

AHERN ADVISORY

Make the Right Decision!

Needless to say, these past years have been challenging times for the trucking industry. I've stated, on many occasions, that the catastrophe's that challenged the trucking industry and the economy were as great as the Great Depression. Many trucking companies went out of business, due to the various financial constraints placed upon them. However, other trucking companies and logistics companies survived, and some grew! Why?

The ones that survived were the ones that:

- Had a plan.
- Had a vision, and;
- They were able to embrace change and make it an opportunity.

Dramatic changes open the door for dramatic improvements. I am thoroughly convinced that the difference between success and failure is a function of how we respond to change or challenges.

You can pursue a challenge with enthusiasm and believe that, in every circumstance, you can find a new potential to experience greater success, or you can give up. However, in order to be successful you must be willing to embrace change.

Can you ever think of a time when you struggled to make a decision? Have you ever regretted a decision you've made?

The key to making the right decision is easier than many of us think! You simply need a plan – a way to make an impartial choice.

Tim Timmons, who is a respected author, has seven steps that he utilizes and teaches to motivate his people. He calls this the "ABC's of making a decision";

1. Ask for wisdom. Where you have not gone before, someone else has. There is an old Chinese proverb that states "he who asks is a fool for 5 minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever". When you're faced with a tough decision and you don't have a solution to the problem, go to somebody that's had the challenges that you're facing and ask them how they solved the problem. This will help you and guide you to make the right choice.
2. Back off and get the big picture! It's too easy to become entangled in the small stuff, or distracted from what really matters. Don't sweat the small stuff; some things just don't matter! When you're up to your proverbial butt in alligators, it's easy to forget that your original intent was to drain the swamp. Get the big picture, so you can have the clarity to observe all the moving parts and consequences of your decision.

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3. **Calculate the worst that could happen!** This is an incredibly helpful exercise. Why? First, if the worst thing does happen, you will be prepared. **Second, you will have a better measuring stick as to what this decision may cost you.** Remember that the cost of your decision is always more than simply money. **I've learned, in my practice that many times we anticipate the worst and, 9 out of 10 times, the end result is far better than we anticipated.**
4. **Dare to be courageous!** Making tough decisions can be a little scary at times. Take a deep breath, concentrate on why you made your decision and stand up for what you believe.
5. **Enumerate the benefits! Who wins?** Your decisions will always create a rippling effect – negatively and positively. Your decision must create a win/win for everyone who is affected. **Even when you make a decision to let someone go from your company, it can be a win/win.** Usually, this individual is not thriving in the present position and would be better off somewhere else. **Be sure to review each person affected by your decision and re-frame them in a winning picture.**
6. **Feel good when you have done your best!** The truth is that there comes a point where all you can do is the best you can do. Don't beat yourself up or move into "analysis paralysis" over a decision. **Find comfort in doing the best you can do, and leave it there.** You're not going to win all the time, but the point is not necessarily winning all the time, but more about applying yourself 100% of the time to try and achieve a goal. **Every baseball player has struck out numerous times before he hit the home run.** Many wide receivers dropped many footballs before they caught the scoring touchdown. **The point; do the best you can and know that whatever happens, happens.**
7. **Gather trusted advisors around you.** This is the most crucial step and it should be paramount in your decision making process. **Don't make a decision in a vacuum.** How many times have you seen owners of trucking companies playing the "Lone Ranger"? **When you're making a tough decision, run it by your trusted friends and family.** There's an old saying that goes something like this; "even the banana, when it leaves the bunch, gets skinned". **This is an interesting statistic, but human beings are confronted with hundreds, even thousands, of decision every day.** Whether or not we chose to make the right one will affect, both us, and those we influence.

If you follow Tim Timmons ABC's for making a decision, you might be surprised what you can accomplish!

When you are facing challenging times, you can be a victim or you can maintain a positive outlook. When setbacks occur, it's very easy to fall in the trap of feeling sorry for yourself and feeling like a victim. **Even subconsciously, we may blame other people for our misfortunes.** Although these feelings are normal, it's better to not let them dominate you. **It's very important for you to, first of all, assess the situation;**

1. What went wrong?
2. What could I have done differently?

Once you've gone through that process, accept the experience and learn from that experience. Successful people make many mistakes, but they learn from their mistakes. In the end, a successful person responds to a challenge which, in turn, perfects their character.

In closing, you need to embrace the opportunity to continually reinvent yourself and your business. We all experience twists and turns throughout our careers. However, you should take comfort in the fact that, even if you make a wrong choice or take a bad turn, you'll likely have another turn to get on the right track.

As you encounter change in your life or business, embrace it. Life may be a rollercoaster, but without the ups and downs, it wouldn't be much of a ride. **If we keep doing what we've always done – then we're going to keep getting what we've always gotten.**

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "There can be no courage without fear, and fear comes only from the imagination". (Peter Abrahams)