball and go into your routine to come into the shot. As you picture the shot you want to hit, your breathing out will push your mind’s eye further out into the range where you want to hit the ball. In effect you’re blowing your mind’s eye out to the target. Give it a few try’s and you will start to realize how efficient your body is at executing without your sight eyes having to participate.

Taking it to the putting green, you will notice as well that once you have a nice balance to your set up, your mind’s eye will be able to keep the line you picked from behind the ball for up to 5 seconds with a diminishing amount of recall occurring the longer you take. We don’t anticipate you breathing so loudly that others will confuse you with a race horse coming down the stretch, just enough to keep mind’s eye engaged. If you want to close your eyes go ahead, and [let us know](#) how it works!

Do You Have An EYE For That?





Branches & Roots: V2:E6, Mind Your Q's

8/25/2015

Good morning and welcome to one of the swiftest and most productive 45 day periods of the year. We hope you were able to sneak away from the world this summer for a week or two, and were able to widen the aperture on your lens and appreciate the people and environment that exists in the margins of your life. Your ability to recreate outdoors with others during the long summer days really helps you re-create and re-set your values for the balance of the year. Late August now brings with it a fully engaged workforce for almost the first time since the middle of June. Projects and agenda's that have been hampered by the summer vacation calendar will experience an immediate surge and we are curious if you might notice that as you refocus that you have picked up a bit of clarity.

In this edition of **Branches & Roots** we will explore:

- Why you should mind your Q's as it relates to your performance.
 - The benefits of putting your team through a "Creative Abrasion" process.
 - How Coaches and Players can share values while having different roles and similar goals.
 - What swimming across Lake Tahoe has in common with the final round of the British Open.
-

Why You Should Mind Your Q's

Recent sociological research has started to notice that our ability to perform well in a role as an individual or as a member of a team can be traced back to 3 quotients. The first relates to your **IQ** and speaks to your ability to cognitively handle the tasks required. Knowing your strengths and then training to improve on them is vital. There are very few roles in today's economy for people performing out of their strength, be sure you can articulate your capabilities and the contribution you can make.

Your performance will be enhanced when you show the ability to understand how your contributions can blend with others for your joint benefit. Central to this concept is acquiring empathetic traits and building your emotional quotient, **EQ**. The force multiplier of working well with others sky rockets when the team sees the goal through everyone's eyes and then seeks to achieve for their mutual benefit. Yet being smart and caring, doesn't appear to be enough these days. It turns out that your ability to be resilient and adaptable in the face of change, both as an individual and as a teammate are game changers.

Click on the links for Ted talks from [Amanda Lee Duckworth at Penn](#) and [Carol Dweck at Stanford](#), who are both actively researching how to add some grit to your life to help you improve your resiliency quotient, **RQ**. So the next time you hear the phrase "Mind

your P's and Q's" we hope you will not only remember to say please and thank you, but you will also think about combining your wit, your heart, and your gut to be the most complete contributor possible.

Speaking of Grit, Can You Pass Me Some Sandpaper, I Want to Improve My Team Chemistry...

The first time your teacher, coach or boss decided you and your cohort would benefit from a little conditioning or organized conflict did you say to yourself, "yes, this is going to make me better and I can't wait to have my lungs hurt, or be in a room where things might get tense"? Probably not, as most of us have a strong pain avoidance bias and it takes real training to get used to handling conflict while maintaining your full field of vision. Yet veteran teachers, coaches, and leaders all seem to have their own way of grooming a group of people into a team of people and these processes often include a term called "**Creative Abrasion**".

We learned of creative abrasion in Rich Karlgaard and Mike Malone's new book [Team Genius](#) and further research points to a [1997 HBR article](#) by Dorothy Leonard and Susan Straus. It turns out great teams can trust each other enough to bust on each other at the right time and in the right context. We are not saying that flamboyant conflict oriented people are the key to success, what we are noticing is that regardless of personality type, the best teams are relentless in the pursuit of improvement and that requires all parties bringing their creativity and best efforts to the group and trusting that the outcome will be better despite the apparent risks.

The trick as the leader is when to introduce the concept, and how to implement and oversee the process. If you have a good story that proves or discredits our thesis, please [share it here](#). If you are looking for more on how disagreement can help your team, we offer up Margaret Heffernan's popular [Ted Talk "Dare to Disagree"](#).

