



**Ten Minutes of Your Time. Lasting Business Impact.**

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"Life is a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get."

**- Forrest Gump**, fictional tycoon and trendsetter

## **What's On My Mind This Week**

### **Peeking at the Filling**

When I was little, my father gave me a red cellophane-covered, heart-shaped box of Russell Stover chocolates every Valentine's Day. While each and every piece looked oh-so yummy from the outside, I was pretty picky when it came down to what lay underneath the thin chocolate veneer. So I developed a special technique to identify those with the coveted marshmallow or chocolate crème centers and reject those with the less-coveted nougat and coconut: I'd find my sharpest fingernail, puncture the bottom and preview the contents.

Do you find yourself peeking at the filling of your business improvement initiatives? Is your company treating project selection like a box of chocolates, selecting what looks to be the perfect project, and then backing off once you've cracked the surface and find it isn't exactly what you wanted?

Perhaps your project ends when your first improvement idea doesn't solve the problem. Or it could be that proceeding with the project would require you to reveal that your department has a few more loose ends than you'd care to admit. Or maybe the project would involve working across several departments to solve a complex issue, and the art of cross-departmental business improvement isn't your company's strength.

If any of this sounds familiar, you are not alone. Plenty of companies crack the chocolate coating, don't like what they see and abandon a project. A colleague of mine often tells the story of a company that identified a project that would save \$1 million annually; they haven't tackled that project because it seems a little tricky. It's been several years since the project was identified, so that's several million down the drain.

Here's how to make sure your project doesn't meet a similar fate:

**Get past the gut feel:** When you have that sinking feeling that you want to drop the project, take the time to map it out - both what it would cost and what dollar benefits you would gain. An enticing financial benefit, with a realistic plan to secure those benefits, can overcome many initial feelings of doubt. It can also keep you focused on the opportunity when your "can't miss" improvement idea isn't the

solution.

**Get help:** If this is a project that will bring a \$1 million ROI each and every year, it's better to spend \$1 million to get it done than ignore it. Seeking outside help is not a sign of weakness; it's a way to get the job done.

**Track project ideas:** Inevitably, you'll come across a project that you won't be ready to tackle right now, but don't let the project idea be lost to inaction. Set up a system to track and periodically review these ideas so you start them at the appropriate time. Better yet, put a 'Start Before' date on each project and focus on the preparations necessary to launch the project on time.

Don't leave your version of the million-dollar opportunity on the table. Before you place this one back in the box, give it a go. I've gotten over my taste for peeking at fillings, and hope you do, too. You stand to reap big business benefits - and it won't cost you a single calorie.

## Creating Customer Success

**With Chief Mark Bowen, Division of Homeland Security, Jacksonville, Florida**

In the post 9/11 world, major cities are keenly concerned about terrorism, and the city of Jacksonville, Florida is no exception. With a major port, a military presence, a population of one million and a date with the Super Bowl in 2005, the government of Jacksonville has a lot to protect.

Improved emergency response is a logical approach, but Jacksonville wanted to go beyond response preparation to focus on active terrorism prevention. With the help of a company called [CellExchange](#), the city of Jacksonville will soon launch a system that allows departments to share critical information that could foil a planned strike.

The Joint Protection Enterprise Network, or [JPEN](#), allows multiple government agencies to share intelligence, information, and records now stored in many disconnected databases. By combining the information and providing real-time, cross-departmental alerts, JPEN can identify patterns of suspicious activity that might have been overlooked in the past. With its focus on prevention, Jacksonville is slated to be the first city to have such a system. And this spells success for their customers-the people who live and work in the Jacksonville area.

The technology will initially allow 3,000 employees across five departments-the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, the Florida Highway Patrol, the Coast Guard, the Jacksonville Health Department and the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department-to share incident reports and other data in real-time. A program to roll the system out to neighboring counties and then statewide is in the planning phase.

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*Take Ten Minutes* talked to the man behind the project - Jacksonville's Chief of Homeland Security, Mark Bowen - about the challenges of getting this project off the ground. Chief Bowen will also be profiled this weekend on the NBC Nightly News.

