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# Four Leg News

Hi Folks!

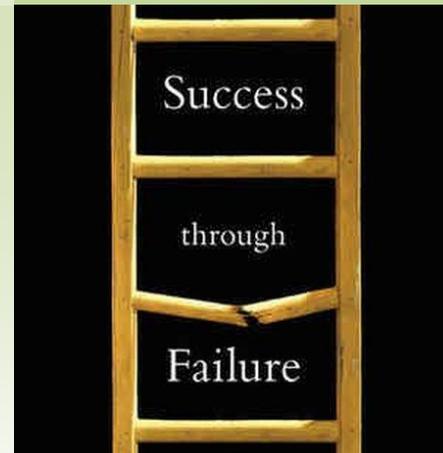
I am very excited to unveil this edition of FourLeg News on Failures! I received a few fabulous submissions on this topic, and rounded out the newsletter with some additional articles that I found for you. Failure is a huge opportunity for learning and growth.

A number of years ago I read Seat of the Soul by Gary Zukav. Now this book is really different and some would say a little 'out there', but to paraphrase it down to what I got out of the book is that the purpose of our lives here on earth is to learn. And that all of the experiences and opportunities presented to us are to help us to gain knowledge. That part really resonated with me, and since adopting this frame of reference, I have approached every new experience with that perspective in mind. It makes everything in life make more sense! At least it does for me!

So when you have a failure or a disappointment, think to yourself, 'What am I to learn from this?' When you have a difficult person in your life (or a string of difficult people), ask 'What are they here to teach me?' When things happen not according to plan, remind yourself that 'There is a lesson in all of this'. Maybe that sounds too esoteric for you at first glance, but I would challenge you to revisit the concept. I think it work, regardless of your religion or lack thereof. Maybe it's just developing an extra keen sense of introspection. Give it a try... and if you come up with some golden gems of knowledge, then pass them back to me and we can share our 'hard earned knowledge'.

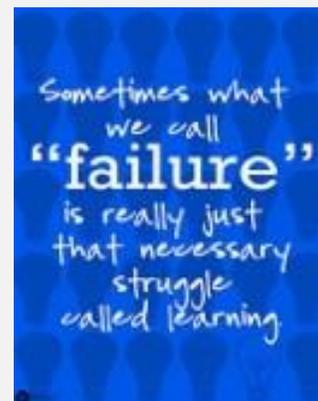
Enjoy this edition of FourLeg News, and as always CHEERS to your success (even if it has to come via failures first!)

Laurie



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I have a case that has been haunting me. It was one of my early cases when I had just started doing rehab. The client found me on the Internet and liked what we had to offer over where he was referred, so I feel the marketing was working well.

The dog is a 3-year-old male Doberman who was doing agility and had intermittent right forelimb lameness for over 1 year. I did a thorough lameness and physical evaluation of the dog and confirmed a right forelimb lameness localized to the shoulder. I suspected a supraspinatus tendinopathy and offered to send the dog for MRI or musculoskeletal ultrasound to confirm the diagnosis. The owner elected to go for the MRI. The report read out as infraspinatus and supraspinatus insertional tendinopathy.

This patient came to me from over 2 1/2 hours away, and because I felt like rehab would require such frequent trips and there were well known rehab facilities closer to him, I suggested him going somewhere that he could get to with more ease and more frequently.

The owner agreed. But after several weeks, felt like he was not seeing progress and said that he felt like the person doing the rehab thought his dog probably had medial shoulder instability instead. The owner felt like the rehab person was not very invested in the case and was only doing therapeutic ultrasound and not doing any other modalities or therapies. The owner rechecked with me 4 weeks after the initial consult and I repeated my exam and got the same findings.

I also spoke with the rehab person treating the dog and said fine, treat him as if he was an MSI as well, start some therapeutic exercises and see how it goes. I got a different story from the rehab person in regards to the owner not actually following any instructions and that he was allowing the dog extensive off leash activity.

*J.K. Rowling was a single mom living off welfare when she began writing the first "Harry Potter" novel.*



*Photo by Dan Hallman/Invision/AP*

*Rowling is now internationally renowned for her seven-book Harry Potter series and, in U.S. currency, became the first billionaire author in 2004.*

Shortly before the dog was to go back to see the rehab closer to home, the dog became increasingly lame and went to a local vet who diagnosed left forelimb lameness and sent him to a nearby orthopedic surgeon. They diagnosed left supraspinatus tendinopathy. The owner called and claimed that I had misdiagnosed the dog and that it was the left forelimb that was lame the whole time.

