



MISSION POSSIBLE

**A PLAN TO ASSURE ENDURING RELEVANCE TO
THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE**

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A PLAN TO ASSURE ENDURING RELEVANCE TO THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

by Thomas Allen Malm
c. 2022 by Thomas Allen Malm

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DELIVERING FOR AMERICA had no chance to succeed from its inception. This document, MISSION POSSIBLE, launches from this irrefutable truth best explained by Peter F. Drucker: “An organization begins to die the day it begins to run for the benefit of insiders and not the benefit of the outsiders.”

There are three documents supporting MISSION POSSIBLE that were first sent to key influencers (including the Postal Regulatory Commissioners) in 2021. REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS weeds through the logical fallacy and misinformation aired during Senate Hearings in August 2020. The document listed counterpoints and recommendations with a workable set of actions still appropriate today.

The documents, QUESTIONING DELIVERING FOR AMERICA, and CREATING A STABLE WORKFORCE, exposes the incompleteness of information within the 10-year plan, it exposes flaws from poor planning methodology, discusses volumes of overlooked information from key sources and studies, and details tactics to address the root challenges from which all other issues cascade. Shortly after these documents were distributed, the Postal Regulatory Commissioners unanimously echoed their reservations regarding the 10-year plan.

The Postal Regulatory Commissioners issued a formal and historic warning as DELIVERING FOR AMERICA was launched. The Commissioners shared unanimous concern that information used for the 10-year plan was incomplete and conclusions were unsupported. They cautioned that the complexity of mail delivery seemed to be overlooked and/or misunderstood in the calculations behind the changes DELIVERING FOR AMERICA directs.

The system for mail delivery in America needs eyes above what seems logical to the financially driven mind now at the helm. Strategic thinking is not an obvious “risk-averse” process, rather one of calculated risk and reward. It rises from above the spreadsheet, with a sharp vision for possibility, and is forward focused on the needs of customers from which all market opportunity comes.

This proposal is both a tourniquet-like response to stop unnecessary losses now, whilst also bridging the intelligence and skill set gaps between DELIVERING FOR AMERICA and the output of a correct planning process. MISSION POSSIBLE presents specific strategies and tactics to arrest the negative results from DELIVERING FOR AMERICA. It outlines and instructs the proper Sun Tzu-influenced formal planning processes that dictate the correct paths to the most assured successes.

MISSION POSSIBLE proposes local oversight to bring agility and responsiveness in the hiring new employees. It presents a reinvention of training programs. There are proven methods that will restore

integrity to information collection and metrics measures. In addition to focusing on core causes of the Postal Service's greatest challenges, MISSION POSSIBLE addresses four unexpected (unimagined) truths that have risen from DELIVERING FOR AMERICA:

- **THE MOTIVATION IS TO LOOK GOOD TO CONGRESS.** Citizens are not getting their incoming mail delivered “on-time” as often as current metrics are reporting success to management, the Postal Board of Governors, the Office of the Inspector General, the US Congress, and the citizen-owners of the American mail delivery system. District offices are directing their local Postmasters to falsify on-time delivery data.

It is called “metrics enhancement” (the expression used in an e-mail memo to Philadelphia District postmasters that I read in the fall of 2021). In “metrics enhancement,” the priority is to deliver packages and to bring back any letter or flat mail when all the packages cannot be delivered by a day's end (the returned letter mail has already been recorded “on-time”, despite it being returned to the post office. Packages are on-time only when scanned at the delivery point).

- **PROMISE OF MANPOWER STABILITY UNMET.** Current mentality of Postal Service is to value newly hired personnel as expendable, interchangeable, and disposable resources. Newly hired employees are not presented a desirable career opportunity. This is problematic and fixable.
- **LEADERSHIP GAPS:** Culture clashes between experienced employees and elements of the 10-year plan has caused an exodus of valued and experienced talent. This loss of talent exacerbates all operational and personnel training/management/retention issues that the OIG cited as causing nearly \$6.8 billion in annual losses before DELIVERING FOR AMERICA was set in motion.
- **WORK STRUCTURES/CULTURES CAN BORDER “LORD OF THE FLIES” IN SPOTS.** Work structures and toxic cultures in remote post office locations have eroded to the unimaginable. DELIVERING FOR AMERICA has created isolated management-voids that elevate stress, augment failure, and expose pockets of antisocial and potentially violent behavior.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Thomas Allen Malm has enjoyed unique and rare business mentoring experience and continues as an ever-evolving student of organizational leadership theory and best practices in strategic planning.

Malm had a very visible role as Marketing and Operations Manager at Brother International. There he authored Brother International's first three "best-selling" products to three different industries. His plans became the template for planning that took the \$200 million typewriter company to \$1 billion in nine years. Of key competitors in the consumer typewriter industry of 1990, Brother is the only to be thriving in 2022.

At the height of his business career, Malm was recruited by a \$19 million-dollar wholesale distribution company in 1993 as its Director of Marketing Operations. He helped the company grow to a reported \$70+ million while being elevated to Vice President/General Manager. Sold to an equity investment company, Malm eventually was out of step with the leadership vision of the financial minded owners. "We were going in different directions," the President would explain. The direction they chose resulted in business skidding by 70% in two years, with assets liquidated, and doors bolted a few years later. The company had been UPS' largest COD shipper in South Carolina.

Today, Malm is a postal clerk who receives trucks, sorts mail, and handles packages. He serves the windows and floors of post offices in the rural South Carolina Lowcountry after serving nearly seven years in Delaware and Southeastern Pennsylvania.

RESUME HIGHLIGHTS

Brother International, Inc.

1986 - 1993

Marketing and Operations Manager – Home Appliance Division (1991 – 1993)

Sales and Marketing Manager – Music Products (1990 - 1991)

Marketing Manager – Consumer Products Division (1989 - 1990)

National Accounts Coordinator (1988 -1989)

District Sales Manager (1986 -1988)

- Wrote the Strategic Plan for the company's first category-leading "Best Seller" (Brother MDI-30/40), introducing the company to the Musical Products Industry.
- Was assigned product management responsibility for Facsimile Products when the company's first-generation goods earned less than 1% of the highly competitive market. Within one generation of new products, the plan Malm authored gained 60% market share.
- Was given responsibility for writing the strategy for Brother's P-Touch lettering/labeling products that disrupted the industry, claimed the "Best Seller" position, and expanded Brother's presence to include virtually every business and institution, millions of households and claim to the generic term for labels of its type.
- Malm's template for planning helped guide a \$200 MM company with over 50% of its revenue dependent upon consumer-level typewriters to become a \$1 Billion company in nine years later while its largest competitor spiraled to its demise.
 - Chairman Hiromi Gunji once introduced Malm as "The smartest person in the company."

