



PETRA PROCESS

**3 BUSINESS LESSONS LEARNED
IN 12 DAYS OFF THE GRID**



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LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

In June 2016, I was lucky enough to accompany my 15-year-old son and his troop on a Boy Scouts of America rite-of-passage: the [Trek at Philmont Scout Ranch](#) in Cimarron, N.M., which consists of a 12-day hike from 50 to 120 miles, based on level of expertise.

I should note — this is not car camping. This is carry all of your food/equipment/clothing/shelter/water in your 60-pound pack camping.

We were set to spend days and days hiking and climbing through some seriously remote, high-altitude peaks in the southern Rockies while preparing for encounters with bears and mountain lions. But the part that scared me the most wasn't the wild creatures.

It was leaving my smartphone at base camp. I hadn't been "out of office" since the late 1990s. This was more than I bargained for and certainly more hard-core than I thought it would be when I signed up. With this new, lemon-filled reality facing me, I decided to make lemonade and see if I could glean some wisdom from my new-found — temporarily challenging — existence. Fast forward 12 days, and it turns out that I learned a lifetime of lessons during our trek, including how to build a business and a team. Here are the three main things I learned:

Lesson 1: In a world of quick convenience and "fail fast" start-ups, sometimes the long way is the best course of action, with strategic planning, segmented growth and deliberate moves.

My fellow Scout dads, who mapped out our adventure, rented vans for our four-day drive from home in Nashville, Tennessee, to New Mexico and had us scheduled to stop each night in, respectively, Fort Smith, Arkansas; Amarillo, Texas; Clayton New Mexico and then Philmont Base Camp.

- *Start: Nashville, Tennessee: 597ft. above sea level*
- *Night 1: Fort Smith, Arkansas: 1,201 ft.*
- *Night 2: Amarillo, Texas: 3,605 ft.*



- *Night 3: Clayton, New Mexico: 5,056 ft.*
- *Night 4: Cimarron, New Mexico: 6,430 ft.*

My first thought, as a “super-smart” and “ultra-efficient” business coach was, “Why not fly into Denver and drive the last four hours to Philmont? Do these guys have nothing better to do! Am I missing something?”

It turns out I was missing the point.

That point was that the length of the drive was important. Crews who tried flying into Denver and then driving the four hours to base camp were experiencing altitude sickness during the first two days in the back country and could not compete with the crews of long-distance drivers who spent nights sleeping in and acclimating to the altitude.

Lesson 2: Tiny problems are often easy fixes if you identify them quickly. Don't let your anxiety over the fallout overcome you and keep you from correcting the issue. Take the time to ask: What is the “tiny pebble” in your organization?

After three days in the back country, we made our ascent to Apache Springs, which consisted of a five-mile hike at a 10 percent-plus grade. As we started out, the waist buckle on my backpack broke. This is critical, because almost 60 percent of the weight of the pack rests on the waist and pelvis when it's working properly. When it's not working right, it is incredibly painful and difficult to carry.

I worried about the rest of the trip. I envisioned spending nine more days hunched over and injured. I struggled for more than two hours with (what seemed like) the weight of the world on my shoulders, and when I finally stopped and took off my pack, I found a tiny pebble in the buckle system. Once I removed it, the pack went back to normal.

Lesson 3: As in business, the conventional wisdom of trekking dictates that the more difficult the trek, the more transformation you can expect to see in each team member — and yourself. If goals previously set are being crushed, regroup and reset more aggressive targets. If targets are missed, explore the failure for learning points and move on.

A week went by, and our crew got leaner and meaner every day. We started to cover ground faster and more efficiently. We even started to look for the most challenging routes to get to our designated campsites.

In one such instance, we dropped our packs to summit a peak, and during the descent, an unexpected cloudburst not only drenched us but washed our packs back down the mountainside. Some boys cried and some were angry, but there was no blame or harsh words — only work that had to be done to get back on track.

"Already broken of our expectations, we look forward to what is around each turn. There is no good or bad, just work to be done, just steps to be taken..." — 3:45 a.m., final day of trek

I wrote that in my journal just hours before I summited my last peak at sunrise and marched back down to basecamp. I'd lost 18 pounds, grown a beard and missed 1,167 emails.

The funny thing? When I sat down to begin answering them, I couldn't help but stare into space and daydream about which mountain I was going tackle next.

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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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