Both the nearby orthopedic surgeon and I told him it could be a bilateral problem. I assured him that on my two exams of his dog, he had only signs of right forelimb lameness at the time.

The owner went to a 3rd rehab person, who told him his dog had left elbow pain. The last I heard the dog was getting bilateral elbow CT scans, but unfortunately I don't know the outcome because the owner won't return my calls.

I feel like I failed this dog and this owner. I should have never suggested he follow-up with another rehab person, even if it required him to drive 5 hours a day 3 times a week to see me. Of course if I felt like I was not making progress, I would encourage a second opinion - sometimes a fresh set of eyes on a case can make all the difference. But I think you have to make an investment with your cases, and hang in there with treatment even when the owner feels like giving up or progress isn't being made.

Now more than ever I understand the importance of constant follow-up, outcome measures and reassessment.

## Wisdom is hindsight disguised as foresight

Meredith White, CCRA

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I live in Central Pennsylvania, US, and one of the things that my dad always wanted to see was the Hershey Gardens in Hershey, PA. Dad loved roses. He grew a very simple garden of them in our backyard and loved to leave pretty single cuttings of his rose blooms on peoples' doorsteps all over our little neighborhood.

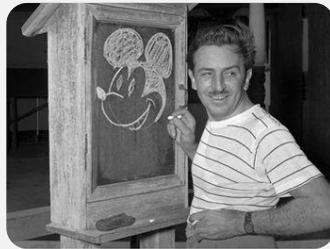
I moved back to Central PA from Atlanta, GA in 2000 and said for years "I'm going to take my dad down to see the roses--several acres of them-- at the Hershey Gardens, because that is something he really wants to do". I kept saying it for years. My dad was in great health--he'd never had a major illness, and even though he was in his mid 70's, his family had amazing longevity, well into their 90's. Dad was sure to be around for quite some time. In the meantime, I had a time demanding job with a big US corporation, and on the weekends I always had grass to cut and laundry/dishes/litterboxes to clean and "who will take care of all of dogs for a day?" We'll get to the Hershey Rose Gardens one of these weekends and it will be great!

One Friday morning (dad was a spry 82 at the time) I was getting ready for work and the phone rang. It was my mom. "Dad wouldn't wake up this morning. The ambulance is here and we are taking him to the hospital". I met her in the ER--he had suffered a serious cerebral hemorrhage. The good news was that the new community neurosurgeon was in town and could operate on my dad. He made it thru the procedure and daily looked, over the course of 6 days, like he was going to regain consciousness...we were going to have challenges, but he was going to wake up from his coma. I would read him the local newspaper, turn on the local news channel playing Mozart (his fave), talk about planting beans and Nana's (his mother) rhubarb stew and, oh yes, we will go to Hershey Gardens when you are awake and strong enough to make the trip!

It was day seven, Friday morning a week later. He had deteriorated rapidly overnight, and his CT scan that morning showed that something was going horribly wrong. The neurosurgeon was kind but direct, and told us that he would do the surgery if mom and I wanted, but that dad would be profoundly impaired if he survived it. As dad had never been seriously ill a day in his life, mom and I decided that it would be no "life" for him. They gave him a huge dose of morphine and disconnected his ventilator, and within minutes he was gone.

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*Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor because he "lacked imagination and had no good ideas."*



AP Photo

*Several more of his businesses failed before the premiere of his movie "Snow White." Today, most childhoods wouldn't be the same without his ideas.*

... **Wisdom is hindsight disguised as foresight continued**

Maybe not the kind of situation that immediately springs to mind when we think about "sharing our failures", but it was a very basic one. I failed to "seize the day" when I had the opportunity. I failed to acknowledge the impermanence of life, hiding instead behind the "safety" of those trivial but rather permanent things in life: unsightly crab grass, yesterday's dishes, the relentless heap of dirty clothes. As for the dogs--if I'd just reached out to a good neighbor, I'm sure they could have gotten a potty break and bowl full of kibble to hold them over until I got home.

That may be too depressing a failure story to put out there, but thank you for taking the time to read it--I've never met you but feel pretty sure that you are the kind of person who can listen to it and empathize...