MBT International

1993 – 2001

Charleston, South Carolina

Vice President / General Manager - Harmony Music Products (2000 – 2001)

Vice President – Marketing (1999 – 2000)

Director of Marketing/Operations (1993 – 1999)

- MUSIC TRADES MAGAZINE listed the company's revenue increase from \$40 MM in 1993 to over \$70MM when the company was sold to venture capital firm in 2000.
- Company was awarded its first "Best Product of the Year" award in Malm's first year as its Marketing Director. Multiple awards would follow.
- Company launched its first product to claim Best Seller position from the formal Strategic Plan drafted by Malm (Groove Juice). Product was later acquired by Promark (a leading percussion products company).
- Was removed from his position by new ownership and within two years the company achieved only 30% of the revenue reached at the time of Malm's departure.

Lafayette College, Head Coach, Ice Hockey

2011 - 2014

- Lafayette College has one of the oldest traditions of collegiate hockey in America. The program fell apart in the 2010 season. Worked with them in non-league play in 2011 and helped them gain a position in the Great Northeast Collegiate Hockey Conference where they completed a successful season in 2012-13.
- Under the system Malm coached, the team avenged every loss to every team they played in the first half of the first season except one (which resulted in a 2-2 tie).

Uberchic Media, Business Writer / Private Aviation Writer

2008 – 2011

Wrote nearly 50% of the magazines original copy during this period.

New World Aviation, Inc, National Marketing Manager

2007 - 2008

Eliminated advertising agency expense and improved measurable outcomes and higher returns by bringing all promotional activities "in-house." (New World Aviation) Clarified message to focus on consumer needs/wants to claim performance leadership position in market. Identified company's 12-Points of Competitive Leadership. Doubled meaningful promotional exposure while reducing expense by over 70%. Attached strategic objectives to all promotional spending with metrics for measuring results.

T.A. Malm & Associates, Business Consultant

2008 – 2014

Quakertown, PA/Newark, DE

Clients:

B. Braun Medical Inc. August 2011 – October 2012

Corporate Communications: Managed Public Relations functions while the department went through reorganization.

Steel Ice Center: January 2011 – January 2012

Served Director of Hockey under one-year agreement to develop and deliver programs to improve the quality of instruction and play and ultimately increase revenue.

DesignLynx: 2008 - 2010

Helped develop competitive market strategy that included positioning and business development tactics for the fledgling design firm.

Writer/Author 2008 – Present

Books include ABSOLUTELY VULNERABLE (Anecdotal manuscript discussing strategic business planning and organizational leadership) and TRANSFORMING TO GROW (Profiles of key leadership personalities in the Lehigh Valley and Tom Ridge).

Boy Scouts of America, District Executive

2005 –

2007

Was named to President's Club for membership growth (top 2% in nation). Executed most successful fundraising events in District history. Succeeded in getting increased support from the United Way (which nationwide was rare very rare for BSA).

SoundBrands, LLC (and former Laney USA)

2001 – 2005

President, Vice President / General Manager (aka Laney USA, 2001 – 2002). The business increased by over 100% in its first year.

Previous employment history includes Royal Business Machines, Casio Inc., Jordan-Kitts, Dorn Music (dba Lowrey Piano & Organ Center), Wilmington Piano, and Southland Corporation.

GROWTH THROUGH CORRECTED VISION

Seeing information wrongly has motivated a tragic chain of conclusions. Valuable revenue-generating products were stripped from risk and expense, and thus modified to become mundane, valueless, and unappealing. Prices were increased and services were diminished to spark a predictable and deserved negative customer churn.

- Slowing mail delivery does not create bottom-line improvements. It creates lost topside revenue, lost customers, and lost value to the USPS brand.¹ This is a measurable result after two years of DELIVERING FOR AMERICA.
- \$4 billion in overtime in the OIG financial reports discussed in August 2020 represented at least \$2.5 billion annual net gain versus wages paid a decade before without slowing the mail. This was discussed in OIG reports that presented nearly \$7 billion in annual losses associated with training and turnover as a more appropriate point for measurable correction. The document CREATING A STABLE WORKFORCE² explores root causes and outlines transformative improvement where workforce shortages and quick turnover of newly hired employees persist.
- A 9% improvement in "trucks on time" created added expense, lowered service values, diminished employee commitment, and eroded the value of postage.³ Not delivering all the mail swiftly hurts America. It cripples business. It causes hardship in homes. It killed 4,200 chickens in Maine.⁴
- Late trucks are not the cause for late hours for letter carriers. When dispatch mail and trucks do not wait, heavy volume is unnecessarily created in the days that follow. Then carriers spend hours (not minutes) delivering along America's roads in the dark.⁵
- When all a day's mail is not brought swiftly to post offices for delivery, those letter carriers who had previously risked their lives to keep the promise of Herodotus ("Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night. . .") are sent a message from management about its revised view, in practice, of the value of on-time delivery. In summary they ask, "Why would I risk my life in the ice and snow? If it does not matter that all mail is delivered, should it matter if none is delivered?"⁶
- Increases in commercial pricing to "prevent a taxpayer bailout" is a taxpayer bailout. It ruins customer relationships and violates the intention of the law (2006 Postal Act) that disapproves of

¹ REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS: SENATE HEARINGS HELD AUGUST 21, 2020.

² Complete title and copyright: ENHANCING THE TEN-YEAR PLAN: CREATING A STABLE WORKFORCE FOR THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE BEGINS AT THE TOP, by Thomas Allen Malm, c. 2021 Thomas Allen Malm

³ REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

⁴ Thousands of Chickens Arrive Dead Amid Postal Service Turmoil, Concord Monitor, August 20, 2020

⁵ REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

⁶ Ibid

one category of service's income covering the losses of another.⁷ But mostly, it taxes the consumers through higher fees passed along to them in a less obvious way.

