



THE PAINTER'S RAG

pdcaresidentialforum.org

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From the President



In the mid 1990's I walked into my first PDCA chapter meeting to a scene of round tables and men in sports coats. Most of them were commercial union contractors but I knew one married couple in attendance.

My mission: I needed to know everything they knew, like how to estimate, how to do payroll, how much did worker's compensation cost them and so forth. I was so desperate for information that when the occupants of my round table revealed, after flipping out their business cards with the blind skill and finesse of black jack dealers, that they were vendor representatives, I politely excused myself and fled the table to find "my" people.

Seventeen years later I'm still asking questions, but I don't run from vendor reps like I just got the rebound and I'm headed to the other basket for the lay-up. Instead, I consider them one of the most valuable resources and partners to my business. As forum president, I have had the honor of meeting the marketing and area directors and product managers who participate in PDCA and I am impressed by their enthusiasm, encouragement and the time they are willing to give. They embody my vision for the future of PDCA, which is to

provide simple and user-friendly venues and networks for the flow of information. Continuing in the tradition of emphasizing ethics in the industry and providing a place where everyone can ask questions and receive support, as well as lend a hand, together we can help the next young contractor step up, and the rest of us can continue to thrive.

Recently I asked my fellow forum board members to tell me in their own words why the forum exists. Here is what they said:

- For members to educate members
- For industry segment specific support of painting contractors across the country
- To address the special needs of residential painting contractors and provide networking and education
- To share best practices and find out what's working across the country; tips and tricks
- A place to share thoughts and ideas

I believe it also exists for that brave and curious young woman willing to walk into a room of men making six figure incomes because she wanted to "know what they know."

May the forum be with you,

Julie Gehrke

Save the Date

PDCA Residential Forum Presents: **Advanced Shop Talk 12**
Innovate or Die!

Your painting business emerging better than before

Sept. 29–Oct. 1, 2011: Chicago, IL

Mark your calendars and see inside for more details — Page 11

How Asking Yourself “Why” Can Change The Way You Do Business

by Suhaiba Neill, sneill@johnneillpainting.com

Why? Why? Why? As small business owners trying to survive the economic crisis over the past two years, we have all probably asked ourselves this question quite often and in various states of distress. “Why am I downsizing and busting my tail just to get by? Why am I working twice as hard for half as much? Why am I trying to keep my employees motivated when I feel like the ship is sinking and we’re all going down together? Why is my competition thriving while I’m barely surviving?”

By now I’m sure we’re all lacking in inspiration, so here’s another way to pose the question of why with a positive spin and some concrete biological evidence.

Simon Sinek, anthropologist turned consultant recently released a book entitled **Start With Why**. Through his research, he has developed a model he calls “The Golden Circle” which explains why 2.5% of the population inspire and innovate in their chosen field and why the rest of us wonder what they have that we don’t. The answer: nothing. They simply look at the world from a different direction, and it is the direction that makes all the difference.

So, let’s look at his “Golden Circle”. We all operate on one, and it consists of: **What** (tangible proof), **How** (specific action), and **Why** (purpose, cause, or belief).

Most of us work from the outside in, and some of us aren’t even able to define our *why*. Innovators, on the other hand, and those who inspire others (be it followers, employees, etc.) work from the inside out, and know exactly **why** they do **what** they do. Some examples that Sinek uses include Apple (who still remain more innovative than their competitors), Martin Luther King, Jr. (who inspired beyond

belief during the Civil Rights Movement), and the Wright Brothers (who were the first in flight despite a lack of man power and funding). In all of these cases, their passion for **why** they did (or still do) **what** they did was the driving force behind it all.

What Sinek found upon further research is that biologically, we are all wired the same way. Our brains are divided into two parts. The “new” brain, or neo-cortex is home to our rational and analytical thoughts and also houses our language. The limbic part of our brain is where our feelings and behavior live, has no capacity for language, and is where “gut” decisions are made.

