



Welcome to the 60th Edition of 'STUFF'. Wow - 5 years! What the heck am I going to write about now? Considering that there are new readers every month, this is issue #1 for them so I need to be respectful and mindful of the first impression I make, whilst maintaining some sort of standard for my loyal stuff followers. I hope you'll indulge me then with a little about why I do this. It's always a great idea when you're a professional convincer to make it about the other guy rather than yourself but issue 60 might be an appropriate time to pause and reflect on the nature of my own "whys" and the way I perceive behaviour, relationships, commitment and influence.

The world we live in has been home to billions of people since day 1. There are some great stories about them; the things they did and the journeys they took that ended up with us in 'the here' and 'the now'. My attitude is; not to live my life without knowing about those journeys. To attain real credibility, real satisfaction and real self esteem, you need knowledge – any kind and as much of it as you can get. Ignorance might be bliss but it won't stand you out – it'll just leave you out.

Regardless of your current job, the breadth as well as the extent of your knowledge will increase your self-regard as it grows. When that happens, other people hold you in higher regard. You get noticed more often. You get remembered for better and for longer. People that matter start to tap you on the shoulder and offer you opportunities that you may not have seen coming. Suddenly you're living a lifestyle that is better and that feels like a goal – even if it wasn't one originally.

The other thing is that you won't be gullible. You'll expect more of your surroundings and more of your leaders and when you become one, you'll be better at it by being able to offer more. It takes no talent to be complacent, stagnant or mediocre but it can be comfortable and therein lies the danger. As I launch the 6th year of STUFF, here's three questions I was asked recently...

**WHAT DO I KNOW NOW THAT I
WISH I'D KNOWN AT 22?**

Answer: The value of having the foresight required to ask a question like that. There is only one failure in life that you positively cannot recover from - only one! That is '**regret**'. The instant you feel it, it is by definition, too late. Too many mature people lament, "if only I could go back knowing what I know now." At 22, you aren't expected to know it all - you never should. Happily, it is the easiest failure to avoid. The act of failing indicates an attempt at some point. **The attempt is the reward.** As long as the attempt was the best possible attempt, you'll avoid regret. If the attempt failed, you'll learn and that means growth.
Participants ALWAYS beat bystanders.

**AM I WHERE I THOUGHT
I'D BE?**

Answer: No, I'm not. At 58, I still don't know what I want to be when I grow up. A 74 year old salesman who had 54 years experience once said to me, "Steve, when you're green - you grow. when you're ripe - you rot." I'm green and open minded to the possibilities. Stay green. Never become the 'old dog' who can't learn 'new tricks'. It's a horrible look and they're the only ones who can't see it. They're seen as resisters, they're underpaid because they're overlooked and eventually put out to pasture or put down.

In the meantime, practice being the "go-to guy". It doesn't require a title but it does involve being influential. Believe in professional karma but understand that reaping a dividend from it is about persistence and consistency; not a onetime attempt at it or forgetting it once you've 'arrived'.

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD I GIVE A
YOUNG PERSON ENTERING THE
WORKFORCE TODAY?**

Answer: Your reputation is your career - not your credentials. The spirit of the way you do your job is more important than your knowledge of it. Your **name** will herald your approach much like the headlights of a car at night. Invest in decency. Show gratitude and finally, understand the difference between training and education. That being; training teaches you 'how' which is great because 'knowing how' means you'll always be employed. Education however, teaches you 'why'. When you know why, you'll lead. Knowledge IS power; acquire it and dispense it and encourage its distribution.