- The expense to deliver a package for "Last Mile" partners in rural America is less than 15-cents. "Last Mile" does not subsidize private carriers. It cannot add up to "\$1 to \$5 in losses."⁸

The pages that follow provide critical and urgent tactics that will focus on challenges at their root, address specific failures with pin-point purpose (versus broad-brushed sweeps), and prepare the Postal Service to be agile and responsive.

MANAGEMENT

STRATEGY: CREATE STRATEGIC PLANNING/THINKING CULTURE

Adopt best practices and planning processes used in consumer marketing that produce success 86% of the time. Recruit strategic planning, product and services management, intelligence, and integrity monitoring personnel from current employees (in partnership with labor unions).

TACTIC: ESTABLISH A MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVE CULTURE

Management by Objective (MBO) defines every employee's role, their importance within the total plan, and sets measures for evaluating outcomes. It helps employees approach work from a sense of purpose. It informs and encourages with defined rewards that assure success. The process highlights an employee's performance, discusses a pathway for their career satisfaction, and details the gaps they need to address with specific action plans.⁹ How to affect an MBO culture was presented in CREATING A STABLE WORKFORCE, Page 9.

STRATEGY: SET VISION TO MEET THE NEEDS AND WILL OF THE CITIZEN-OWNERS OF THE US MAIL SYSTEM

Work within the HEIRARCHY OF STRATEGY to set a vision supported by a definitively articulated mission with detailed strategies that assure success.

The Postal Board of Governors should meet to determine what the Postal Service should be. From the totality of information, the Board of Governors must know:

- The mission.
- The customers.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ In letter sent to all US Senators in February 2020 in response to President Trump's "Joke" remarks.

⁹ See example in Appendix A.

- What customers value.
- What firmly articulated goals need achieving in the long and short term.

TACTIC: OPEN DOOR CULTURE

With successes dependent upon trained individuals closest to the challenges and opportunities, the structure must not impede information flow. Individuals from every stratus regardless of worker status, management role, or supervisory responsibility must have the freedom to bring questions, air concerns, and raise ideas to individuals at every stratus, even if above an immediate supervisor. Every door must willingly open to any employee. This is agility. This is efficiency. This neutralizes politics and abusive behavior. Because it is policy, it is an employee advantage that is rarely needed.

“If your boss is not comfortable that you are here talking with me, then he/she is not strong enough to lead in this company.” Those were the words of Hiromi Gunji, Chairman of Brother International as he explained his “open door” culture. A more detailed example is shared in Appendix E.

TACTIC: ADOPT VISION FOR POSSIBILITIES. BE STRICT IN DEFENSE OF AMERICAN EXCELLENCE AS A CRITICAL SUCCESS VALUE

Any strategic direction of the Postal Service brand that is not aligned with the symbolic excellence of the traditional Postal Service brand and its symbolic focus on being “World’s Best” is not aligned with American values, the American will, and is dismissible for setting an unreasonable burden on America (the price of mediocrity).

TACTIC: RESTORE COMMERCIAL AVIATION CONTRACTS WITH DEDICATED PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Instead of moving mail to trucking logistics, the Postal Service management could have seen that the OIG indicated that big losses were derived from poor monitoring of commercial air carriers. They noted that a better job could have reduced expense by \$5 billion of a \$17 billion commitment with one air carrier alone.

Returning more mail to air carriers for transport and restoring swift services while devising tactics to improve USPS monitoring of air carrier performance, would cut losses and improve performance. Each contracted air carrier presents opportunities for recovering billions-of-dollars with minimal added expense and manpower.

STRATEGY: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

There is a barrier of unfamiliarity that keeps emerging generations from knowing the service values offered. Engagement with the community through practical examples, that focus on the differentiating and unique benefits of the Postal Service, can elevate awareness, and attract new business with little added expense or manpower. Always present festive, welcoming spirit appropriate for event.

TACTIC: SCHOOL VISITS/IN CLASSROOM POST OFFICES

The schools no longer require students to know how to address a letter or use a post office. If classrooms in America could be visited by specifically trained postal representatives to teach how mail works, a critical barrier could be overcome in attracting emerging generations to the values of postal services. A campaign could be launched in a unified national sweep, lifted through a strong Public Relations strategy. Focus on augmented product values and symbolism with hands-on and practical instruction to demystify mail delivery and eliminate barriers-to-entry for new market growth.

TACTIC: BE PRESENT IN COMMUNITY EVENTS

Post Offices with engaged relationships with communities may find new growth opportunities in awareness campaigns at community block parties, parades, bridal/wedding shows, and limitless special events that bridge the familiarity gaps and accent augmented and symbolic values. Bring retail items like postcards and stamps specific to the event. Sell commemorative stamps with date stamp. Collateral materials designed to promote unique and differentiating values of postal products and services. Such presentations should attract, engage, and cultivate the youth market with interactive and informative games. All designed to demystify the mail for new markets.

WORKFORCE

Before DELIVERING FOR AMERICA was published, there was ample information to address several meaningful problems with modest risk and expense. A key opportunity was found when the OIG reported that as much as \$13.7 billion was lost over a two-year period from “training and on-boarding costs” due to high turnover. Data and exit interviews identify specific root causes for this costly failure that DELIVERING FOR AMERICA does not address. CREATING A STABLE WORKFORCE is dedicated to personnel management and proper corrective steps to attract the best talent.

STRATEGY: VIEW EMPLOYEE AS THE SOURCE FROM WHICH ALL GOOD COMES

Viewing personnel as the conduit for all customer opportunities will result in revenue improvement. An appealing work environment supports success cultivated through an empowered “think like owners” mentality amongst the workforces. Investment in training, empowerment, and management’s trust will motivate all employees to act on behalf of the Postal Board of Governor’s vision.

STRATEGY: EVOLVE MANAGEMENT/LABOR RELATIONSHIP PARADIGM

These six workforce objectives listed below will not be met in an environment in which management and labor are adversaries. A partnership paradigm should grow to successfully work toward solutions with common benefits.