Most of us are wired to work from the outside in, and focus on the “what” and “how”, but often overlook the “why”. To be truly successful in connecting and inspiring people, you have to work from the inside out. When you work from

the inside out, you’re talking directly to the part of the brain that controls behavior – “why”, which is

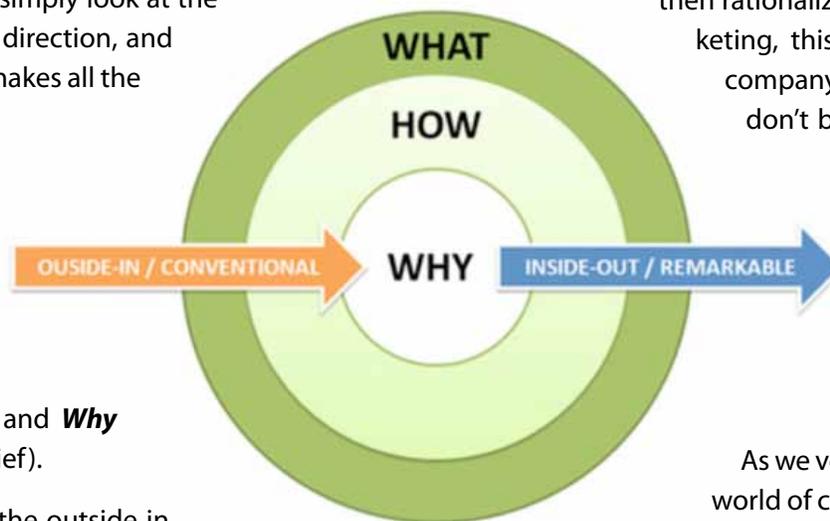
then rationalized with the “what”. In mar-

keting, this can make or break your company. As Sinek states “people don’t buy **what** you do, they buy

why you do it.” And the ultimate goal is to sell to people who believe what we believe, not just those who need what we do.

As we venture into a new era in the world of commerce, our challenge as business owners is to clearly define our “why” in such a way that it will allow us to stand apart from all the others who do “what” we do. So why not ask yourself “why” one last time and see if you can’t come up with something inspiring. ■

[Click here to watch the video](#)



The Gnashing of Teeth and Pulling of Hair

by Nigel Costoloe, nigel@catchlightpainting.com

WOE IS ME

The gnashing of teeth and pulling of hair, the wails of protest, the pitiable lament of 'why me'.over the past few years, as business slowed and 'our' projects were 'stolen' by low ballers we often succumbed to self-pity. I know I'm guilty of this – are you?

Heading into 2011 the business climate remains unpredictable; regardless of the anticipated bump in consumer confidence and spending, price sensitivity is here to stay as supply will continue to exceed demand. When the sun comes out this spring and melts the last of the snow here in Boston, I'll be ready to leave my recessionary cave but also happy to acknowledge there is a lot more I can be doing to make my company more competitive.

A BRIEF HISTORY

We took the standard path when the crash came – downsizing to reduce overhead, pulling vehicles off the road, releasing poor performers, (aka; dead wood); tightening our estimating in a seemingly fruitless effort to make our proposals more competitive. And I found the following to be true – our 'real' customers worked with us to negotiate and compromise on pricing to create win-win projects. Other prospects were more like tire kickers, eager for bargain-basement pricing; of course most found it, from someone, somewhere, but not from us. Some opportunistic professional customers leveraged the lack of demand and drove pricing down to their advantage, playing subs against each other. I blogged about one GC which took a low ball painting bid on a high-end project; that bid either drove the painting company out of business or exposed its strategy to run the project off the books. We knew we couldn't afford to work with such companies, and also began to walk away from those that, ordinarily sluggish to pay with 30 day terms, inevitably went to 60 or even 90 days as emails were exchanged over every last nickel and dime. We've cut our ties to these operators.

“What is my competitor doing that will drive me out of business?”

We've also worked to reduce our average hourly wage in an effort to reduce our bid rate. We offered discounts to past customers and prospects. The end result? In 2010 our gross and net revenue matched our best year before the recession. We are very lucky to work in the Boston area, and recognize our good fortune is likely due more to geography than my genius.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT...

It's tempting to relax and breathe a sigh of relief now that the worst seems to be over. But I've learned my lesson and it is this – the innovation required to stay in business