How to Get the Roles Right on Your Team, From the Beginning

In July we shared our ["Coach Can I"](#) video as part of our culture killer series which lead to a series of interesting discussions on the blurring of the roles between players and coaches. One such discussion occurred in early August when we ventured up to UOP for a check in with Glen Albaugh. We were working through the concept of **creative abrasion** and Glen pointed out that a wise coach or leader will take the time to help the players and coaches agree to their respective roles during the season before hitting the practice floor. When pressed to expand on this thought he further shared that the two groups need to articulate what they are responsible for and that each group gets to establish their own values, complete with both process and outcome goals for the season. Sharing these with each other establishes a relational bond that then allows them to start living out their values and driving towards their goals. What may seem as obvious to some was worth special mention

to us, too often we see work teams where the roles of management and staff are blurred and chaos ensues. When setting up your next team at work consider laying out each groups roles and then allow both groups to define what they value and the acceptable attitudes and measurements they are willing to commit to as a team. If you want some expert help, [email Glen](#).

Why Mike Tyson can't swim across Lake Tahoe or win the British Open

“Everyone has a plan til they get punched in the mouth” - Mike Tyson

Mike's quote has two sides, one that challenges us to endure adversity and adapt, and a second more superficial message that appears to be telling us is that all you need to be able to do is land one good punch. In July was when we found the second point interesting while swimming in the Trans Tahoe Relays and watching Zach Johnson win the British Open at St. Andrews.

The Trans-Tahoe swim has been a staple for many people going back decades and for the avid swimmer it is a wonderful experience. The relay requires each of the 6 swimmers to swim for 30 minutes which gets the team into the second half of the race, and then the duration of each swim drops to 15 minutes. Swimmers will often remark how much easier the second swim is after toiling for 30 minutes. It was during this year's 30-minute leg that the Mike Tyson quote came to mind. Overcast skies and high winds accompanied the start of this year's race and made for true rough water conditions, smiles on the boat abated, and each stroke was a challenge. After 5 minutes of swimming in what felt like a washing machine on the “Ice” cycle, I really wanted to just punch the lake in the mouth and be done with it. Sadly, there is no punching Lake Tahoe in the mouth, its size and strength demand your attention and respect at all times. The only recourse a swimmer can have at that moment is the resolve to keep swimming and work with the water, not against it.

Which brings us to the British Open, which happens to always fall on the same weekend as the Trans Tahoe race. St. Andrew's Old Course is considered by many to be too easy to host a modern Open and on a flat calm day that may be true, but find me 4 days in a row in its history where it has been calm. This year's championship was another wonderful test of skill, flair, and resolve as player after player succumbed to the elements. Champion golfers with major championship titles to their credit were unable to keep their swings intact and their minds sharp for 4 days in a row. Several made it all the way to the final 7 holes before making the oddest mistakes and none of them could “punch St. Andrew's in the mouth”. The champion Zach Johnson is known as a fighter, a grinder, and for the second time in his career he is a major championship winner. Something tells me, he figured out how to keep hitting quality shots and work with and not against the mighty winds of St. Andrew's.



Branches & Roots: V2:E7, Not A Time for Quiet Historians

10/4/2015

We are fourteen months out from electing our next President, and the United States along with the ever connected world we live in are processing significant challenges to the status-quo. Long standing issues that have been simmering on the back burner are forcing their way to the front page, and the images can leave us stuck with a dilemma. Let the image of a face down child on the beach sink in, or not. Imagine being on a train in France or a community college in Oregon and what you would do if fate put you in the line of fire, or not. Picture being shot or beheaded because of your religion, or not. Try to process what appears to be a 7th century problem that you can do little to solve, or skim over it and complete your daily tasks in the fast changing 21st century present. All of this leads us to believe that now is not a time for quiet historians. Our historians typically pick up their craft as the living die off. Historians exist in the background weaving the fabric of our past together into a coherent narrative in the hopes that we might learn from our mistakes and fail forward in the future. It is at times like this that I hope our story tellers will emerge and work with our leaders to craft solutions that spread our infectious positive American energy both near and far.

Back at the Banyan workshop we have been fortunate enough to come across three quick performance enablers for you and your teams. In this edition of **Branches & Roots** we will explore:

- If you are looking to hire a young president, your odds improved in 2015.
- When working with a medium to large group of entry level employees we came across what we call the L3 solution for getting the troops to perform their best.
- Finally we are happy to pass on some wisdom from Nick Saban on how you can control your future with two little words, AND or BUT.
- Book Review is here and we have a look at the book "[Team of Teams](#)" by Stanley McChrystal.

Hail to the Chief

Article II of the U.S. Constitution states that in order to be President of the United States you must be 35 years old. The closest the country has ever come to having a President this young was Teddy Roosevelt when he assumed the office in 1901 at the age of 42, and John Kennedy was elected at the age of 43. The age of 35 sits in the back of people's minds in the modern day work landscape. It stands to reason if you are old enough to be President of the United States, surely a true star performer of that age can lead your company, or a large division. With that thought arrives 2015 bringing with it the largest crop of men and women turning 35 since 1999. You guessed it - the oldest members of the millennial generation are turning 35, and turns out they are finally buying homes and cars in droves. However, this story isn't about consumer demand or that having children typically turns even the most ardent non-conformist into a safety freak. We want to add one more statistic to the mix. The millennial generation now makes up 45% of the

entire workforce, and if the rumors are true that only a millennial can talk to millennial, then you had better hire the oldest one you can find to lead the rest of their lot.