My dad wasn't one to "stay in the dumps", so in honor of him, I will share a funny failure tidbit from this week. My schnauzer-terrier mix, "Chuck", has a partially torn cruciate. Dr. Rider said "hey, he's the perfect candidate for you to do rehab instead of surgery with", so in comes one of my own dogs for rehab, and this is going to be great because I can work with him at home in addition to hospital time!

He sat in the hospital kennel and screamed. I went out and bought him a delectable chew toy--he buried it in his kennel blanket and continued to scream. I got into the underwater treadmill with him, where he thrashed about like an angry fish and left both of us soaking wet. E-stim to the stifle and some uphill land treadmill walking went somewhat better--AHA, we're getting back on track. So I went to do some PROM and stretching with him and try out some gentle joint mobs. OH HELL NO!!! Snarling, biting, and rolling like coked-up crocodile. The only good thing was that he was so exhausted by the end of it all that he quit screaming and fell asleep in his kennel.

So I thought "well, maybe he'll do better working at home". But he has procured this glittery Christmas drink coaster that he is currently guarding with his life. It is filthy, damp, and has lost all of its' sheen, but he carries it around 23.75 hours a day--growls, snarls, snaps, and then runs away anytime you get near him, apparently fearful that you covet it as much as he does... It's always the preacher's kids, aye?

*Soichiro Honda's unique vision got him ostracized by the Japanese business community.*



*Getty Images/ The Asahi Shimbun*

*Honda was a mechanical genius who idolized Edison and rebelled against the norm. His passion for aggressive individualism was more fit for the United States, and thus alienated him from Japanese businessmen, who valued teamwork above all else. Honda then boldly challenged the American automotive industry in the 1970s and led a Japanese automotive revolution.*

## My Mistake

Rod Newman, MS, CCRP.  
Canine Rehabilitation of Nashville

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I had just started doing canine rehab and this mistake was probably in my first six months of practice. I had a dog referred to me with a shoulder strain. Infraspinatus as I recall. After doing my meager evaluation, I felt certain that the tissue around the scapula was not a strain but more likely a growth of some sort. The tissue just didn't feel right to me.

I sent the dog back to the vet for a reassessment, as I was not comfortable treating something that I had questions about. The vet saw the dog and assured me that this was in fact a muscle strain and that I had nothing to worry about. I started treating the dog with ultrasound, massage and ROM. Since I was mobile starting out, I actually saw the dog at two different clinics. The owner had one dog at each clinic but either clinic was open for us to treat wherever the owner needed to be due to her job. The second treatment was at the second clinic and I still had questions about this muscle strain. I asked the second vet to have a look at the shoulder and let me know what he thought. "Muscle strain," was the answer, "continue treating."

After about three sessions using the US, I really didn't feel like we were getting anywhere, so I decided to use my e-stim and see if we could make any progress this way. After about three treatments with the e-stim, massage and ROM, I thought that the muscle was actually increasing in size and was very alarmed. I stopped doing any rehab at that point and sent the dog back to the vet who again said muscle strain and nothing to worry about. I did not think it prudent to continue rehab and told the owner this.

About two to three weeks later, the owner called me to report that the shoulder had ruptured one day when she was at work and she came home to find a bloody mess all over her kitchen and her dog covered in blood

The dog was then diagnosed with cancer. So basically, I had been feeding this tumor with US, e-stim and massage all the while, knowing in the back of my mind, that this tissue did not feel normal.

What did I learn? I learned that even though I was inexperienced in the canine rehab world, that I had a base set of skills from the human world that served me well if I had listened to my intuition. I knew that the tissue feel was very different from anything I had ever felt before but I dismissed my gut feeling and deferred to vets with years of experience. I rationalized away what I knew to be true. I now know the feeling of a tumor in a muscle and quite frankly, can't forget it.

How did I grow from this experience? I grew stronger in self-confidence and in my clinical reasoning skills. Where I had not stood up in the past to speak my concerns to the vets, I will now do so immediately. This is my concern, this is why I am thinking this and this is why I will not treat that dog, or, this is what you referred the dog to me to treat, but this is what I believe is going on. I have since found several tumors in dogs that have been referred for rehab and I attribute this to the hands on approach that a rehab evaluation requires as well as the distinct texture of the tissue. In my experience, the texture is very similar to a football (American) with the little bumps and almost the same in consistency / compression as well.