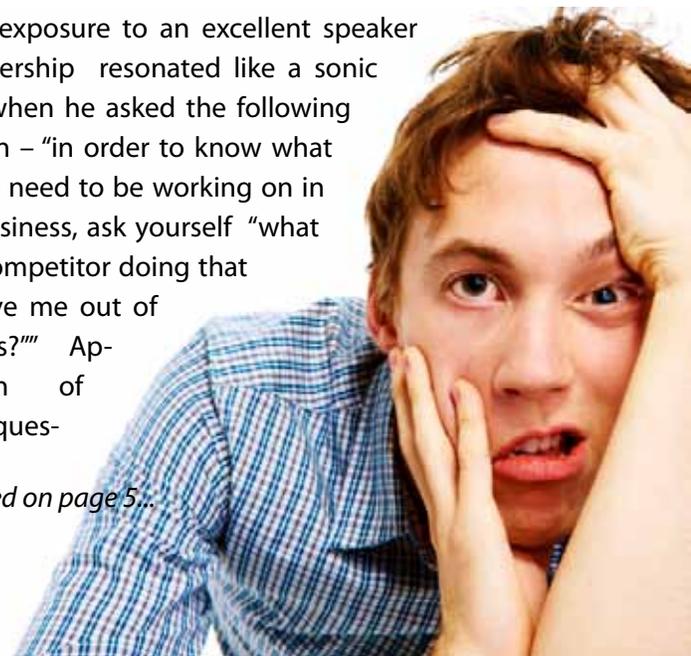
these past 2.5 years must remain a constant pressure if our business is to remain successful. Success for all of us, after all, has been redefined; double digit growth, a nicer car, the newest piece of technology, other old measurements of 'I've made it! Look at me!!' now take a back seat to a simpler metric – is your business viable? Are you living on a credit line? Is your debt ratio reasonable? Are

you now a marginal business looking for that next deposit to help manage current obligations? Are you measuring your expenses against a carefully crafted budget or are you shooting from the hip?

HOW DO YOU NOW DEFINE SUCCESS?

Recent exposure to an excellent speaker on leadership resonated like a sonic boom when he asked the following question – “in order to know what it is you need to be working on in your business, ask yourself “what is my competitor doing that will drive me out of business?”” Application of this ques-

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The Pedestrian's Corner

by Doug Imhoff, imhoffpainting@msn.com

I call it the alumni club: that distinguished group of painters who no longer work for me. It's a mixed lot box of mistakes, oversights, knee-jerk reactions and other gaffs.

Managing your alumni club: it's a matter of proper stewardship, or good husbandry, if you will. I believe it is an often overlooked area of human resources that an astute owner should bear in mind as he/she embarks on any new-hire relationship.

In the 5 or 6 years since striking out on my own I've watch as my alumni club grew into a who's who list of painters; the ranks swelled with able chaps rutted in bad habits, less able chaps versed in the jargon of ability, rising stars mismanaged, falling stars miscategorized, clock-watchers, wake-n-bakes, misogynists, the immobile, the *prima-donnas*, the client thieves, the work-comp aspirants, the chronically tardy, slow and hard-of-hearing, the sole-proprietors looking for fill-in work; all manner of individuals- good, bad & ugly.

The truth, in many cases for me, was visible early and often. Pride, ego and the ever present desire to make lemonade from lemons caused expenditures of good time & money after bad hiring decisions. And occasionally, good

material was cast in a bad light by jealous co-workers, thrown under the fast-moving bus (me) and discharged.

Sound familiar? Of course it does, we all walk or run on the same path. Experience is the best teacher if the pupil is paying attention. This little reminder of what you already know will be timely; it's an excellent time to hire new talent so don't let the errors and oversights of the past make a re-tread of you.

Hear the bell sounding: hire slow and fire fast, check references, check backgrounds, use your PDCA hiring resources, verify eligibility, confirm work history, give simple mechanical tests, written tests,

use another trusted person for a 2nd interview, review policy documents, use sign-off sheets and disclaimers, check work comp claim history (many states require written consent to do so), ask open ended

questions and hire on a temporary or trial period basis.

Here's a new one: group interviews- pack 3 or 4 applicants who've passed the first hurdle into a group interview and tailor your questions to a group audience. Observe and notate, they'll show you things that, left to a natural cycle of comfort/growth, would take months to reveal. This will

"Experience is the best teacher if the pupil is paying attention."

Editor's Note: Redefining Leadership

by Suhaiba Neill, sneill@johnneillpainting.com

Since the start of the year, leadership has become a recurring theme in my life, popping up in different forms over the course of the past 10 weeks. It started with a presentation from a personal growth coach at a conference, continued when my father handed me a book called *Becoming a Strategic Business Owner*, by

Daniel Murphy (aka—The Growth Coach), and finally with Simon Sinek's video about "How Great Leaders Inspire Action", which was used to kick off the third session of Shop Talk Groups. No matter what the medium though, the overall message is the same—anyone can hold the position of "leader", but it takes a dedicated and pas-

sionate person to lead. In the newly defined business environment, this seems to be a tool that will aid all of us in our own future success as well as the success of our businesses. So here's to rediscovering your passion and using it to inspire those around you.