- Restore meaningful and frequent training programs.
- Train and empower local supervisors to make most personnel decisions.
- Partnership with Labor to establish management training.
- Establish Management by Objective plan and review process.
- Support a Labor Union/Management partnership to pursue and correct abusive leadership-personnel, cheaters, and frauds.
- Establish succession program.

STRATEGY: ADDRESS EMPLOYEE RETENSION ISSUE

The \$13.7 billion in employee turnover losses every two years would be substantially mitigated and potentially stopped through:

- Live, in-person, in-classroom leadership training for ALL employees.
- Training in self-leadership, empowerment.
- Identifying leadership candidates.
- Establishing quality control measures and monitoring.
- Eliminating “bad apples.”

TACTIC: LOCAL AND EFFICIENT HIRING BY THE POSTMASTER/SUPERVISOR/OFFICER-IN-COMMAND

Standardize processes and train local postmasters and supervisors in new hiring processes that decentralize personnel recruiting. The objective is to shorten hiring times and meet needs with the person deciding to have a deeper familiarity of the job and its need. An objective is to add agility and responsiveness that top candidates should expect, while elevating the local leader’s personal investment in the success of those hired.

TACTIC: ASSURE ALL ENTRY-LEVEL POSITIONS MEET THE DEFINITION OF DEPENDABLE AND GAINFUL EMPLOYEMENT

Entry-level employees receive no management commitment to their success, ergo the new hire gives equal commitment in return. This stops when the Postal Service:

- Re-establishes “career path” employee development structures in place from 2007-2010.
- Models recruiting, training, and preparation for assignment from best practices and apprentice programs of other trades. Objective is to offer 40-hour position to every career-seeking candidate, with PTF roles truly becoming parttime with some exceptions. Explore possibility for work assignments for new hires established in partnership with labor unions.

- Partners with Labor Unions to identify candidates with leadership aptitudes and welcomes them to participate in specific management-track training and succession plans.

TACTIC: CREATE EFFECTIVE LEADERS

Establish leadership training program for all new hires, regardless of their ambition to lead. Leadership training helps understand leadership motivations that benefit all. This is discussed in **CREATING A STABLE WORKFORCE**, beginning on Page 14.

TACTIC: TRANSFORM STRUCTURE TO EMPOWER DECISIONS CLOSEST TO OPPORTUNITY

Tactics devised to create higher service qualities and swift responses to opportunities are through an “upside down” organizational structure that trusts the trained, motivated, and empowered associate nearest the opportunity or challenge, will know the best solution to a situation (within specific limitations) and need not wait for “permission” to do best. The role of management in an empowered MBO culture is to create the environment for success of those they lead. This structure is discussed in **CREATING A STABLE WORKFORCE**, beginning on Page 8.

TACTIC: INTERNAL “THINK LIKE OWNERS” CAMPAIGN

Communicate with employees in a “think like owners” empowerment campaign. Train, trust, inform, and motivate, those at the point-of-success with the respect for their critical contributions that attach to all success. Keep reminding all in the organization that they are citizen-owners and stakeholders through motivation and incentives that are born from respect for their individual importance.

TACTIC: ADDRESS USING SICK LEAVE BEFORE RETIRING TO ELIMINATE OVERTIME

Work with unions, personnel management, accounting, and operational leadership to allow jobs of those retiring to enjoy values from accrued sick leave while assuring replacements to fill positions without costly delay.

Scenario example: Kennett Square, Pennsylvania post office had three tenured employees retire within months. Two used their remaining sick leave before retiring, tying up the positions for months before positions were allowed to be posted (while the employee is never going to return, their position is not officially vacant until their sick leave accumulation is exhausted). Meeting the work needs in this circumstance (which is common) requires pulling from other offices to fill the positions and creates unnecessary expense in overtime.

Start with a study to understand the universal nature of the issue. Create solution through partnership with labor to fix overtime expenses in an organic, root-cause resolution. Practical solution: Payout for accrued sick leave. Fill all essential positions when vacated.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

GOAL: RESTORE/PROMOTE/ENHANCE/TAP CONSUMER VALUES

Fundamentally, the reduced standards for mail delivery described in DELIVERING FOR AMERICA brought losses in transaction opportunities, topside revenue production, and ignored the most significant areas for new growth: Meeting the needs of customers. These following strategies and tactics will produce topside income required for any business success.

STRATEGY: FOCUS ON FIRST-CLASS LETTER MAIL FOR REVENUE GROWTH

Any business will understand that their highest volume product/service categories will create the greatest opportunities for improvement or the deepest dangers of failure. The OIG (and additional studies and research from Belgium, and Switzerland) showed case examples in which dramatic price increases produced less than a 2% reduction in volume. The accelerated erosion in American letter volume seen in 2022 demonstrates the importance of value and the customers' rejection of "snailier" mail.

Restore swift service. Sell augmented product values and grow with new and emerging generations and the needs of their markets. There are untapped markets to cultivate from the values delivered by the United States Postal Service. This is where greatest increases in revenue must come.

STRATEGY: DEVELOP UNTAPPED MARKETS

There is a generation (or more) unfamiliar with and uncomfortable at the post office. This represents markets to attract with predictable outcomes.

TACTIC: "A GIFT AS GOOD AS DIAMONDS" AUGMENTED VALUE CAMPAIGN

Identify test market for a PR and Commercial Campaign that delivers the augmented message of love. Every relationship, every occasion. Message: "A gift as good as diamonds and it didn't even cost a buck."

EXAMPLE: "PLUS SELLING": Grandmother/lover letter campaign: Love delivered at the mailbox.

When students from Lincoln University would need help addressing an envelope, clerks would show how, and then sell a stamp for the piece being mailed. In one case a clerk would sell a second stamp while telling the college student, "Now that you know how to address a letter, write to your mom."

The students would usually say they "send text messages to mom all the time."

“Imagine how she’s going to feel when she sees you took the time to write a letter. It’s as good as sending diamonds, but it didn’t cost a buck.” The clerk would sell the augmented value, the feeling of love that mom gets when she opens her mailbox and sees her child went to the trouble to give her something she can keep.

This value proposition can be repeated to limitless markets: i.e., job searches, romance, corporate PR campaigns.