How has it pushed me forward? Similar to growth I think. I would encourage all practitioners to listen to their gut though and if a red flag is waving please don't ignore it or rationalize it away. Your patients' health may be at stake.

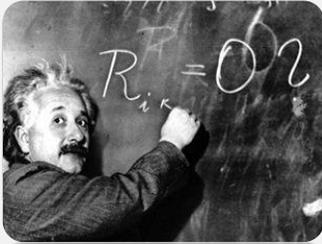
*Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, had his first book rejected by 27 different publishers.*



*AP Photo*

*Dr. Seuss became a legendary children's author known around the world for classics like "The Cat in the Hat" and "Green Eggs and Ham." His books have sold over 600 million copies.*

*As a child, Albert Einstein had some difficulty communicating and learning in a traditional manner.*



*AP Photo*

*Of course, Einstein's communication and behavioral problems were not indicative of a lack of intelligence. He won the Nobel prize in physics for the discovery of the photoelectric effect, and his special theory of relativity theory corrected the deficiencies of Newtonian physics.*

## Failures

Dr.Tanya Grantham, B.Sc (Hons) B.V.Sc CertSCVA  
Animal Health & Hvdro. South Africa

*"Experience is not what happens, but what we do with what happens."* Aldous Huxley

I have had treatment failures (as we all have) but I find that the failures which impact me more are those that I call 'people failures'. These are the cases where I have misread a person and behaved inappropriately. Or, I have been in a stressed state and reacted to a comment instead of taking a step back, and recognising that perhaps the client is really emotionally upset.

I am certain we have all been in situations like this. When these events happen, it forces me to become introspective and try to find a way to prevent this from happening again.

In order to offer healing in the best possible environment, I have had to search for balance, as well as a way of maintaining that balance.

These failures make me re-evaluate and hopefully, improve.

## Failures- Knowing When to Say Goodbye

Denise Testa

One of my biggest failures (or at least the one lasting the longest) was staying way too long at a practice which did very little to support veterinary rehabilitation.

It was a large practice, 16 doctors, a boarded internist and surgeon along with a thriving emergency service. It seemed the ideal place for rehab. I started there shortly after becoming certified and realized it would take some time to demonstrate the benefits of rehabilitation to the owners and staff.

After about a year, the entire practice moved to a new building which had been a former supermarket now converted to a sprawling veterinary hospital.

The rehab service "inherited" a room that had been earmarked for CT scans. Unfortunately before the room was finished, funds ran out so we were stuck with an unfinished concrete floor, walls with only primer on them and a set of second and third hand furniture. It was promised if rehab continued to grow, the room would be finished. In the meantime, I was to see appointments in the regular appointment rooms and not bring any owners back into the rehab room.

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### ... Failures – Knowing when to say goodbye continued

In the short term, this made me get really creative using limited space. Flash forward five years, the rehab service is thriving, busy servicing in hospital patients as well as being fully booked with appointments. However, the room was still unfinished and I was making myself crazy, trying to juggle appointments to make things work.

The breaking point came, when the hospital director decided that rehab could share the room with the training director. She didn't see a problem with people learning new skills while a dog was on the treadmill. If the patient didn't get a good session because of multiple distractions, that shouldn't be a problem because there were no owners present.

I realized it was time to go.

My failure was not setting up specific goals linked to performance and a set time frame for getting the room finished. Instead I was enabling them. In my mind, it would be the next tough case the doctors couldn't resolve which rehab would turn around that would get me a finished floor.

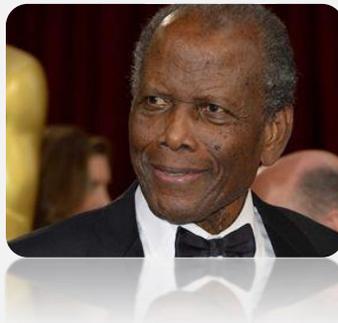
Veterinary rehabilitation is a valuable profession, not to be treated like some sort of back room money grab. Our patients deserved better and I was letting them down by settling for less.

By this time a lot of the staff, doctors and boarded surgeon supported rehab so it was really hard to say goodbye. And it was scary because I had settled into a comfort zone. But I left and moved on to a place that respects and fully supports rehab. In retrospect, I shouldn't have wasted so much time hoping that things would change when clearly they were not going to.