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also save you time; that which you haven't had even in adequacy—let alone abundance—in years.

Above all, trust the voice or voices (for those of us whose monkeys never sleep) in your head & heart. Remember that once you've chosen, your job is only just begun. Monitor progress, review & debrief your trusted staff. Make notes, issue written warnings, leave a paper trail no

matter which way it appears to be going. This will assist you later as you are managing your growing alumni club, review your actions and adjust accordingly. Human capital is the flesh-n-bones side of the numbers coin, practice good husbandry and your skills & instincts will lend themselves to better decisions, happier employees, more profits and maybe even a diminishing alumni club! ■

The Gnashing of Teeth and Pulling of Hair continue from page 3

tion can be pushed down through every level of a business, starting with leadership, including renegotiated credit lines and ending with project post-mortems (Mr. or Mrs. Foreman, why did you miss your budget?) It's an elegantly concise and ruthless inquiry, not just because it exposes the extent to which immediate improvements can be made. In the near term, it's helped motivate me to be more structured and intentional with my time and energy. In the long term, it will help ensure focus on every new goal/harebrained scheme which will be measured against an unrelenting yardstick.

As we navigate the coming year, challenges will abound and it will be easy to lose focus as we rush to put out brushfires here and there. But as a driving motivation, it's a question we have posted throughout the office and one we now ask during every meeting, both in the office and in the field.

POSTSCRIPT

I've invested heavily in education since 2005, when I recognized that my native intelligence (use of sarcasm, good scrabble scores, use of multisyllabic words in conversa-

tion and writing) was insufficient to ensure the success of my painting company. So I joined Advisors on Target and learned the value of understanding profit and loss statements, balance sheets, the importance of measuring performance, and the critical role of peer review (no matter how good a year we have, there is always someone else whose numbers are better and who can also help me find my own efficiencies). The relationships I've forged with my peers in this group have helped me confront liabilities I overlooked – blind leaps of faith, crappy estimating, among others. This experience has taught me the value of transparency, courage and honesty.

I'm hopeful we can recreate a similar conversation and transparency in Chicago this October when we meet at Advanced Shop Talk. Please come prepared to do some hard work, to answer some hard questions, and to leave with a laundry list of action items. We'll conclude with an opportunity to join a Forum peer group to help you implement the takeaways from the event. It's going to be the best AST yet and I look forward to seeing you there. ■

“No matter how good a year we have, there is always someone else whose numbers are better and who can also help me find my own efficiencies.”

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Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/of53cd>



inSPIREd LEADERSHIP

by Julie Gehrke, Julie@signetpainting.com

In 1934, the current day Spire Federal Credit Union in Minnesota (renamed from Twin City Coops FCU), was founded by Edgar Archer when he needed a \$50.00 loan. Archer's unorthodox borrowing method birthed an institution of over 500 million in assets, one that employs 130 people, and has ten banking branch locations. I had the pleasure of meeting up with Dan Stoltz who has been in Spire's CEO position for a little over a year, after 11 years on the executive team. Stoltz is nothing if not affable. He prefers a crisp white shirt and tie for himself, but is committed to the comfort and encouragement of whoever has his focus. For one hour, that person was me, a volunteer member of Spire's supervisory committee and a student at Bethel University, given the directive to 'interview a leader.'

In 1991, I became a member of the credit union and have always considered myself (along with a multitude others) to be their biggest fan. They were the first to grant me a car loan and credit card in the years following a forced bankruptcy that occurred when several home builders did not pay our painting business for services rendered. I have always enjoyed Spire's friendly and knowledgeable employees at my local branch and LOVE not having to fill out a deposit ticket for transactions, nor being asked for my I.D. since the seldom turned-over staff operates like the iconic theme song to the television series "Cheers", and 'everyone knows your name.'

Stoltz and I met in the conference room at the administration offices in Falcon

Heights, MN. During the past year I had the opportunity to see him in action, handing out old-fashioned 7up bottles to punctuate a key capital ratio goal, presenting his vision with the inspiration of a coach at half-time and engaging the board and staff in building strategic plans together at the annual planning retreat. I knew he had the communication style of a charismatic and transformational leader, but I was looking forward to hearing his rendition of how the transition from the former CEO, John Gisler (a more organic, less structured and yet prolific leader who grew the credit union exponentially in his 20 years at the helm) had been going. Stoltz had worked around the clock to pull the credit union out of a 2009 slip in capital ratio that had federal regulators on its back until recently. Through his discipline and reorganization efforts, they have asked if other troubled credit unions may seek his counsel.