STRATEGY: COLLECT ALL THE MONEY/COVER ALL COSTS INDEPENDENTLY BY CATEGORY; RESTORE VALUE, INCREASE TRANSACTIONS, REVIVE COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

When attempts are made to increase the price of shipping packages to cover losses in letter delivery, the intended problem is not resolved and a new one is created. This idea is contrary to the intention of the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act that expected all categories of mail to cover their costs, “direct and casual.” Resolving pricing issues will restore lost relationships and bring immediate improvements to losses in volume and revenue generation.

TACTIC: REVERSE PAST ACTIONS THAT RAISED PRICING FOR LAST-MILE PARTNERS TO RESTORE WIN-WIN-WIN SCENARIO

Set pricing to partners to cover costs “direct and casual” only. Reestablish the United States Postal Service as self-funding and valued infrastructure to help businesses reduce costs passed along to the American consumers. Be infrastructure used by commerce to streamline and restore competitive value to commercial delivery. Eliminate redundant travel in low density areas by the commercial carriers and help lower operational service costs passed to American consumers by eliminating millions of redundant travel miles. This will also lower the carbon footprint of package delivery to America.

TACTIC: CONSUMER MARKETING PRINCIPLES FOR FIRST-CLASS POSTAGE

Current postage stamp pricing does not address the variable costs at the point of transaction. Today, a single stamp transaction will accrue the same labor and materials expense as one-thousand stamps sold during a single transaction.

Tactics to collect additional “direct and casual” costs of the various postage stamp transactions can be established through IT support that will identify and impose higher postage stamp prices to single stamp sales versus lower prices for quantity purchases, so all casual expenses are reduced, and volume incentives for the customer are created.

- **SELL STAMPS LIKE MOVIE THEATER POPCORN**

From “movie theater” popcorn pricing studies, consumers purchase more quantity if the value presented is obvious. If a small bag of popcorn is \$0.75 and the gigantic is \$1.00, few small bags are sold.

- **BUSINESS AND NON-PROFIT DISCOUNTS**

Strong resistance to price increases of postage stamps have been registered by commercial mailers and non-profits. Criteria can be set for qualified rebates to specific categories of customers. The IT department can create automatic point-of-sale discounts to those registering EINs and non-profit documentation with the Postal Service. This data can be valuable in promotions to add new revenue.

- **COMMERCIAL FIRST-CLASS**

In many cases, some financial institutions send private banking information to customers, and some commercial invoicing is mailed via Standard postage. This does not include Forwarding and Return-to-Sender features. To better support American commerce and the privacy of American people, creating a discounted First-Class product to replace Standard could be evaluated for feasibility and market need.

TACTIC: NEED-BASED POSTAGE STAMP INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

Informed decisions based on Postmaster needs to assure stamp inventories are consistent in meeting demand throughout the post office network will reduce lost sales. Addressing the broad-brushed constriction of inventories now imposed at the window will add incremental revenue.

APPENDIX A: MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVE EXAMPLE

Management by objective example: The organization's leadership develops long-term and short-term goals articulated and prioritized within a preliminary draft of the Chief Executive's annual evaluation document. The Chief's evaluation document will state the organization's immediate needs in defined terms, with connections to long-term plans so mission drift is avoided.

The Chief's document is given to his/her direct reports from which this staff draw their individual goals defining how they anticipate contributing to the Chief's success objectives. These documents from the C-Suite (after being reviewed by the Chief to assure when all goals are met, his are as well) are then distributed to the executive leadership team's direct reports, who then draw their objectives.

The process is repeated throughout the organization to assure that from the customers' mailboxes to L'Enfant Plaza, every strategic business unit from local post offices to maintenance operations, to IT, and to finance and the legal department are functioning from the same vision and progressing in the direction of connected mission achievement.

APPENDIX B: LETTER SHARED WITH SENATORS REGARDING LEADERSHIP MODEL FOR NEXT POSTMASTER GENERAL

1000 Fountainview Circle, Apt. 208
Newark, DE 19713

March 16, 2020

Editor, The Wall Street Journal
1211 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036

Dear Editor,

Your March 3, 2020 article regarding Mr. Jack Welch's passing reported that, "[his] success was driven by a hard-nosed strategy to slash less profitable businesses and unproductive employees." From my view, this is almost accurate. More correctly stated, Mr. Welch's test for keeping GE in a business was not profit, but instead it's industry position. The business' share of the market was always the focus.

In his first years, Mr. Welch shut down, spun-off or sold large sections of the company. He only kept those that were first in their markets or competing for first (the ones in second). By not using the tag "Neutron" to your article, you rightfully do not perpetuate the myth and misunderstanding that earned him a reputation similar to the weapons technology that eradicates all life, but leaves the structures sound. He eliminated businesses under the GE umbrella that required resources to attain a position of mediocrity.

Most jobs that separated from GE's payroll continued in businesses that spun-off, while others stayed with divisions and product groups that were sold. My brother-in-law, for example, lived through the effect of the "bomb." His part of a defense contracting segment of GE was blown to a place where what they did would get the attention that was not available in an environment where their scale made them invisible against the "firsts" and "seconds." Because of Mr. Welch's thinking, that business wasn't destroyed. It got a new lease on an eminently more prosperous life.

Yet, with Mr. Welch adopted as the poster boy for expense control, the differently motivated and ambitious leaders were inspired by the "Neutron" image and too often navigated a pathway to the top by executing a horrible plan. This (or should I say "my") generation's understanding of business was crystalized in the entreaty, "It's all about the bottom line." But it isn't about that. Not for any company. Not for any service organization. Not for any success.

From the notion that "the bottom line" is all that matters, we've felt a cascade of wrong thinking. From the notion that Wall Street success is the success for all Americans, we elected a government drawn into the "voodoo" that removed the protections placed by our grandparents and parents that ensured

preventing a repeat of 1920s crash. We allowed our elected officials to remove pricing controls that subsequently produced tumbleweeds on Main Street and set a business climate in which strong Darwinian competition (the necessary 'beating heart' of a capitalist economy) was consumed by the kind of predatory giants that historically always fail (unless given "too big to fail" support by both sides of Congress).

