
WHAT'S IMPORTANT | Volume I, Issue 1 | November 17, 2004

It gives me great pleasure to launch "What's Important." I have found this to be a universal concern. The phrase resonates with an infinite number of meanings. What's important is both a question and an answer, depending on the situation.

Most of us would describe our workday as being filled with many important tasks. We all work more hours than ever, typically bring work home with us, and fret constantly over how to improve. I am not writing this to tell you about my search business – you can get that from my website if you like. My intent is to expose you to interesting things I've learned that can be applied to any aspect of your life. If you understand more about what I think is important, you will form an opinion about whether I am the kind of person with whom you'd like to work.

Sometimes, what's important may at first seem insignificant.

Charles Plumb was a fighter pilot in Vietnam. After dozens of combat missions, a missile destroyed his plane. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy territory. He was captured and spent six years in a Vietnamese prison. He survived that ordeal and now lectures about lessons learned from that experience. One of his favorite stories illustrates the importance of seemingly small contributions.

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!" "How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb. "I packed your parachute," the man replied. Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!" Plumb assured him, "It sure did – if your 'chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about that man. He thought of the many hours the sailor had spent on a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship carefully weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of each parachute, holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn't know.

Now, on his speaking tour, Plumb asks his audience, "Who's packing your parachute?"

We all have someone who provides what we need to make it through the day. Who is counting on you to lend a hand or otherwise support their efforts? Perhaps more importantly, have you thanked those individuals who have contributed to your success?

Email me at chuck@durakis.com to share your thoughts.

Thanks,

Chuck