

Fog of Covid War

Writings about war always mention the “fog of war”. This fog comes from a lack of information, wrong information, and the mental slowdown that happens when dealing with sudden surprises and situations not planned for. Right now, we can find a lot of people suffering from a mental fog because of the current situation. We suffer from a lack of good information, a lot of misinformation, and surprises. To cope, we are forced back to our basic beliefs, our planning, and how well we can learn under stress.

In a war, information is vital. We want to find out where the enemy is, what their strength is, and what they are planning on doing. Unfortunately, we don’t have that information in many cases. In the field, all sorts of people will try to give us conflicting information. Some of it is valid. Some of it is misinformation that the enemy wants you to think.

In the current situation, we have misinformation coming from all sides. At the same time, hard, data-based information isn’t available – because we just do not have the capability to get that information. All this is happening while people are getting sick around us.

We are in a real “fog of Covid”.

To cope, we need to go back to the basics.

Going back to basics means asking “Why are you in business?” Successful businesses are never about just making money. “Shareholder value” has never been only about maximizing return. If that were so, then no start up company

would exist as most of them never return even the initial investment.

Successful businesses have a reason beyond the money. This reason has to be bigger than just one person. People never are inspired to make another \$1.

They are inspired to help others, to work towards freedom for more people, and to provide safety to those who fear.

We are in business to serve the community. Sometimes that community

is spread out. We work to find and help that community. Articulating our vision of helping that community is an important part of piercing the fog.

In battle, successful generals have a vision of their goals for that battle. Success is

measured against those goals. When opposing sides have different goals, one side may think they are winning by counting bodies, but lose when the other side achieves their goals first.

Then, talk to those goals. The only way to inspire others to help is to tell the story and the vision. Identify how you are working towards making the vision into reality and share that.

Customers want to hear from you; how you are working for them, how you are coping with struggles, and the successes you have.

In this Covid Fog, we make headway by going back to basics, identifying our vision for service, identifying the community we are helping, and communicating to that community how we are making progress.

Pierce the Fog of Covid War

Leadership Pulls Together

In times of trouble, leadership pulls the team together so that we have a consistent and coherent response to that trouble. Divisions often sink the organization. Great leadership pulls enemies together for a common goal.

In the early days of Apple, Steve Jobs made a huge leadership mistake. He gave special treatment to the people working on his latest project while those who were supporting the money-making endeavors were slighted. It caused a big division in the company which was part of the reason why he left. When he came back, people challenged him specifically on this part of his leadership. During his time away, he had grown and his response to that challenge was filmed and is shared as a great example of leadership. He acknowledged their concerns and pointed to the shared corporate values – bringing his questioners into the fold.

In today’s challenges, great leaders do the same. They acknowledge that others have valid concerns. They point to shared values. They invite their questioners to be part of the process of change. They include their doubters in the decision-making process. Great leaders ask for advice from people who will argue with them and those whose temperaments are significantly different from theirs.

Abraham Lincoln is an example of such a leader. His cabinet included his opponents and rivals. But he was looking for the best people who could serve in those posts. He found people who could balance his gifts and his faults so that the whole cabinet was far better than what he could do alone.

For the good of the organization, we pull everyone together for a common goal.

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Risky World

Testing, and the number of problems found, is sometimes an issue. People have been known to avoid testing or use the wrong test so that they do not have to face all the problems found. One group used a weaker virus scanner because the robust one they had been given kept finding viruses on their machines.

Prairie Trail Software, Inc



3821 Beaumont Lane
Plano, TX 75023

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