

Jan 06: Nothing Changes New Year's Day

"Nothing changes New Year's Day." - U2

Last month, I had the distinct pleasure and honor of presenting to the Harvard Business School Alumni Club of Boston. Seventy people showed up and I delivered one of my best performances yet (and they will keep getting better!). After the presentation, I ran a 'Passion Taster' where I walked participants through the first two Ps of my Five: Passions and Proficiencies. In the course of filling in his Personal Balance Sheet, one gentleman really whacked a nail with such force it has carried through to this year and is still moving through my brain. Essentially, the predominant reason he and many of his friends went to HBS was to improve their weaknesses, rather than burnish their strengths. His corkscrew provided the bubbles for this release.

RESOLVE YOUR STRENGTHS, NOT YOUR WEAKNESSES

We humans are a funny lot. Always striving, always seeming to take the hardest route possible to whatever ends we deemed necessary (at least when the journey began) and always focusing on how we can shore up our liabilities versus exploiting our assets.

Part of our internal spotlight on our dimness probably shines because, per *PASSION AT WORK* and James Montier, 40% of our happiness comes from volitional activities - setting goals to improve ourselves and then meeting them. Unfortunately, it seems we spend a considerable slug of our energy trying to mediate our mediocrity, instead of advancing our uniquenesses. Human resource departments have also contributed (part of which is justified) by actually linking our ability to fight our flaws to our performance review ratings and implicitly, our upward mobility in title, floor, expense accounts, headcounts, and compensation.

The result is that we spend an inordinate amount of time going through a cornucopia of courses and programs to limit our limitations. The number of improvement modules that exist on- and off-line may exceed the number of people who can actually benefit from them to the extent that the investment bears notable betterment. Business schools, in this light, are a rather expensive route to prove to yourself that you too, can suffer miserably at statistics, financial theory, and accounting (as I did).

This irrational need to candidly display our defenses does not end here though. Many a first time job, career, or second or third career, as people recount to me,

are based on conquering a deficit with a deficit. This logically makes little sense to me, in either a personal or economic context. The above-mentioned HBS graduate jovially described a recent position he cognizantly undertook, managing a team of technical folks, knowing full well that he not only didn't like managing people, but he wasn't good at it either. Net sum: even HBS graduates, who I understand have been enabled to walk across the Charles River without needing a bridge, cannot be perfect. (They should have considered Wharton.)

So, whatever New Year's resolutions you made that by now are precariously balancing on the point of no fulfillment, I suggest tossing them with your empty champagne bottles into your local recycling bin. They will come back, no doubt, but their impact on your performance will be ridiculously dampened by the stellar results of simply and far more easily applying your resolve to your strengths. To quote the effervescent Dr. Joseph Mancusi, "You are the best and you are only getting better."

Event Updates

MA: January 17 - Presentation to Senior Executive Networking Group of New England For more information, please visit www.seng-ne.org

MA: January 19 - Presentation and Passion Taster from 6:00pm to 9:15 at Wild Child Gear at 397 Mass. Ave. in Arlington, MA. Please sign up by e.mailing events@wildchildgear.com. For more information please call 781 483 3566 and ask for Dana.

MA: January 19 - Presentation to The CEO Club of Boston Harvard Club, 374 Commonwealth Ave. For more information, please visit www.ceoclubs.org

MA: February 11 - Niche Definition Workshp Be guided through the first three Ps by their creator and his Passion Posse in this intensive one-day seminar. Boston area. For more information, please contact [Ashley Chiampo, Head Sherrif](#)

VA: February 15 - Keynote at Entrepreneur's BootCamp Reston, VA. Sponsored by the Business Alliance of George Mason University. For more information or to register, please visit www.businessalliance.org

CA: February 21 - Keynote at Business Object's Annual Planning User Conference San Diego, CA. For more about Business Objects, please visit www.businessobjects.com

CA: February 21 - Passion Taster to the Wharton Club of San Diego. (*Other alumni are invited*) Details forthcoming.

TX: February 28 - Presentation to the Wharton Club of Dallas. (*Other alumni are invited*) Imprimis Group, Heritage Square One, 4835 LBJ Freeway, Suite 1000, Dallas. 6:00 - 9:00pm. Please contact [Linda Bechtold](#) for more information.

NY: March 28 - Presentation to Columbia Graduate School of Business.
1:30pm.

NY: March 28 - Passion Taster to Princeton Entrepreneur's Network of NYC.
The Offices of Couduet Brothers. Please contact [Marc Laurent](#) for more information.

Many more events are being planned. Visit my website www.lawlerkang.com often to see if/when I'll be able to see you!

Random Media

Lawler was recently interviewed on **New England Cable News (NECN)** by the main anchor, RD Saul, two other local cable channels, **Bloomberg radio** (syndicated across the country) and **Mike Carruther's "What You Should Know"** radio show, which is also syndicated to 150 stations.

He is mentioned in this month's issue of **Inc Magazine**, a recent edition of **Investor's Business Daily**, and will be popping up all over the place this next quarter.

He will also be interviewed on **Foxes LA Morning Show** on February 25th.

If you'd be interested in having me present or blindly yap away about **PASSION AT WORK**, don't hold back!

Until next time, stay in trouble out there!

My best, L