Again, I emphasize that what was primarily important to Mr. Welch was not profit at all, ever. He scolded America's business decision-makers after the crash of 2009. As a business leader your priorities must be products, customers and employees, and your profits are a by-product of doing the right things. His entire catalog of wisdom centers around creating the environment for people and their ideas to succeed. By not focusing on the bottom line as the first priority, Mr. Welch enjoyed greater growth success than anyone in his Century.

I've witnessed firsthand the impact of leaders who misunderstand what Mr. Welch believed. I was told this "Off the record" tale from a company-head within a huge global conglomerate. He (and all other company-heads under the same umbrella) were directed to fire employees for a reason as arbitrary as not having as many weeks onboard as the person in the next cubicle. Sometime later, I happened to be in a train station where I listened to a new department head ask the two employees she now led, why her predecessor was terminated. "Nobody told me," She explained. If she was listening to the Chairman as he addressed his shareholders at the Annual Meeting, she would understand what I did. He promised a reduction of employee payroll. She was just cheaper than the guy she replaced. Neither of the two tales above are about anything but the influence of the accounting department. Mr. Welch asked, "If you managed a baseball team, would you listen more closely to the team accountant or the director of player personnel?"

Through much of my life I had the privilege to be invited to the Chief Executive's table as strategy was set. I've been honored to spend important time discussing organizational vision with dozens of leaders including CEOs who accomplished the remarkable, Four-Star Generals of historic importance, an innovative leader from one President's Cabinet, transformational leaders in education, and a few significant agents of social change. They all share the same core values that were Mr. Welch's foundation for leading. The mission's success and the people who accomplish it are inseparable. It is the context for how I feel about future leadership at the United States Postal Service where I now work.

For the last five years I've been employed by the US Postal Service. I've seen the tail end of one Postmaster General who believed your tax records, stock certificates, business invoices and your loved one's cremated remains might just as well be handled by the part-time clerk at the stationary superstore. I enjoyed the full-term of another Postmaster General who was a product of the system and a clearly competent defender of its values. I anticipate the announcement of the next.

As a business, the Postal Service has an absolute market – it serves every home and every business. As a public trust, it brings American citizens, communities, and business its most important services. Among all agencies, independent polling tells us that the United States Postal Service is the Government agency that citizens trust most. Who wouldn't want to lead that?

Yet, finding the right visionary for the current conditions will be a hard job to fill. What competent executive would take such responsibility for a pay of less than \$400,000 per year? Who would care to have a job reporting to the institutional apathy of Congressional leadership? What visionary would be attracted to the United States Postal Service's accounting methods against which (from the bottom-line perspective) no business has a chance to survive? I've felt the kick as the source of my personal income has been used as a political football. From misinformation and incomplete truths shot into the Twitterverse, I've witnessed the instant negative impact on the business. Who would come to lead in that environment?

The spirit I see daily that my peers put into their work deserve someone excellent to follow. The people keeping the USPS brand promise need a leader to articulate the inspiring vision to make the changes necessary to effectively compete. In these changing times, the search for a new Postmaster General must be for the kind of once-in-a-generation powerhouse who understands what Mr. Welch meant when he said, "If the rate of change on the outside exceeds the rate of change on the inside, the end is near."

This leader might use the USPS as a laboratory to show the rest of American business how systematic long-term success is achieved during the dynamics of American life. This leader will take us to an ideal place that inspires the products customers want to be delivered by the blue uniform they trust most. Hmmm . . . customers, products, employees. These could all benefit from a leader who might sometimes ask, "What would Jack do?"

Sincerely,
Thomas Allen Malm
Postal Worker, Landenberg, Pennsylvania

APPENDIX C: CAMPAIGN DISTRIBUTION LIST

POLITICAL: President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, Sen. Richard Durbin, Sen. Mitch McConnell, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Rep. Kevin McCarthy, Sen. Gary C. Peters, Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney, Sen. Robert Portman, Rep. James Comer, Sen. Thomas R. Carper, Sen. Margaret Wood Hassan, Sen. Josh Hawley, Sen. Ron Johnson, Sen. James Lankford, Sen. Jon Ossoff, Sen. Alex Padilla, Sen. Rand Paul, Sen. Mitt Romney, Sen. Jacky Rosen, Sen. Rick Scott, Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, Rep. Andy Biggs, Rep. Cori Bush, Rep. Michael Cloud, Rep. Andrew S. Clyde, Rep. Gerald E. Connolly, Rep. Jim Cooper, Rep. Danny K. Davis, Rep. Mark DeSaulnier, Rep. Byron Donalds, Rep. Pat Fallon, Rep. Virginia Foxx, Rep. C. Scott Franklin, Rep. Bob Gibbs, Rep. Jimmy Gomez, Rep. Paul A. Gosar, Rep. Glenn Grothman, Rep. Yvette Herrell, Rep. Jody B. Hice, Rep. Clay Higgins, Rep. Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Rep. Jim Jordan, Rep. Fred Keller, Rep. Robin L. Kelly, Rep. Ro Khanna, Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, Rep. Jake LaTurner, Rep. Brenda L. Lawrence, Rep. Stephen F. Lynch, Rep. Nancy Mace, Rep. Kweisi Mfume, Rep. Ralph Norman, Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rep. Katie Porter, Rep. Ayanna Pressley, Rep. Jamie Raskin, Rep. John P. Sarbanes, Rep. Pete Sessions, Rep. Jackie Speier, Rep. Rashida Tlaib, Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Rep. Peter Welch, Sen. Patrick Leahy, Sen. Tammy Baldwin, Sen. John Barrasso, Sen. Roy Blunt, Sen. Cory A. Booker, Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin, Sen. Robert P. Casey, Sen. Christopher A. Coons, Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, Sen. Joni Ernst, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Sen. Joe Manchin, Sen. Patty Murray, Sen. Bernard Sanders, Sen. Charles E. Schumer, Sen. Tim Scott, Sen. Debbie Stabenow, Sen. John Thune, Sen. Mark R. Warner, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Rep. Liz Cheney, Rep. Katherine M. Clark, Rep. James E. Clyburn, Rep. Peter A. DeFazio, Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro, Rep. Steny H. Hoyer, Rep. Hakeem S. Jeffries, Rep. Richard E. Neal, Rep. Gary J. Palmer, Rep. Dean Phillips, Rep. Steve Scalise, Rep. David Scott, Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Rep. John A. Yarmuth

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APPENDIX D: THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS (EXCERPT FROM; ABSOLUTELY VULNERABLE, THE CRISIS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN AMERICA)

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FROM CHAPTER: PLANNING TO PLAN

. . . Statistics state that when people in a business merely say they will do something, they achieve it only 5% of the time. The probability that goals will be accomplished increases as they are written down, shared, and tied to specific measurements. When put into a formal written structure with a deep understanding of the marketplace's dynamics, specific actions, projected results, and regular reporting, the probability of success exceeds 80%. . .

