

The Power of Intention[©]

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The following is the most powerful and important tool I have in my personal and professional toolbox. It is the central driver that has allowed us to overcome amazing obstacles in order to develop Microplant Nurseries into a successful company focused on the commercial micropropagation of (mostly woody) plants.

MY NUGGET IS ABOUT MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

During our IPPS meeting in Portland this year, I asked our entire group to help illustrate my message and they did it with gusto. When I asked everyone to get up and move to one side of the room, it took 23 s for about 100 people to get there. I didn't even ask them to do it quickly! The challenge given was for each person to cross the room in a different way than those who went before them. How many ways are there to cross a room? It took about 20 min, helped along with some lively rock and roll music and the results were often hysterically funny. Cartwheels, jumping jacks, zigzag, with cell phones, bumping into walls, hopping, skipping, hopping backwards, oogling your spouse with binoculars (thanks Mike Evans!) reading a newspaper, yoga, queenie waves...on and on it went.

The point of it all was this:

- 1) **If You Intend to Do Something...You Will.** The most important step is deciding to do it. One of the best examples I know of, is Diana Nyad. She intended to swim from Cuba to Florida. She declared it to herself. She didn't try to do it, she intended to do it. Nobody gets things done by "trying" to do them.
- 2) **The Rest Is Just Mechanics.** How you get there is just something you need to figure out. We often focus on the struggle with the "how" part of the equation and choose to give up because we can't see the answer right away. If you give up, that's OK, just recognize that you didn't intend to get there in the first place. Own your choices.
- 3) **What Do You Let Get In Your Way?** Sometimes there may be roadblocks or rocks in the way. Realize they are just rocks. If you really intend to get there, you are going to have to come up with a way to get around them. Diana Nyad ran into many obstacles on her swim. She made several attempts over the years. Sharks, jelly fish, dehydration and fatigue were all problems she had to overcome. Eventually she got there. It was her fifth attempt. She was 64 years old.

Sometimes those roadblocks are people...like your boss or the bank telling you there isn't enough money to buy that critical new piece of equipment, or you can't hire more people to get the job done, or your spouse thinking they know the way to the concert, but they really don't. Sometimes the roadblock is our own head...not smart enough, not strong enough...choosing to believe it when someone knocks down your brilliant idea. The very hardest part in capturing the power of intention is in realizing that it is nobody else's fault if you don't get there. The key word is YOU. What do YOU let get in your way? If you can't afford that new piece of equipment or more labor, what is your next plan to get the job done? And why did you not drive the car to the concert yourself, or have the directions handy, or make sure you left the house earlier? If the group shoots your idea down, and you know you had the answer, why did you not choose to come up with a different way to get the team to understand? Own the fact that you never intended to get there, don't blame others.

Once you see the obstacles as just things to get around, the getting around can be so much fun to create.

Be a Soft Rock

Many of us are in leadership positions in our companies. Pay attention to those moments that you throw roadblocks in front of others. Encourage folks to find their way around

you by suggesting alternatives or simply expressing the confidence you have that a solution is possible.

It is amazing what the people in your life can accomplish if you simply get out of the way and cheer them on to the other side of the room.