



Our Need for Discovery

When I recently observed the Discovery space shuttle launch, it reinforced for me how important the basic human need to “discover” is. It underlies our motivation to achieve as well as provides us with many of our deepest, most meaningful enjoyments in life. Here are four ways to increase the positive discoveries you make in life each day. *(Reading time 180 seconds).*

Watching in person the last launch of the space shuttle Discovery re-defined the word “awesome” for me. At the end of the countdown all of us were fixed, awestruck as we watched this giant chariot of the sky glowing golden, carrying 6 astronauts, rising above the earth reaching speeds of thousands of miles an hour, in a minute. It made me smile and made me proud.

Reflecting on the launch later, I realized what had awed me was not so much the shuttle, the flames, the power, speed, or even the expected pinpoint accuracy that would precisely fly the shuttle to its rendezvous with a small capsule floating in space. No. I was more struck by the human drive to discover how to do this, so we can find out what is “out there.” It was the grandeur of that human motivation itself as well as its outcome that left me awestruck.

That desire to discover, that human curiosity to “remove the covering, to find out, bring to light, to see or gain knowledge of something previously unknown” bestows magnificent benefits on each of us.

Why Intellectual Curiosity is More Important than Intellectual Capacity

Big discoveries, like those that have made space flight possible, can change the course of history for all of mankind. But personal discoveries can be equally powerful in changing the course and adding to the amazement of your individual life on a daily basis.

You know this. When you have discovered a quicker way of doing something at work it not only makes your job easier on an ongoing basis, it makes you proud that you uncovered it. When you have discerned something different or special that pleases your spouse

or friend – you’ve given them joy – and have something you can do that makes both of your lives happier on an ongoing basis.

You don’t have to be brilliant or even smart to multiply the positive discoveries you make in life. You just have to be intentional. Those of average intelligence who are very curious often are wiser and more successful in their life as a whole, than more intelligent individuals who are less engaged in discovering the world around them.

Intentional Discovery

Many of the valuable discoveries we make are accidental. But you can multiply the contribution new discoveries add to your life by making more of them happen on purpose. When you develop a strong enough curiosity about life to actively engage in discovery every day, you gain wisdom and a deeper joy of life much more quickly.

Here are four easy areas and ways to grow your intentional sense of curiosity and resulting discovery:

Discover New Ways to Achieve – You can discover today better ways to do the jobs you are tasked with or to organize your work or your day. Don’t say “My work is routine and I just crank it out” Every job can always be done faster, better, cheaper. We are in a world of constant change and lack of new discovery has not only been the downfall of many once major companies, but has and will stymie a career. You can easily avoid that problem if you decide to be intentional about discovery.

Today you can uncover and achieve the use of an additional application of a software program you currently use on your laptop or smart phone. You can gain new knowledge regarding your profession or career by reading an industry paper or leading edge article. Or you can discover more about a person who changed history, what made them tick and how they thought by starting to read their biography. Such discovery is not hard, but it will add important value to your life.

Discover New Ways to Enjoy – Make it a habit to discover new enjoyments – either brand new ones or a different way of doing something you already enjoy. I like to fish – and it gives me great pleasure to explore new places to cast my line. Make something unique for dinner – a recipe you’ve wanted to try. Or go to a new restaurant. Take your lunch to a park and just listen; be curious about what is happening around you. Start reading a new fiction author or buy the initial components needed for a hobby you have been considering. Life is to enjoy. Be intentional about exploring new ways to do it every day.

Work-Life Balance Lessons

By David Friend

One of the work-life balance advantages of working in finance at Turner is also one of the disadvantages. Those of us in business unit finance departments often have the advantage of more predictable schedules than those on job sites, but for two weeks of every month, we have very little schedule flexibility. When we're meeting nonnegotiable reporting deadlines, we have to be here doing the work. While we know in advance which weeks will be the most intense and can block out that time on our calendars, the lack of schedule flexibility has the potential to create personal stress.

In spite of the challenges this can present, I believe I have good work-life balance. I was able to coach my older son's football team last fall and hope to do so again. Over the years, I've learned how to manage my time, prioritize, and communicate when I need help. Here are some of the things I do to get the balance that my family and I need:

Accept your reality – whatever it is. In my department, we know our peak periods in advance and we schedule activities around them. Accepting this as part of the job description helps reduce some of the stress that comes with calendar conflicts.

Commit to your commitments. Last fall, I agreed to be an assistant coach for my son's football team. When I did that, I committed not only to him, but to every other boy on the team. I owe it to them to be there for practice as much as possible. If I can't be there, it's up to me to make sure another one of the assistant coaches is there to cover for me.

Know what's important to you and stay focused on it. A colleague with older children once mentioned that he was glad he made time to coach youth sports when his kids were young. His comment made an impression on me. When my children are grown, I want them to remember how much time we spent together, not how much time we were apart.

Be sensitive to the work-life balance needs of others. Encourage others to communicate when they have a conflict and support them when they do. When we help each other, we're all more likely to get the balance we need both inside and outside the workplace.

David Friend is the financial manager of the Orlando business unit.

Discover More About Others – Life's greatest achievements and enjoyments usually come from our relationships with others. Each individual you meet can be a fascinating potential source for both. But each individual has to be discovered for who they are – the surface meet and greet won't tell you that. You can achieve a more valuable relationship with a co-worker, client, friend, child or significant other today. Just give them the opportunity to reveal more about themselves by asking them to lunch or dinner and being truly curious about them. Ask questions about their past, their pleasures, their thoughts for their future – and if you are listening, their answers will prompt other questions. What you discover may surprise you, and it will always help in making judgments about more positively interacting with that individual in the future.

Helping Others to Discover – Watching others benefit from discoveries you've helped them make is one of life's most satisfying rewards. When you help an adult or child discover a new skill and then see them using it to better their lives, it is rewarding. When the joys you have shared – of a vacation place – a special meal – a tradition – are then revisited with joy by your children or friends – the smile is deep. Today, if you take one of your parents or siblings out to explore something that brings you great pleasure, you are potentially creating a lifetime of immeasurable value for each of you.

Yes, being a doer in life is good – but there is more. You also want to be a curious seeker and explorer. So decide. Will it be a new achievement, enjoyment, or person? What or who will you discover today?

Jim Bird, Publisher

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Quotes by Marcel Proust

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes."

"We don't receive wisdom; we must discover it for ourselves after a journey that no one can take for us or spare us."

"Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom."

Marcel Proust (1871 – 1922) was a French novelist, essayist and critic.

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By helping someone at work discover something of value that you already know, you are changing their life and yours for the better. Why not do that today?