We have spent the last 3 years working and leading this generation and find the future to be bright, if not different. Institutions will be questioned and doubted, self service will be preferred to full service, and sharing a car or a house with a stranger will not just become markets, they already are. So strap on for a wild next 10 years while the Millennials are given more and more responsibility and if you are looking to pick up a new language, we suggest its emoji.

Winning the Troops Over Without a Hammer

Keeping with the theme that 45% of our workforce is not into autocratic leadership, we came across a solution while working with a few clients for getting your lowest paid employees to help set your company culture on the correct path. We started by identifying everyone into three categories, the Leaders, the Followers, and those that were Adrift. We then coached the supervisors that when they had the opportunity to individually encourage a specific worker, they give them category appropriate coaching while suggesting they show a certain type of leadership trait. We believe that until the team isn't saying what the coach is saying before he says it, you haven't said it enough. Doing this with a smile on your face makes everyone realize that you care, and that it really is quite simple, which makes it safe for them to try it.

Here is what we learned. You stick to three types of leadership traits, Effort Leadership, Inspirational Leadership, and Performance Leadership. You typically encourage the Adrift employee to be a leader by their effort and to engage in the team by following the leaders on the team. You encourage the Followers to be a leader by learning how to inspire their fellow team mates with their communication in attitude and respectful communication. Finally you encourage your current Leaders to be performance leaders and to keep recruiting the Adrift teammates to engage in the team effort. This cycle of 3's has really worked and helps the supervisors offer customized encouragement and coaching for the employees to self-direct.

How to Get the Roles Right on Your Team, From the Beginning

Nick Saban has won more football games in the last 10 years than any other coach in America and sits atop one of the most active volcanoes in the country, the alumni of the University of Alabama. He was recently interviewed by [David Feherty on The Golf Channel](#) and he delivered an insight that we can't stop repeating in our meetings. He referenced his time in the NFL when they would look at potential players and the one page player information sheets would all look the same, everyone was big fast and strong. He remarked that the coaches ended up looking for two small words at the end of each page, **AND**, or **BUT**. Clearly this was where the scout was sharing the character traits of the player and as we all know character counts, even in the NFL.

The insight we would like to add is that if you find yourself putting in a lot of effort into a group, or a company, or even a hobby and you aren't getting much help or having the

success you seek, it could be that you have an extra BUT that is keeping you from making progress. Take a look at the role you are playing, how it fits your strengths and then see if you need to make a change or two to get the added benefit of a reputation AND in that situation. Most of the BUT's in your life are not eternal and heck even the Snickers candy bar company has run TV ads showing people getting a little cranky and then being their normal self after a little chocolate refreshment. Nick's advice to his players is sage perspective for all of us, and the good news is you can pivot quickly and keep improving.

Book Review

Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement For A Complex World by Stanley McChrystal

We began this newsletter with some sober thoughts around human safety and are greatly encouraged by the work that General Stanley McChrystal recently completed in Iraq. He weaves in the realities of our war with Al Qaeda and how they adapted their teams' efforts to survive against an enemy that appeared to have no center. The correlation between the life and death consequences of our troops and our more sanguine business efforts is artfully composed and one main point rings through. To compete in the future, decisions must be pushed to the very edge of the structure and they must be trusted and be able to adapt with as little friction as possible. Without spoiling the ending, he even encourages us as leaders to think like a gardener...



Branches & Roots: V2:E8, The Secret Ingredients of Winning Teams

11/15/2015

#1 – Humility

Whether 2015 has brought you joy or sorrow, success or failure, or life or death, each passing year the virtue of humility and its teachings are never far away. We hope you enjoy our findings and of course would love to hear your own perspectives on the topic [here](#).

We would like to thank you for your support and encouragement in 2015 and look forward to our interactions in 2016. Who knows, we may even come up with another poem to kick off the year. Most certainly we will be following up with additional secret ingredients of winning teams, after humbly kicking off the first below.

Humility

A recent [Wall Street Journal article](#) caught my eye and it started us down the path of what makes a humble leader and how it works in sport and life.

So what on earth does humility have to do with business and sport leadership and team success? Depending on your bent, either nothing, or everything. Webster's Dictionary tells us that humility is the quality or state of not thinking you are better than other people. Others have described humility as not thinking less of yourself, but of thinking of yourself less often. Regardless, in a performance driven world being confident and humble at the same time appears to be a paradox. Our attempts to solve this riddle have led us to seek out the humblest of confident groups, the U.S. Navy Seals. The men who have earned the right to say they served as a Seal are an accomplished and confident group, yet as you get to know them the dominate trait they share is a searing passion for humbly serving their team.

