



Kiwanis Insider

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Private and Confidential for the Board Leadership of Kiwanis

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Dear Kiwanis Leaders:

In my last communication with you I shared some thoughts on ***Raising the Bar*** as it relates to personal performance. Referring to my high school track team experiences, I shared how my coach consistently raised the bar during the preseason until I could clear a height that he felt would be competitive. At the first track and field competition that spring, with a cool breeze and a light rain falling, I finally got my chance to compete. Just like in practice, the bar started out at a level that was very comfortable for me. After some stretching and a couple of practices approaches, I made the jump with ease. The other jumpers cleared this height as well, and the judges moved the bar up 2 inches. This continued for several more jumps, with everyone clearing the bar successfully.

As the bar neared the six-foot mark, something happened that I have never forgotten. A young man who had been sitting patiently watching us make our jumps, stood to his feet and declared he was ready to compete. After a little stretching, he took off his sweat pants, and with very little effort cleared the bar. The smooth, almost effortless way he performed, made it obvious that he had been doing this a lot longer than me. What I could not understand was why he did not even begin competing until we were nearing six feet.

Later I would learn that individual competitors get to decide what height they want to enter the competition. Someone who regularly clears the bar at 6'4" might decide to join in at 5'8", and not bother with jumping at lower levels. Since the goal of the competition was to see who could make the highest jump, it really did not matter how many times one cleared the bar at lower heights. This competitor knew exactly what he was capable of doing, and when the time came, he stepped up and performed. At the end of that competition I was not recognized for making five successful jumps. The prize went to that jumper who cleared the bar at 5'10, then 6'2" and ultimately at 6'5". I remember standing and watching them continue to raise the bar for him even after the rest of us were eliminated.

The bar was raised to a new level that day, and I did not like how it felt to be in over my head. As I discussed this with my coach on the bus on the way home, he told me I had three clear choices:

- 1 Find a new sport (quit)
- 2 Get used to losing
- 3 Work harder and smarter than ever before

At Kiwanis we have raised the bar dramatically over the past year. Our BHAG (Big Harry Audacious Goal) of One Million Members by 2015 has set the bar much higher

than in the past. All of the successful jumps that we have made over the years, while helpful in teaching and preparing us for this challenge, are no longer relevant. We must commit ourselves to working harder and smarter than ever before. We also need to recruit additional staff and volunteers who are skilled and experienced in competing at a higher level.

Performance Reviews

Today is the deadline for the first step in the employee performance review process. By 5:00pm EST each staff member must turn in a self-evaluation that details their individual view of the following:

1. Personal accomplishments over the past twelve months
2. Barriers and obstacles that had to be overcome
3. Opportunities for improvement, and goals that were not accomplished
4. Educational/training needs for the future
5. Current thinking on personal 5-10 year career goals

Once these self-evaluations have been received and reviewed, each supervisor will complete an evaluation of their own that will be compared to the self-evaluation and discussed with the employee. I will keep you updated on our progress.

This past week I was asked to describe what I thought were the qualities and characteristics of a GREAT Kiwanis club. Following are my thoughts. As always, I welcome your comments or feedback.

In GREAT Kiwanis clubs...

...the mission is so clear that everyone wants to give their time, talent and treasure

...the meetings are so enjoyable that members only miss when it is unavoidable

...the service projects are so inspiring that there is a waiting list for volunteers

...the leaders empower and equip the members to become leaders themselves

...the members are proud of their club and invite their friends to join

...the club plan serves as a map and compass to make sure the direction is clear

...the value of the club to the community and the members is obvious to everyone

...the fun and laughter is so contagious that members are still smiling on the way home

On a personal note, it has gotten so cold here in Indianapolis that I gave in and bought a winter coat. This coat, along with the warm glow of a wonderful Super Bowl win by the Indianapolis Colts should get me through the balance of this winter. Thanks for your leadership and passion for Kiwanis.

Rob