Who would have guessed that Stoltz's paper route in the 8th grade had taught him leadership lessons he still draws upon today? He was born in 1960, the oldest of three children, on the East side of St. Paul, "My dad, a painting and drywall contractor, wanted us to know that a work ethic was important so I took this route for the Pioneer Press. Back then they had a morning and evening edition. I had to wake up at 5a.m. and that taught me hard work – that



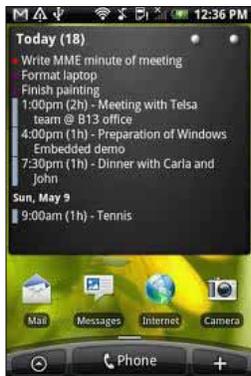
Smartphone Apps, More Than Fun & Games

by Mike Kelly, mike@crestwoodpainting.com

Two years ago, at AST in beautiful Portland, OR an attendee explained that some men drink, some chase women, but he buys cell phones. That sounded like solid logic to me although my wife, as yet, sees no merit in my new vice.

So last June, after waiting an entire year for no good reason at all, I upgraded from a dumb phone to a smart phone (Android, in my case). I wanted to be very sure this would be a business tool and not just the text-aholic, Facebook-stalking and YouTube-gawking device that captivates so many. It has made a huge improvement in my organization, use of time, and general effectiveness - wish I had made the move sooner.

Each of the three major platforms (iPhone, Android and Blackberry) has its devotees. None of the five apps I use are exactly rocket science; let's assume that both iPhone and Blackberry have similar offerings.



First, keeping track of appointment details is essential and I found **Pure Calendar** (~\$1.96) to be just the ticket. I can have several different color-coded calendars (Estimate, Personal,

Business, etc.) that all synch with Google Calendar so no back-up worries and it's very customizable. I can input everything I need for an appointment including the phone number (to confirm the appointment) the address (so the GPS can give turn-by-turn directions), and set an alarm to ring so many minutes in advance to give me plenty of time to get there.

But the alarm only rings once - and this was becoming a problem. While on a jobsite checking work progress, making to-do notes, maybe even actually talking to the customer . . . 15 minutes have passed since the alarm rang and now I might not make the forgotten appointment on time.



Enter **Nudnik** ("nag" in Yiddish, ~\$2.06). A simple recurring alarm that's been set to ring every 10 minutes, starting 45 minutes before the event, and does not stop until it is manually turned off. This, too, is very customizable. Nudnik integrates very nicely with Pure Calendar so there's only one app to deal with - Pure Calendar to enter details with the alarm time and then Nudnik when the

alarm sounds. Between the two I really can forget about appointments because the phone will remind me, with plenty of advance warning, about all appointment details.

Sometimes customers call while I'm driving. Rather than write, talk and prepare for a crash, I'll open the phone's Voice Recorder and repeat the details back to the customer while driving. Pull over, replay, enter into Pure Calendar, set the alarm, fuhgeddaboutit and continue driving. Pure Calendar can also be used as a



call reminder, but **Callback Pro** (\$1.99) is a better solution. Enter call details, set the alarm and just push Call when the set day and time arrives. Callback does not integrate with Pure Calendar though, so I can't see upcoming calls on the calendar, but so far that hasn't been a problem.

Weather is a factor here for much of the year, so I use **The Weather Channel app**. It tracks hour-by-hour which is nice in our changing-by-the-minute part of the world. For what it's worth, one of the local TV weather dudes spoke to our PDCA chapter and admitted that any forecast look-

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Why Hire a PR and Social Media Marketing Firm

by Dan Brady, dan@danbradypainting.com

HOW IT PAYS TO SPEND MONEY ON HIRING A FIRM TO DO YOUR PROMOTION

Are you trying to do it all? If you're the typical entrepreneur, you probably are. And that's not necessarily a good thing, especially when it comes to promoting your business. If there's one thing I've learned, it's that I'm more successful when I focus on what I know best and hire others to do what they are skilled at doing. Before I start trying to do something on my own, I ask myself "Do I have the right skills and resources to do this?"