It appears the Seals have figured out how to have a high performing team full of confident people, who are all willing to risk everything to support the team's mission. The correlation to other team environments is worth a closer look. How do they do it, what is their process, and can you duplicate it with your team? To start, let's take the miles of running in the sand, the racing and beaching of small boats in high waves, and the sleep deprivation out of the equation. Most of us are just looking to get our work or sports team to come together and be a caring unit, so that we can optimize our chances for success in a highly competitive world. So what is it that we can mirror and learn from the Seals?

We have noticed three key behaviors all tied back to their humble spirits. First, you will never hear them ever speak poorly of another member of their team. This may not seem like a big deal, but

bagging on a teammate is a classic trait seen in teams that are average performers. They haven't taken the leap to care enough about each other, and they just might be over their skis, or not have a clear picture of what winning looks like. When you witness this behavior, make a note of it, and then at a private moment share with the offending party how cancerous this is to the team's health.

Another big leap the Seals take is being fully accountable to the team for the review of their performance. If the unit does not feel they did their best, then they did not do their best. The giving up of one's personal performance review is a huge leap for most people, and as a leader it is hard to see where your team is on this metric. Yet this mindset is the beginning of a most powerful seed called trust, and as you see people grimace and squirm when they are reviewed by their peers, you are witnessing them "leak" physically as they mentally struggle with this issue. As the leader, make sure you keep your direct reports aware of how challenging this step can be for some people. Hammering an offender will not lead to trust, it takes curiosity and some tact to get most people to take this step.

The final trait tied to humility we have witnessed with the Seals is that they have found the deepest human energy reserve that is known to exist, a fanatical commitment to serving the team. When it comes to energy, we all have some interesting emotions to tap for our internal fuel. Hate and anger are powerful fuels, however they are akin to sugars that burn hot and fast. The challenge is that sugars do not sustain you and have toxic exhausts that make you hard to be around. Joy and happiness work extremely well for creating contagious energy, yet are too ephemeral to last and sustain, they are like pixie dust. The long term protein of internal fuels for humans is the service of others who you are committed to help. When a person is tapping the emotion of helping those they are committed to, they have fuel for days.

The Seals teams' commitment level is life or death. For us, the stakes are often far less serious, yet getting everyone on the same page about the level of commitment to the team is important. Most groups of people you are involved with have different pictures of success. Many are defining their success individually, and have vastly different levels of commitment. As a teammate, team captain, or coach of the unit, you might consider the power of implementing some Navy Seal humility.

Book Review

"Extreme Ownership" by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin

This book just came out and is already the number one ranked business book in the United States. The two authors walk you through the lessons they learned in combat in Iraq in 2006, and how it can correlate to our work environment. We found the book to be very current and aligned with other teachings about decentralizing decisions and building highly adaptive teams. It also comes with a stiff challenge, if you are a leader of a team and it is failing, it is your fault. Period. No excuses. You are to blame and you need to marshal all your personal resources to adapt and improve. Both Willink and Babin are Navy Seals and they share openly about their mistakes and the lessons learned while serving our country. Both men come across as competent,

assertive, confident leaders, and yet each chapter addresses areas where they made mistakes. [Extreme Ownership](#) is a book that teaches the virtue of humility amidst the chaos and the fog of war.

The Year of the Humble Champions in Golf

2015 treated us to some of the best major championship competition we have seen in years, and the top performers all had one thing in common. They were humbled by their moment and gracious in their moments of triumph. Jordan Spieth's body of work across all 4 events takes you back to Ben Hogan days, and if he had won all four events we bet they would have had a ticker tape parade for him in Dallas. His demeanor and competitive grit make him one of the easiest golfers to root for in the history of the game.

The British Open champion Zach Johnson was a self-described emotional mess. Whilst fighting back tears he was adamant in declaring he is the tip of the iceberg, meaning everyone sees him play the game but without his team he would be nowhere. He deserves a hearty golf clap for taking down a stacked field and a wind and rain swept timeless St. Andrews links.

Jason Day left a birdie putt short to join the playoff at the British Open, and in that moment of despair turned the corner to become the dominate player in the world for four months after, including the PGA Championship at Whistling Straits. His walk to victory saw him leaning on his caddy and lifelong mentor Colin Swatton on many occasions, and he fought back tears of emotion that come from representing his family in their joint quest. It was only in the weeks after his victory that he shared with the world the horrors of his upbringing, and again we are amazed by the humbleness of this athlete.

Looking ahead to 2016 we are curious how Rory McIlroy will perform, and also have an eye to the bright future of Patrick Rodgers and a young amateur by the name of Maverick McNealy. If they are taking notes on how to be the best, it would appear they might want to take note of these 2015 champions and make sure a dash of humility is part of their morning coffee.