

“MINDSET” - 3 OPTIONS TO CONSIDER PLUS A BONUS THOUGHT

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Recently a long term industry veteran asked me what advice I would give someone based on my journey. I was taken aback for two reasons, 1) I'm not old enough to give advice (at least that's what I choose to believe); 2) I wasn't quite sure my pontificating about how people should behave was going to be valid for others. Due to my respect for this individual and the thoughts it provoked, I offered up three points that have guided my own behavior in life.

1) Set Specific Goals (in every aspect of your life)

The old adage of “failure to plan is planning to fail does indeed hold true” — if you don't plan your course in life, life will simply happen to you. Be specific and set tangible targets for what you want out of your life and your career with timeframes. I won't bore you with my own goals, but I will tell you that more have come true than I would have imagined had I not set them (on paper) and worked toward obtaining them. Sometimes people around me challenged me when I went lateral or backwards in their minds, but every decision I made was to get me closer to a long term outcome. Sometimes it felt like I might have been selling myself short, but the experiences I received were indeed invaluable and well worth the short term sacrifices. This requires true clarity in goals. Most everything I have achieved thus far has been based on a well defined goal and of course a high dose of fortune (or luck).

2) Practice Humility

Especially in this industry with 35-45 percent attrition rates — realize you may not have all the answers. Seek to be a student of life. Again, the adage, “when you're ripe, you rot, when you're green you grow” holds some truth. Be a sponge for learning. Question the status quo. Seek to understand and learn more about everything that affects you. Don't be arrogant or pompous. Be generous and inquisitive. I believe this has helped me continue to evolve.

3) Operate as if You are the Best

While humility is critical, operating the way the best “YOU” would operate delivers immeasurable results. I have often spoken of Be-Do-Have (in that order), a lesson taught to me by Mitch Wald. Operating as the best in your field will raise the bar. When I am faced with a decision that is not easy, I simply ask myself, what would the very best health club operator do in this situation? If you have good morals, integrity and character you will come up with the right answer. Basing your decisions on sound principles makes life so much easier and more fulfilling. It also serves your colleagues, company and our members well.

One bonus point that has always resonated with me as well is the order of things:

People first – Product second and if you get those two right — Profits will be there!

These are just some of my thoughts to get YOU thinking. Please realize that my sharing is in no way a judgment, just some things that came to mind when Roger Ralph asked me what I might share with others at an IHRSA convention a couple of years ago. Knowing what you stand for so you don't fall for anything is a personal journey. Enjoy the ride and make the best of it.