I found this on a poster and think it sums up the lesson that I learned.

### **If You Are Brave Enough to Say Goodbye, Life Will Reward You with a New Hello.**

*When Sidney Poitier first auditioned for the American Negro Theatre, he flubbed his lines and spoke in a heavy Caribbean accent, which made the director angrily tell him to stop wasting his time.*



*Photo by Dan Steinberg/Invision/AP*

*Poitier worked on his craft and eventually became a hugely successful Hollywood star. He won an Academy Award for Best Actor and helped break down the color barrier in the American film industry.*

## 9 Lessons from A 10-Time Startup Failure

Eric T. Wagner Contributor, [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com)

Source: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/soniakapadia/2013/10/23/success-stories-are-great-failure-stories-are-even-better/> [Accessed April 14, 2014]

*“Nine out of ten businesses fail - so I came up with a foolproof plan — create ten businesses.” — Robert Kiyosaki*

Well-spoken by [Kiyosaki](#). But what’s it like to live through 10 failed startups and still come out with a 3 million dollar company?

Meet Kurt Theobald, Co-Founder and CEO of Classy Llama.



Theobald started 10 businesses over the span of 5 years. Each one a failed mess. But herein lies the beauty from ashes — he nailed it on his 11<sup>th</sup> try.

Now ranked at [#454](#) on Inc’s Top 500 Fastest Growing Companies in the U.S. for 2013, Theobald’s latest creation (with the help of co-founder Erik Hansen and a team of 23) is on target to reach \$3 million in revenue this year.

As luck would have it, Theobald and I were able to sit down for a 60 minute rapid-fire chat where I did everything I could to extract the secrets of his success.

Pull up a chair and take notes, because Theobald reveals 9 valuable lessons you can take to the bank today, which I now gift to you:

### Lesson #1: Opportunistic vs. Strategic Entrepreneur: One Of These Is Fatal

Look up ‘shiny object syndrome’ in an older dictionary, up pops a picture of Theobald. He had the disease and it wasn’t pretty.

*“That was really just a big mistake on my part. If it looked interesting, I’d pursue it. It was just like whatever came my way. Just chased multiple opportunities and never was strategic about any of it. That in itself led to many failures.”*

**Lesson?** Act strategic. Don’t just chase every opportunity walking by in a pretty skirt. Understand your core competencies, your ‘North Star’ purpose and learn what ‘*opportunity discernment*’ means.

### Lesson #2: Fail Fast... But Not Too Fast

Sweeping the startup world is the mantra ‘fail fast’. And yes — this is sound advice for every startup. But is there a case when it can go too far?

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... 9 Lessons From A 10-Time Startup Failure continued

Ten failures in 5 years — I'll let Theobald tell you: *"It may not be entirely redeemable to let go so fast. I'm an impatient person and it's a leading weakness. I'm very quick to let go — sometimes too fast to let go. Sometimes the most successful entrepreneurs will stick with it, try from different angles and then it eventually takes off. They stick it out and get the formula right."*

**Lesson?** Yes — take on the 'fail fast' approach. But balance it with tenacity and dogged determination. You don't want to be the miner who stops digging 6 inches away from the vein of gold.

### **Lesson #3: Find Your Formula**

Every successful business on the face of the planet has this in common: they've figured out their 'secret sauce' and are now scaling it. But you can't scale until you find your formula first.

Theobald on one of his 10 failures: *"By the time it came to close, there wasn't enough revenue to sustain the (business) model. It just wasn't viable and **the formula wasn't right at a fundamental level**. It wasn't too long after that I went and filed personal bankruptcy."*

**Lesson?** Nail first, scale second. Nathan Furr and Paul Ahlstrom drive this home hard in their book 'Nail It, Then Scale It'. Do this in the wrong order and you'll drive off a 500-ft cliff.

### **Lesson #4: Know Who You Are**

You're either an entrepreneur or you're not. Period. No half-way point. No being a 'little bit' pregnant. The entrepreneurs who recognize who they are at their core are most likely to figure it out and succeed in the long run.

*Theobald explained it this way: "I wrote two things in my journal: One, when I fall, I am getting up. Every single time. And two; I get up because it's who I am as an entrepreneur. Therefore to not get up is to betray who I am. And so that's what kept me going through all the failure. You can't stop. You don't really have a choice because if you choose that then you might as well sacrifice your whole life."*

**Lesson?** Write it down. If you truly believe you're an entrepreneur, commit right now to that as your identity. Claim it and live by it. I did when I was 14. You may think I'm a writer, but I'm an entrepreneur. Period. And I never quit.