That's why during the past year I've formed a strong alliance with a local PR and Social Marketing firm. The owners have tons of experience in traditional communications and they're also knowledgeable in online communications, which is really important to me. There's no question in my mind that having a strong online presence is critical to my ongoing business success.

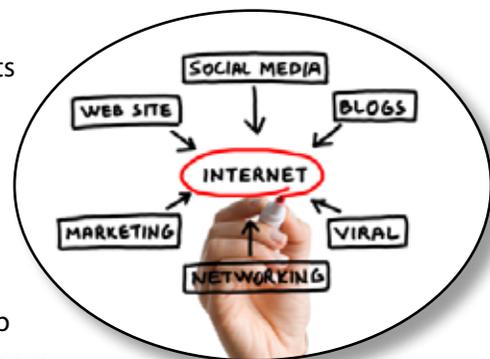
We've been working together for a little over a year now and most of the projects we've done involve promoting my business online and helping me improve the search engine optimization (SEO) for my website. As a result, if you do a Google search for Dan Brady you'll see Dan Brady Painting high in the rankings. My business site is usually listed first, ahead of the Dan Brady who is an Illinois State Representative and the Dan Brady who is an attorney in North Carolina and owns the URL www.danbrady.com.

They've also helped me raise both the local and global visibility of my site for Dan Brady Tricks of the Trade where I sell my do-it-yourself painting video. Here are just a few of the projects we've worked on that have helped me promote my video and enhance my web presence:

- Placing an article with an online ezine that focuses on entrepreneurs and provides links back to my site.
- Developing TV spots to promote my video.
- Developing news releases about the video and distributing them online to reach a global audience.
- Developing a blog on painting and promoting it.

- Developing business pages on Facebook.
- Developing newsletter stories for my monthly email newsletters.
- Developing a You Tube video for my newest Tricks of the Trade video production, which is coming soon.
- Developing a news release, pitching media coverage and creating a You Tube video about a local charity event where the Dan Brady Team took a lead role in repainting a local homeless shelter.

All of these projects have helped me promote my Video as well as my Painting and Wood Restoration business. Better yet, they've freed up time for me to do more



quotes, which is critical to get-

ting new business in the door and keeping my team busy. Could I have done these promotions myself? Some things, maybe, but not as quickly, not as efficiently and not as effectively. Plus the time I would have spent on trying to figure out how to do a news release and distribute it, or to develop a script for my TV commercials would have taken away from the time I can spend building more business. But beyond that, I don't have the contacts that my PR firm does. Plus, just like me, they have specialized tools for their trade that they can use for my benefit – like a media data base of contacts for newspapers, broadcasters and bloggers.

It's tough for most of us who are entrepreneurs to delegate. If we didn't think we could run our own business better than our former employers, we probably would have stayed in the rank of employee. Being great at what you do is critical to your success. Learning to hire people who are also successful in their fields as consultants for your business will help you be even more successful. ■

inSPIREd LEADERSHIP continued from page 6

if I wanted the reward it was going to be hard.

“Being out on the streets at that hour was probably not the safest thing and one morning I got mugged at knifepoint by some high school age boys. They wanted money but I had none so they left me alone. That taught me that you’ll always have critics or people who want to knock you down. That’s life. And it served me well later when I got involved with city politics. You can never please everyone.

“Back then, the paper boys had to collect from the customers. Can you imagine, 8th grade boys walking around on collection day with up to \$200.00 in their pouch? What an easy target! What I found out is that some people didn’t pay. And I learned that life isn’t fair. I learned how to budget and I learned the principles of risk and reward.” These lessons served him well as he found himself jobless and in debt after graduating with a finance degree from Northwestern College in Roseville, MN. He called a meeting with the college’s CFO to explain his predicament

“What I found out is that some people didn’t pay. And I learned that life isn’t fair. I learned how to budget and I learned the principles of risk and reward.”

and to assure him that he intended to pay his tab. Taking the initiative to insist upon this personal meeting - a networking instinct that he continues to employ today - paid big dividends as Stoltz was offered an accounting position at the college. Later, he became the CFO at the tender age of 31. “It was a little awkward that as second in command of the college, I was now the boss of my professors”.

