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PEOPLE

IN BUSINESS, FLEXIBILITY WINS THE DAY



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LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

Office Everybody's got a travel nightmare story. And I travel a lot for business, so I've got my fair share. Whether or not you're a frequent flyer like me, you know that even the best laid transportation plans are still subject to factors outside your control. A recent flight to Florida for business reminded me how crucial flexibility is – not only in travel, but in work and in life.

The first part of my trip was the usual. I got to the airport early, made my way through security no problem, and got to the gate with plenty of time to spare. Then, everything changed. Suddenly the sky wasn't bright, and the flight attendant announced that our flight would be delayed because of heavy rain on the horizon. So we waited, sitting still at the gate.

Soon enough, the deluge began, and as I listened to the sound of the rain on the body of the aircraft, I learned the weather had caused a backup in runway traffic and we would have to wait a while longer. I had built in some extra time into my day for just such a problem, so I thought, "No problem. I got this." Then we were informed that the inclement weather would likely require a change in our route. "Hmmm," I thought. "That could be a problem." The news got worse when the announcement came over the loud speaker that there was a tornado watch and the delay was currently "indefinite." As the number of irate passengers around me began to grow, and loud cell phone conversations could be heard all around me, I thought, "Now, it's game time."

I knew there was nothing about the situation that I could change. The only thing that I had power over was how I handled it. When life presents unplanned circumstances, as it so often does, I play a game: "T.A.G." Think, adjust and gather. This game of T.A.G. doesn't involve running around saying, "you're it." It puts you in a power position and allows you to be as flexible as you can be. Here's how to play:



THINK – In life and in business, you've got to expect the unexpected. Step one is to stop what you're doing and "think." Don't get caught up in what you had thought would happen and all the ways your plans have been foiled. And don't respond impulsively. Instead, take the time to ask yourself, "What's happening?" "Why is it happening?" "How does it affect me?" and "How should I respond?"

ADJUST – Once you've answered the four questions above, you can adjust to your new set of circumstances by adapting your assumptions and how you choose to behave. Maybe your "Plan A" didn't work out. So what? Going to "Plan B" isn't failure. It means that you won't take "no" for an answer and you're determined to keep moving forward. The destination is your goal. How you get there is flexible – and totally up to you.

GATHER – Even when you're being patient and practical and channeling your inner Yoda, a supportive shoulder to lean on is always helpful. Whether it's your family at home or your colleagues at work, gather people you know you can count on. These are the people who will adjust their schedules when they find out your arrival is delayed or will make room at the table when the babysitter cancels. Allow them to help you when they're able.

So there I sat on the plane, asking myself what had happened and what it meant for me. My arrival was delayed, I wouldn't check in on time and I might even be late for my meeting. Plus, my phone was dying. Problems identified. Time to adjust. I determined what needed to happen, contacted a colleague to coordinate with the client and contacted my wife to coordinate with the airline and hotel.

Eventually the storm ended. My original flight had been canceled, so my fellow passengers and I all got on a new flight. My plans had changed, but I arrived at my destination. Being flexible doesn't mean being passive. Rather, flexibility requires an adjustment of our attitudes and actions to account for the unexpected. This is one game of TAG you can always win.

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THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

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