**Q:** How did this project start?

**A:** It started when we decided while we wanted to be the best at responding in the event of an attack, it would be far better if we had nothing to respond to. We wanted to prevent the attack in the first place. The way to do that is collect the right information about activities that could lead to terrorist attacks and then do something about it. This technology solution allows us to do just that.

**Q:** Was it difficult to get people to buy in to the concept of prevention versus inspection?

**A:** Not really. Since our goal is to save lives, logically, it's tough to argue against this. The mayor and the sheriff saw that early on, and that was important to moving the project forward. Having people stop being territorial and let us make the required changes was harder and took a lot longer. But we're on schedule to test the system in March and have it running in April.

**Q:** How will you determine if your project is a success?

**A:** That's a tough question; how *can* you quantify the impact? I guess the only way we'd know for certain would be if an attack occurred in another city, and the terrorists stated specifically that they stayed away from Jacksonville due to its system. But that is an unlikely event. So do you consider it a success if years from now there's been no attack? Would you consider it a complete failure if there was an attack in Jacksonville? The bottom line is that terrorists are very patient-they lull you into a false sense of security, and then they strike. So we can't declare success after the system is up and running. We can't declare success a year out. We've always got to stay a step ahead of them.

Will it prevent a terrorist attack? I do not know. Will it help us solve crimes? Absolutely. I think that's a success right there.

**Q:** Give us an example of what it will do for you.

**A:** For instance, let's say the highway patrol responded to a break-in at a manufacturing plant where a substantial amount of rat poison was stolen. Using the alert system, the Health Department would be immediately notified of the theft. Since the health department is looking at the incident in a different way than the Highway Patrol, it would instantly warn area hospitals to be on the lookout for patients with symptoms that could indicate poisoning. It could result in correct diagnoses and saved lives.

I'll also give you a real-world example: recently, a man was taking pictures of Jacksonville's bridges. Since the city is connected by bridges, the bridges are critical.

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It turned out to be a legitimate venture - he was conducting a valid transportation study. But what if he was a terrorist with intentions to bomb the bridges? What if the Highway Patrol, Coast Guard and Sheriff's department all filed reports about the man on different days, but each event was viewed as an isolated incident and not as a trend because data was not shared? The repercussions could have been serious.

**Q:** Do you have any advice for those trying to drive change?

**A:** Keep in mind that change doesn't come easy - everyone is at some level afraid of change. People like things to stay the same and can always find reasons something new can't be done. Expect and prepare yourself for that reaction. If what you're trying to do makes sense, and if you've got buy-in and work hard, you'll get it done.

**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 journey that never ends." So let the journey...*continue!*

Please send story ideas or comments to our [editor](#).

**About Our Companies**

In today's marketplace, only capable companies will survive and thrive. The overarching goal of [Philip Crosby Associates](#) (PCA) and [The Capability Group](#) (TCG) is to give companies the culture, tools, methodology and results-focused support to become 'Capable Organizations' - useful, reliable, adaptable, and ever-focused on achieving customer success.

PCA and TCG deliver on this goal by first working with clients to assess where they are on the maturity spectrum and where they want to go. For companies early in the process, we work hand-in-hand with management to install a culture of prevention - the culture that has been championed by the PCA side of our business since quality management guru and PCA founder Philip Crosby published *Quality is Free* in 1979. Over the past two decades, Crosby's techniques have been implemented by many of the Fortune 500, as well as small and mid-sized companies

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seeking excellence.

Once the foundation of the Capable Organization is present, TCG steps in to help clients take their efforts to the next level by further reducing costs, enhancing quality and promoting growth. TCG was founded by Kevin Weiss, who was a Quality Leader and Master Black Belt for General Electric when that company first implemented Six Sigma - a program CEO Jack Welch has attributed with "changing the DNA of GE". With a proprietary Cost-Quality-Growth™ Model created based on the knowledge that GE's success was due to much more than a typical Six Sigma deployment, TCG has helped shape Cost-Quality-Growth™ Programs for companies such as Shimano, American Express and Sony.

Along the journey to the Capable Organization, PCA and TCG provide a comprehensive set of training programs and materials as well as consulting and assessment services to accelerate progress. Products and services range from courses and CDs geared towards the education of hourly workers to intensive seminars for managers and executive teams.

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