Over the years, Stoltz has shared his talents with the community by serving on two city councils, first Circle Pines for six years and then Lino Lakes for six years. This leadership experience included campaigns, public debates and council meetings held on camera. Currently, Stoltz serves on the boards of the Lindbergh Foundation, the Cooperative Foundation, Midwest Challenge and Northwestern College and Radio. As Stoltz talks about his leadership style he mentions his philosophy and ever present goal of building networks and alliances. As one who has experienced campaigns and door to door work, he understands the importance

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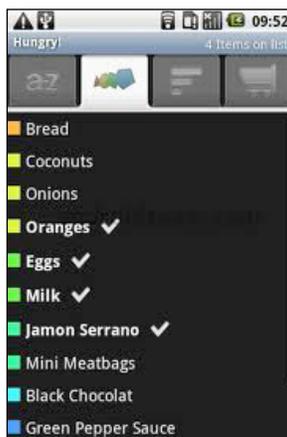
Smartphone Apps, More Than Fun & Games . . .



ing out more than three days is a complete coin toss.

Finally, **Hungry! Shoplist** (\$Free) is very handy for anyone that makes lists. Designed as a grocery shopping

list, I’ve changed “Frozen Foods” to “Masking” and included every size and type of paper and tape. Other new categories include “Oddball



Tools I don’t carry all the time” (ladder roof-hook...) and one for “Common Prep Items” like spray primer. Rather than fumbling for paper and pen and writing something that I’ve already written 146 times, it’s entered once and then added and checked off whenever needed.

With the wide range of apps available there are certainly other ways to handle these same tasks – how do you do it? Send in your favorites so we can share them with all of our members and help each other manage this vice. ■

of reaching out and developing a broad spectrum of partners. "My aha moment regarding leadership came during my M.B.A. work at St. Thomas University in St. Paul, MN. I expected them to teach us how to be drill sergeants. Instead, they taught a value system that I could align with." It is the Servant Leadership style that Stoltz espouses. He believes that three things are important under this model: hire right, make expectations clear, and provide the tools. The last point is where the servant leadership comes into play. According to Stoltz, "It's where the leader must be involved to ensure the followers have the tools."

Stoltz credits both of his parents for modeling a philosophy that life is about giving; not getting, and that by giving you actually get. I asked if he had any favorite parental quotes and he replied, "From mom, she used to say, 'nothing good happens after midnight' and as a parent, I use that quote now too. And from my dad there are two that come to mind, 'fall down five times, get up six' and 'you can do anything you set your mind to'; he let us know we could reach for the stars."

When asked if he has ever been confronted by someone who resisted his direction, Stoltz nodded and said, "oh yes" and went on to recite a favorite quote: "The fewer the facts, the stronger the opinion". Stoltz said he deals with these situations by listening. "Listening allows you to understand the missing pieces. Then you can work things through 90% of the time".

In transitioning the culture at Spire from the former CEO's style, Stoltz said the process has been slow because change is hard. As he works to put efficiencies and fundamentals into place before new growth can occur it has

required some "necessary endings" in terms of staff, a phrase Stoltz borrowed from a book of the same title by Dr. Henry Cloud (2011). In order to enforce his brand of

efficient culture, Stoltz said he talks about two things at every meeting: modeling and communication. Stoltz wants to see clear expectations modeled by his executive staff so that "we're not asking people to do something we're not doing."

Next, Stoltz has stepped up communication and meetings, scheduled on a weekly basis, with the directive that all communication from Stoltz to his team will be sent down the line by them to their directors and from the directors to the rest of the staff.

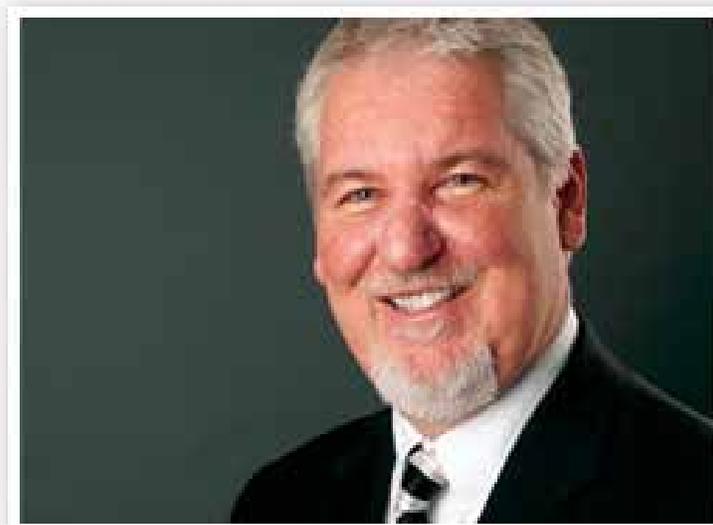
As federal regulators work overtime to crack down on credit union regulatory compliance, Stoltz is meeting the challenge by winning over his people to a, "no sur-

prises, expectations are clear and we win together" foundation of trust. Stoltz initiated new ways to reach out to the staff including the purchase of StengthFinders 2.0 books by Tom Rath (2009), complete with follow-up coaching for his management team. It was a price he was willing to pay because of his passion to make Spire "Minnesota's Best Financial Institution".