. . . To set the strategic planning process in motion, it's often a good idea to block off time and select a place away from the distractions of the regular functions of the business to get started. Include anyone that has value to add. The ideas in this planning process should be recorded in a way that nothing is lost. The first question to answer should be, "What do you want the company to be in five years?"

. . . Defined in specific, measurable, and realistic terms, a strategic plan must begin with the ultimate objective or objectives of the company. A goal must be stated in very definable and measurable terms. For example, if a professional minor league ice hockey team sets attracting more families as a goal, it needs to be stated in language that specifies the number of families set as the target, and it must include verifiable measurements to monitor progress. When Hiromi Gunji said Brother International would grow to generate a billion dollars in annual revenue in the United States within ten years, it became a measurable ambition for the company by specifying how much and when. When John Kennedy promised a moon walk before the end of the 1960's, there was no question of what would happen and when it would take place.

Goals must be realistic and fit the conditions in which the business operates. The minor league hockey team couldn't realistically set a \$1 billion revenue goal and Gunji couldn't expect to put a Brother employee on the moon. Looking at Brother International's market position and size in 1984, one might have thought that the ten-year, billion-dollar target of a company with \$200 million in revenue was outlandish. Perhaps in the context of the company's history, it was. Yet, against the evolving market conditions and the company's capabilities of the day, it wasn't.

When goals are specific, they focus the tasks of the company on the achievement of very specific results. Goals can be determined by need. In the case of Brother Fax machines, goals were based on the minimum marketshare necessary for the company to stay in the fax machine business. A minor league hockey team may set its goals based on the financial realities of staying afloat. Ideally, goals should be tied to opportunity. We can go to the moon, so we should. We could be a billion-dollar company so we will . . .

Current Conditions

... Current conditions can change rapidly. A stable environment, regardless of how long it has seemed unchanged, can swiftly be altered, leaving the unprepared in ruin. Understanding current condition is to look inward and outward. It is to identify a company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (the SWOT analysis) with an honest and verifiable assessment of the situation. It is to understand the competitors, consumer trends, financial realities, and internal needs of the company. It evaluates staffing and payroll, taxes, and legal issues. It digs past the obvious and sets the stage for the remarkable . . .

... How are you currently performing? Describe your customer-base and why they are your customers. What potential do you have for growth? Which products are most successful? Why are they selling? Do you have products that under-perform and why? Is there adequate and affordable manpower with the skills to do the necessary work and provide a consistent standard of performance? Does the company comply with local laws and federal regulations? A business must be sure there are ample sources of revenue available and that cultivating them can be done profitably and within the budget.

The decision-makers who guide a business must correctly identify the size of the total market and the companies that are engaged in it. What benefits are consumers seeking that you can address? What are the distribution channels that you will use to reach the consumers of your goods and/or service? You need to know as much as possible about the business model of each of your distribution channels. You must identify the competitive pressures you will have to address to be successful. Can you identify your competitor's strengths and weaknesses, and describe their areas of vulnerability? Everything you believe must be verified and proven . . .

... I have seen it plenty of times. The resistance to having a formal plan is that people sometimes must change what they do, how they see their company, and they must accept a level of accountability that makes them uncomfortable. However, the strategic planning process should give employees greater comfort because it produces nothing vague. It reveals, identifies, and clarifies what is happening, what will happen, what can happen, and what must happen to keep them from being a victim in the battles for commercial viability . . .

... Doing current condition research with due diligence moves you past your educated guesses and faulty assumptions. When Brother took its facsimile strategy to market, they didn't invest in building a large consumer pull. There were no magnanimous expositions like the Macintosh Super Bowl ads of 1984 to shift their position from a fraction-of-a-percent of the market to its top position. They didn't court masses of consumers through the pages of the magazines on the newsstands. They focused on changes in the distribution channel and relied on selling just a handful of people: the buyers of the strongest retailers. Identifying the changes in the retail merchandising landscape, they saw where their opportunity would be found, and then focused on the factors that would make them successful.

Reviewing current conditions routinely as part of the planning process does not only keep you abreast of changes that you may have already observed. It establishes the vehicle for investigating their implications.

Key Factors of Success

Understanding the Key Factors for Success is a lot like planning a vacation. In order to enjoy yourself, and for the trip to be successful, what must be in the suitcase? How much money will you need? Is your passport current? Are there adequate opportunities for transportation that fit your budget? What kinds of things will ruin the experience if they are not available or managed? This analogy makes a significant point regarding the importance of planning strategically for business. Most people spend more time annually planning their vacation than their business. They know there are risks that could ruin a holiday if the itinerary is not thoughtful.

... Without defining the tangible, specific, and measurable elements that must be in place for a successful franchise, a company cannot be sure it understands the environment and may not be able to chart its success within it. In professional ice hockey, a key factor for achieving bottom-line profit goals may be the kind of venue lease necessary to function profitably against the threshold of the ticket price and the number of tickets to be sold. A key success factor would identify elements that must be in place to draw fans and to provide them a consistently positive game experience. It would describe the factors required for successful promotion. It would detail transportation issues, concessions, and other elements that make the experience one that a consumer would want to repeat. A key factor of success will quantify and confirm that there are enough commercial sponsorships and advertisers to be realistically gained for the team to succeed. It will quantify and ensure that the season tickets that must be sold and retained are possible. Key factors determine the difference between success and failure.

Strategies and Tactics

... The next two components of a strategic plan work hand-in-hand. In order to reach the goals of the plan, it takes a strategy. Strategies are executed through a series of tactics (also called “action plans”) that when combined, achieve the goals of the company. Strategies are generally drawn from the current conditions of the market. A tactic is the specific action taken that is drawn from the strengths of the enterprise and focused to ensure the highest probability of success ...

