

WANT TO DRIVE AGILITY? ... BE A CEO!

By Tom O'Shea, CMC Organizational Agility Practice Leader



I THINK I WANT TO BE A CEO! I can still remember back almost a decade ago when my wife and I took our youngest son on tours of prospective colleges and we had a great visit to University of North Carolina at Wilmington. I have many dear friends in the delightful seaside community of Wilmington, NC, so I contacted one of them who is a marine biologist named Jean because our son was expressing some interest in

exploring such careers in this field of study. We had a tremendous visit to this beautiful campus and my friend Jean arranged an extraordinary tour of the Marine Biology Lab associated with the University. All seem to be going well as we toured the facility and spoke to many of the highly educated young scientists involved in the marine lab.

I don't think I will forget the interesting conversation with one of the 20-something scientists who took time to speak with my son and describe all the reasons why pursuing a career in scientology of ocean critters made such good sense. Until she made the final statement ... "unless you want to make any money"? Time stopped at that point and suddenly there were clouds of doubt that entered the picture. The rest of the tour went quite a bit faster as well. As we headed back to our inland home on the couple of hour drive, I could tell my son was processing a lot of information.

Finally, I asked him what he thought about the tour and what he observed ... we began to talk about some of the realities that the young scientist introduced. And then he declared ... I think I want to be a CEO instead! He realized that if he was going to invest himself in a field of serious endeavor, then there should naturally be some meaningful benefits. My son is twenty-five now and actively navigating the journey towards his goal. I have no doubt he will achieve all his dreams.

Frankly, I think all talented young people should set their sights on becoming a CEO - especially my definition of CEO which is Chief Encouragement Officer. I have the opportunity to work with CEO's in many settings, different industries and diverse countries. Over time, you begin to develop an awareness of CEO's that really make a difference from those CEO caretakers who

view their function and role as scorekeepers, auditors, quality inspectors and sometime even enforcers. As you look at the impact these different profiles and personas have on their businesses - you can also begin to see the corresponding influence. Scorekeepers beget score mongering ... teams that play for the score at all costs. Auditors beget magicians who try and make things appear and disappear on command. Inspectors beget rigid list masters only focused on those things that will be inspected. Enforcers are just kind of scary - we aren't always sure what laws or codes of conduct are being enforced.

Encouragers are extraordinary. They bring out the best in everyone ... no matter what. You can tell when a true CEO enters the room - people's eyes light up and smiles break open. I had the pleasure of observing one in action last week.

People are inspired with authentic CEO's who demonstrate real care about the mission and also care about the people. I know my son will make a great CEO one day ... he is well on his way. It really starts with your own personal definition for your leadership brand. Who am I as a leader? Do I choose to be a CEO or one of the other choices? We definitely need more CEO's at all levels throughout our organizations.

I invite your feedback and conversation. Do you know any CEO's? How did that happen?



Tom O'Shea, CMC

Organizational Agility Practice Leader

tom@agilityconsulting.com

336-282-1211

skype-osheatom