Overall, Daniel E. Stoltz is the epitome of a

transformational leader, all the way down to his humble self-assessment as one who makes mistakes. From a St. Paul son who learned some of life's most valuable lessons at 5 a.m. on a paper route, to the role model he has become who shared with me on a parting note his definition of ego: Edging God Out, Stoltz's father can rest assured, he not only reaches for the stars, he shares his light with all of those within his reach. ■

*"The fewer the facts,
the stronger the opinion."*



Dan Stoltz, CEO of Spire Federal Credit Union

INNOVATE OR DIE!

Your painting business emerging better than before

PDCA Residential Forum Presents: **Advanced Shop Talk 12**

www.pdcareidentialforum.org (800) 697-7322



These last 3 years have taught us all a lot about supply and demand! As the adage goes, a rising tide floats all boats – during the bubble years of the 90s and 2000s we all thought we were business and marketing whiz kids – profitable, enjoying double digit growth, masters of our industry. Most of us are now adjusting to the new normal – pricing sensitivity, greater competition, slimmer margins and fewer customers.

In light of this, how do we now define success?

Join us in Chicago this October to discuss the new definition of success, and find out how you measure up against your peers....

What challenges do you now face as a leader?
What adjustments have you made to your own definition of success?
How are you preparing your company, and yourself, to compete and succeed in this new economy?

Come prepared to talk honestly and openly about your business and yourself. Come prepared to teach others and to learn from your peers.

Come prepared to do some hard work, but be ready to leave inspired!

WHEN September 29th–October 1st

WHERE Chicago at the Oak Brook Marriott

WHAT

- Network with top residential painting contractors from across the country.
- Leave with completed action plans to bring back to your companies.
- The opportunity to join a peer group. This will hold you accountable and maintain momentum long after AST ends.
- Analysis and action on your business

And much more!



ATTENDEES SAY

*"Every year AST is a highlight for me."
Eric Hernanz, Hernanz Painting*

*"I appreciate everyone taking the time from work to attend this year's AST."
Tom Reber, Jalapeno Paint Werx*

"AST is about sharing. When we share it uplifts the spirit." John Peek, Peek Brothers

*"The group this year was very focused. I can't think of time or money better spent."
Doug Imhoff, Imhoff Painting*



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The Craftsmanship Forum Column

- 1. I have some heavy furniture that I need to move to the center of my carpeted living room. Is there an easy way to move it?** Furniture glides with a Teflon bottom and a rubber top can be used on carpets when moving heavy furniture during the masking and dust protection phase to prepare for covering all the furniture. Ref. COP RI-GL-3
- 2. Sometimes when I finish a room, we cannot remember where each picture or chair was located. Any suggestions?** It is a good idea to photograph the room from various angles before moving anything to help remember where to put everything back when you are finished. Ref. COP RI-GL-3
- 3. Three weeks after we painted for a homeowner, they called to say that the windows were sticking, but I know they all worked fine when we left. What should I do to prevent this in the future?** Next time leave the customer a paper instructing them to move the windows up and down daily for one week to be sure the paint does not stick windows in place. Ref. COP RI-PT-5
- 4. When working on clear coated trim, when is the best time to fill nail holes?** It is best to fill nail holes after the first clear coat and before the final clear coat, but be sure to sand and clean area surrounding the nail holes. Ref. COP RI-PR-3.
- 5. When I get a new roller cover, sometimes I find what looks like little hairs coming off of it onto the painted surface. How can I prevent this?** Running a new roller cover up and down over a length of tape will pull off the loose hairs of a new roller. Then your surface should look better. Ref. COP Ri-Pt-4
- 6. I can caulk two painted surfaces together, but sometimes I have to caulk next to stone fireplaces. How can I keep the caulk from getting the stones messed up when I tool it?** To create a straight line next to stone, tile or back splashes, apply painters tape in a straight line where you want caulk beads to end. Then peel off the tape before the caulk sets up. Ref. COP RI-PR-2

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