



5 Minute Strategic Mindset

Your weekly does of subtle reminders



Here's my list of what I'm enjoying, or is inspiring me this week.

A quote that made me think

"Because of the availability of information today, ignorance is a choice"
Joe Dispenza.

A feeling I had that was reinforced by an amazing story

We all know about 'ripple effects', where effects from a single event multiply, sometimes unpredictably. In Yellowstone National Park, **grey wolves had been wiped out in the 1930s**. As the top predator, this meant that elk multiplied dramatically. Sounds OK, yet, when wolves were reintroduced in the 1990s, guess what happened? Yes, fewer elk, but also more mobile elk. This meant less grazing on willow trees, which now flourished, which meant more beavers (who eat willow stems). Beaver dams change water courses, meaning more fish, and the willow stands mean more songbirds. How much of this was predicted? Ecologists confess that little of this was known until it happened. Just in the past year, I've recommended many 'grey wolves' to my clients: dismiss a destabilising leader, consolidate sites, exit a non-core business. In each case, we've seen hugely positive ripple effects (while keeping a close eye on unintended negative consequences). **Question: "What is a 'grey wolf' in your organisation that would create desirable ripple effects?"**

A book I'm loving

Just in the past two weeks, both a client CEO and a consulting colleague have both recommended a book that was one of my favourites for 2017: Frederic Laloux's **"Reinventing Organisations"**. It answers the question, "What do we do about the epidemic of organisational disillusionment?" This is not a leadership philosophy book — Laloux takes us into deeply practical businesses (tomato packing, machining, in-home nursing) that have built enlightened work practices and organisational structures and give people soulful, authentic and purposeful work. There are radical proposals here: don't give people a single workspace, give them many spaces to choose from, depending on task (one of my clients, Cardinia Council has done just this) and let production staff self-organise quotas based on *their* negotiations with the end-customer (this is in a vehicle parts supplier). Doing these things strips out huge amounts of overhead — physical and people — and leaves the 'doers' in an organisation feeling in control of what they do. **Question: "What relics of the 19th century persist in your organisation?"**

An idea that I've been pondering this week

How much potential injury is worth avoiding? I spent a day last week with 50 experts helping them develop the foundations of a National Injury Prevention Strategy. We talked about major injury categories such as roads, falls and suicides, but also about contributory factors (I didn't realise that alcohol has a part in one-third of all injury types). I'm pleased that my 9 year old son is protected by soft matting at playgrounds, a helmet when he's skateboarding, pool fences and frequent swim classes, product packaging blocking him from chemicals. But, I also ask myself, is zero harm really the desired goal? In some areas, like suicide, the answer is simple for most of us — no level of suicide is acceptable. But how much protection is really necessary, or desirable? **Question: How much investment or effort is worthwhile expending to lower harm or risk in your area of work?**

And, please send me your feedback by email to ah@workwell.com.au
Which bullet above is your favourite? What do you want more or less of?
Other suggestions? Let me know!

Have a wonderful weekend.

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