



Ten Minutes of Your Time. Lasting Business Impact.

**Volume 1, Issue 3
05 February 2004**

“ ‘Be good and you will be happy’ is a dangerous inversion.
‘Be happy and you will be good’ is the truth.”

- W.H. Auden, poet

What's On My Mind This Week

Celebrate the Not-So-Small Stuff

The other day, I was talking to a manager at a company that has used Philip Crosby's methods to reap some pretty hefty benefits in a short period of time. By installing a culture of prevention, focused on doing things right the first time, this organization has dramatically improved operational performance, significantly lowered its Price of Nonconformance and won rave reviews from customers. To the outside observer, this company has had a hugely successful start to its business improvement journey.

"Wow!" I exclaimed as the manager ran through the company's long list of successes. "How does this make you feel?"

"It makes me feel like we've got so much more to do!" he replied.

Fair enough, I thought, but he was glossing over so much good stuff. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies, holding out for perfection. We tend to focus on what must still be done, not on how far we've come.

And that's good. But that's also bad.

It is good because it sparks us to greater goals, to become better, faster, smarter and more focused on customer success. It is bad because it can wear us down. Always seeing the next mountain in front of us can tire us out and make us lose our oomph.

Find a happy medium. Take time to celebrate the small stuff--and realize that organizational change is not so small after all. Clear the decks and for a moment relish how much healthier your organization is today than it was last year or even just last week. Keeping your unique corporate culture in mind, find ways to celebrate on an individual, departmental and organization-wide level.

Listen to Auden and don't wait until you are perfect to be happy with your progress. You'll be glad you did.

Something to Think About

Is Your Planning "Ponch and Jon" Style?

While fans of the 1970s hit TV show "[CHiPs](#)" were thrilled to see it return to the limelight briefly last week, *Take Ten Minutes* was not impressed.

In case you missed [the story](#), one of "Denver's finest" attributed his ability to bring a runaway car under control to an old CHiPs episode. Seems this officer was never formally trained to deal with runaway automobiles, so when a Pontiac went out of control on a Denver highway, he called upon his memory of how Officers Jon Baker and Frank "Ponch" Poncherello handled a similar situation.

This should *not* be standard operating procedure. Don't get us wrong; kudos to the quick-thinking officer. His willingness to go out on a limb and get the job done likely saved lives. But this isn't the first time in transportation history that a car has gone out of control. He should not have had to rely on memories of fictional scenarios to effectively handle this very real, very dangerous event. The officer should have had experience-based, step-by-step information on how to deal effectively with the situation.

Does *your* company know how to identify and effectively deal with its version of the runaway Pontiac? Do you have the right plans and processes in place? Do you measure results and know when to take corrective action? Are specific people responsible for that corrective action, and do they know what action is appropriate in particular situations?

No offense intended to the CHiPs duo, but we don't recommend you count on a "Ponch and Jon" strategy. It worked on that highway in Denver, but it's probably contraindicated for your organization. Better to plan ahead.

About *Take Ten Minutes*

Take Ten Minutes is a weekly publication of [Philip Crosby Associates](#) and [The Capability Group](#).

The premise behind *Take Ten Minutes* is simple: take ten minutes out of every week to refocus and recommit to business improvement. *Take Ten Minutes* features quotes and interviews to inspire you. We also pull articles from today's headlines as examples of the power of the preventive culture (or the deep problems caused by not having one).

As the name suggests, *Take Ten Minutes* is relentless with the editing razor and keeps each issue tight - each issue should take you no more than ten minutes to read, start to finish. You'll reap even bigger rewards if you kick in an extra ten minutes to discuss the ideas with a colleague or to take an idea found here and plan to roll it out in your organization. We hope *Take Ten Minutes* becomes the business improvement equivalent of your running partner, providing the inspiration you need to lace up and "just do it" on those weeks when the couch seems oh-so preferable.

We hope you enjoy *Take Ten Minutes*. As Philip Crosby said, improving your business "is a

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
The Capability Group and Philip Crosby Associates
306 Dartmouth Street, Boston MA 02116
617/716-0222

Were you given this hard copy of *Take Ten Minutes*? Would like your own free electronic subscription?
Sign up at: <https://www.philipcrosby.com/forms/maillinglist.htm> *Don't miss another issue!*