### **Lesson #5: You Must Have A Deeper Why**

Simon Sinek nails this in his infamous TED Talk speech. If you've never listened to this thing, do so after finishing this article.

Theobald; "I believe the most successful entrepreneurs have a deeper why. They have a deeper purpose for what they're doing. The most contemporary and best example I can think of is Steve Jobs who came back (to Apple) with no ownership and taking only a dollar for his salary. Just because he cared about delivering greatness. He just wanted to be insanely great and make a dent in the world. That mentality is what changed things for me. It's the key difference between exceptionally successful entrepreneurs and marginally successful entrepreneurs."

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... 9 Lessons From A 10-Time Startup Failure continued

**Lesson?** Dig deep and find the deeper why. If you're just in this for the collateral benefits of possible wealth, freedom and independence, I predict an eventual train wreck for you.

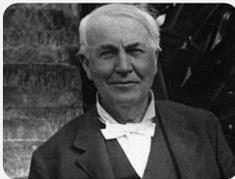
#### Lesson #6: It's Not About You

Grasp the meaning behind the deeper why? If yes — then you'll automatically recognize entrepreneurship is not about you.

*Theobald explains it this way: "When you chase opportunities, it's all about you trying to get something for yourself. I started experiencing success when I made a significant shift in my thinking. My role changed from looking out for myself to focusing on making other people successful. This mindset generated significantly different results."*

**Lesson?** Jump 180 degrees to the other side. Stand in the shoes of your \_\_\_\_\_. (Yes — fill it in. Customer. Team member. Supplier. Partner. Whoever.) Let your focus be on making them successful. Internet entrepreneur Jeff Walker calls it spreading the 'abundance juice'. Do it and you'll never once have to worry about your own well-being.

*Thomas Edison's teachers told him he was "too stupid to learn anything."*



*AP Photo*

*Edison went on to hold more than 1,000 patents and invented some world-changing devices, like the phonograph, practical electrical lamp, and a movie camera.*

Want the real secret to success? Empower others, support their success **while giving up control**. 'What? Give up control? No way. This is my baby and I own it. I control it. Besides, I fled my job because I was sick of not having control.'

*Theobald counters with this; "Control is a dangerous thing. You actually gain more control by giving up control. You want to share it with others and allow them part of that stake in making decisions and moving forward. You are simply not smart enough to be successful on your own."*

**Lesson?** Empower others by giving up some control. The only real element you should control in your business is the vision, purpose (deeper why) and core values.

#### Lesson #8: Focus On Effectiveness Instead Of Your 'Rake'

Yes — you need to be profitable. Yes — you need to generate coin. But by solely focusing on your rake (read: moolah); you miss the bigger opportunity.

Continued overleaf ...

... 9 Lessons From A 10-Time Startup Failure continued

*Theobald put it like this; “When you become more effective, it’s characterized as increasing the size of the whole pie so your slice is bigger. Leveraging the goods you been given and submitting yourself to others and team, your rake will actually be better in the end. So focus on being effective, and not so much on what your ultimate rake is because you’ll be much further down the road.”*

**Lesson?** Stop thinking of your own wallet. Again, it’s not about you. Focus on how to empower others, cede control and in the process, focus your time and energy on being effective in those areas. The result? You eat a much bigger piece of pie.

### **Lesson #9: You’re Doing It Wrong...**

Theobald also wrote a book named *‘Finding Truth At The Bottom’*. He shot me a copy and I’ll wrap this thing up with my favorite quote from the book. The context is a guy who struggles mightily, but keeps doing things the same way. His wise mentor pretty much socks it to him straight in this quote:

*“Nothing’s going to give if you keep doing the same thing you’ve been doing. If you keep banging your head against the concrete wall, the wall doesn’t suddenly give way. Instead, you end up knocking yourself out. You need to pick a different approach.”*

I’ve just extracted and delivered 9 things from Theobald you can look to change in your own business. Don’t just read it. Take action and fix what’s broken. Otherwise, you’re unconscious and slumped at the bottom of the concrete wall with no one to blame but yourself. Don’t let this be you.



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Drop me a line! Send me your questions!

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