... Yet, any action of an enterprise that is not focused on the ultimate long-range goals of the company, and mindful of the potential vulnerabilities they might bring, is a waste of resources, a misdirection of energy, and often the beginning of the end.

Forecasts and Management Tools

A formal strategic plan is not complete unless it contains the financial plan of the company. If you’re planning successfully, you will be able to quantify your efforts through anticipated results. You may have objectives that are defined by the sales of specific units, marketshare growth, or increased transactions. You may plan for a growth curve that will come from tactics that increase revenue from the current prospect base. You may draft strategies and tactics to be successful in specific un-served gaps in the market. You might see specific revenue to be gained from key customer targets.

With the plans set, you should be able to translate the results into product sales, inventory needs and time constraints. Once top-side revenue is projected, the expenses to support the success should be detailed.

The facilities, utilities, manpower, freight, postage, insurances, promotion budgets, professional fees, and anything else essential to growing the topside revenue should be included.

Putting the strategies and tactics into financial projections reveals the revenue necessary to record a profit and the cash necessary to serve the demand. It may identify the need for new strategies and tactics to reduce expenses, generate faster cash flow, or inject new money into the company. If your strategic plan identifies revenue opportunities and those revenue opportunities are based on the sale of inventory, you would be wise to plan your inventory needs to ensure the cash is available to serve the demand.

This is where the rubber hits the road. You can only achieve revenue from what you can deliver. If yours is a service business, the skilled manpower available that can provide your service limits your top-side revenue opportunity. If it's a product you must inventory, your facilities, cash flow plan, and credit line may present a growth limitation . . .

Critical Assumptions

Things like top side sales, cash flow plans, inventory turnover, and gross margin projections will be based on certain assumptions regarding the available market, the ability to borrow, the products, and the competition. Increases in interest rates, labor strikes, legal or cultural changes, will alter results. A strategic plan should list anything assumed, which if changed, that could alter your results.

Planning is Crucial

The benefits of having a written plan (and the risks for not having one) emphasize why having a formal strategy for every enterprise is crucial. Finding the time to plan, and to do the work necessary to ensure it is comprehensive, can be the biggest challenge for any company. But it's worth it. Why? Because when you commit your objectives to a plan, do the work necessary to ensure they are realistic, and establish regular reporting points to track your results, you can increase your chances for success by 1600%. If you just say you'll do something, it will happen 5% of the time. It's worth repeating - when an objective is committed to a plan with a formal structure, it happens over 80% of the time.

APPENDIX E: OPEN DOOR OR PANDORA'S BOX (EXCERPT FROM BLOG FEBRUARY 2013) by Thomas Allen Malm

ON OPEN DOOR POLICIES

... I worked in an open-door environment in my earliest years in the corporate world. It was nothing like anything I have seen, experienced, or heard about before or since. In fact, what I experienced was something few corporate cultures have the strength of structure and leaders to make work without major changes. Open door, in my experience, was an environment in which the night shift worker that drove a forklift was welcome to share his ideas, concerns, suggestions and fears with the CEO. The CEO welcomed everyone, and everyone's direct boss was comfortable not being a fly on the wall. If you took something to the Chief's office, however, it had to be worthy of his time and not resolvable without his help. If you think about what kinds of things that might include, you realize that this was a serious policy for open communication. The reason why it worked is because people rarely ever had to take advantage of it ...

... The policy worked largely because this company's CEO instituted a disciplined formal strategic planning process to ensure that everyone knew their expectations and those expectations were supported by the necessary tools, knowledge, and empowerment. This was not utopia for some, because with empowerment comes accountability, and that is not a comfortable feeling for the weak. It was a transformational culture, and the policy was built from a level of connectedness, expectation, and empowerment that might have made it a critical element responsible for the company's extraordinary success. If something wasn't going as it should and your boss didn't have a way to help, any door behind which expertise and help could be found, was open to you ...

... I once took advantage of the opportunity to meet with the CEO so I could have a clear dialog about the company's commitment to a new market we were exploring and within which my professional reputation was growing. I needed to know, so that I wouldn't over commit and burn bridges, how what I was doing fit in bigger corporate vision, and I wasn't getting satisfactory answers in the conversations I had with my immediate bosses. I expressed some concern that there could be reprisals for going over their heads. He said, "Any manager that does not understand the open-door policy cannot manage in this company."

MANAGEMENT-BY-OBJECTIVE

There was a Management by Objectives (MBO) policy in place in which every performance expectation assigned to an employee was drawn from, and directly connected to, the performance expectation the CEO made on his own MBO commitment. As such, if there was a problem, it was his problem, too. If he needed to hear about it, it was less useful to have it filtered by someone not as close to the details. Mind you, this CEO was very demanding, spoke his mind directly, and not a person that you wanted to face if your work was sloppy, and your thoughts were not complete and substantiated ...

... Since that day, I have had a vision for how companies can work. I have known no other company with such a respectful, supportive, or transformational model. It isn't an environment for clock punchers. It isn't an environment for the thin-skinned. It is an environment in which the corporate IQ was the highest I have ever known because the organizational separations were less like silos, and more like synapses of the brain. Creating this corporate architecture didn't happen overnight. It wasn't painless. Yet, its value is measured in the results. The company grew by five times in a nine-year period, all while their established core technology was becoming meaningless to the market.

A successful open-door policy isn't just a decision to open doors. You start from how you plan. You evaluate your structures and how leaders are cultivated and positioned. You communicate the connectedness of every task to the vision of the corporate mission. Otherwise, you're just moving pieces around and asking for a different kind of trouble.

SUCCESSION PLANNING & MANAGEMENT-BY-OBJECTIVE

Another reason why this process worked was because there was a succession plan in place. Every performance evaluation included a healthy dose of personal development and career tracking. You knew where you stood, evaluated various career paths, and were given some vision for your opportunities if you achieved specific aspects of your personal development. This ensured competency in each seat and a minimum of on-the-job-training/failing. Knowing where you stood eliminated a great deal of fear and helped folks love their work. The successful open-door policy worked because of the structures, the planning, and the connectedness of the work that was communicated and executed throughout the organization . . .

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