

# Pulling Together

Winter, 2012



## From the Top

### Observations from a Fellow Sojourner

Was it Gabby Hayes who popularized, "Shoot low sheriff, they're ridin' Shetlands"? It was a great *laugh line* about 100 years ago. Is it a great *advice line* in a speech to young people? More and more, I hear people of influence recommending that others avoid shooting for the stars. Rather they encourage others to aim lower and be satisfied with less. There have always been *risk-averse* people unwilling to take a chance. They would not ask the prettiest girl for a dance for fear of rejection. They wouldn't try for that advanced degree or certification for fear of failure. They would not invest in stocks, bonds or anything else for fear of loss. You have, no doubt, noticed them. I just did not realize the thinking was so pervasive until I heard the First Lady express the idea to a graduating class and heard the President reinforce the idea in a speech.

If, in fact, this attitude is as pervasive as it appears, think of the uncontested opportunities available to the achievers. I'm reminded of an old West Texan who told me he came into this world with absolutely nothing and so far had managed to hold onto most of it. Just how many businesses are trying to **hold on** instead of expanding? Is achievement just too demanding? Is the risk of failure too daunting?

There was a time in this country when competition was in vogue. It was not uncommon to hear people say things like, "Anything you can do, I can do better!" Young people were encouraged to be the best they could be. The local gentry assured young people that if they became the best at anything, the world would reward them handsomely. It was implied that an engineering degree does not guarantee anything. However, the very best engineer will be rewarded handsomely by the world. They encouraged young people to choose their vocation and dedicate themselves to becoming the very best. Whether choosing lawn service, dairy farming, brain surgery, or rocket science, the world rewards excellence and competition drives people and businesses toward excellence!

Look around! Do you see a lot of competitors? Do you see more and more people willing to settle for less – shooting low – afraid to aim for the stars – quick to blame government – quick to blame family or friends – willing to go along to get along?

FUD paralyzes! **F**ear, **U**ncertainty, and **D**oubt have crippled more individuals and more businesses than competition ever has. Recently, I saw where Eastman Kodak was considering bankruptcy. An industry leader – an innovator – an employer of thousands! Was it competition or technology or politics that brought Kodak down? What do you suppose Kodak could have done differently?

I am reminded of another company, Fisher Brothers. If I understand the history of the Fisher Brothers correctly, they built carriages during the horse and buggy days. With the advent of the automobile, the Fisher Brothers adapted and started building chassis for auto manufacturers and distinguished themselves as the premier auto body manufacturer in the world. Today, Fisher family off-springs are designing chassis for hybrid vehicles. What happened to all the other horse and buggy carriage companies? Was it competition or was it failure to strive for excellence in a new arena or was it technology or was it politics?

What about your situation? Are you running hard against an imaginary competitor while ignoring technology and ignoring politics? Businesses ignore politics at their own peril! What is happening in your business world? Will changes come from the bottom or from the top or from regulations? What (Who) is going to change the way you and your company conduct business in the future? Will you see the changes in time and be agile enough to adapt to a new paradigm? You are not stuck in a rut practicing circular thinking are you?

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Having worked on College and University campuses for several years, I was often asked, "What is the most important thing for a student to learn?" I disappointed many parents with my answer. The most important thing for a student to learn is to learn how to learn. If students learn how to learn, they will more likely adapt to new technologies – to new paradigms. I also liked to remind parents that eagles don't fly in flocks, and that conventional wisdom is more often wrong than right.

Today, in every line of business there are those few business leaders who have their companies soaring toward the top while the majority of their competition continues to flock together and encumber themselves with conventional wisdom. Chances are, at the end of the day, they shrug off disappointments by asking, "What else could we have done"? They never saw it coming!

### Afterthought

By the way, do you have a good definition of learning? If not, feel free to use mine. Learning is changed behavior. If you are still behaving in the same way, you have learned nothing.

*Don W. Davis*

## Clever ideas to make life easier

Posted on November 01, 2011 in [Bed, Bath & Kitchen](#), [Decor & Furniture](#), [Organise & Personalise](#) by [Simone](#)



Via: [amy-newnostalgia.blogspot.com](#)

Why didn't I think of that!  
We guarantee you'll be uttering those words more than once at these ingenious little tips, tricks and ideas that solve everyday problems...some

you never knew you had! (Above: hull strawberries easily using a straw).

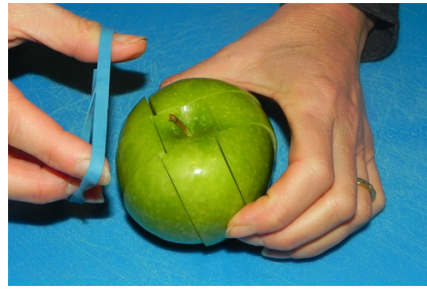
Via: [apartmenttherapy.com](#)

Rubbing a walnut over scratches in your furniture will disguise dings and scrapes.



Via: [unplggd.com](#)

Remove crayon masterpieces from your TV or computer screen with WD40 (also works on walls).

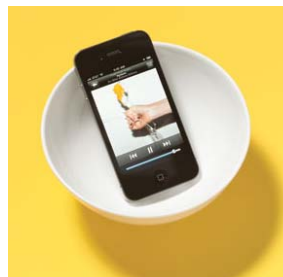


Via: [athomewithrealfood.blogspot.com](#)

Stop cut apples browning in your child's lunch box by securing with a rubber band.

Via: [marthastewart.com](#)

Overhaul your linen cupboard – store bedlinen sets inside one of their own pillowcases and there will be no more hunting through piles for a match.



Via: [realsimple.com](#)

Pump up the volume by placing your iPhone / iPod in a bowl – the concave shape amplifies the music.

Via: [instructables.com](#)

Gotcha! Find tiny lost items like earrings by putting a stocking over the vacuum hose.



Via: [flickr.com](#)

Look up! Use wire to make a space to store gift wrap rolls against the ceiling, rather than cluttering up the floor.