

Compliance & Ethics Professional

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Snell

We all face difficulties. Resistance, budgets, numerous problems, and the occasional bad idea we think of that causes a self-inflicted wound. We all fail to perform to our, or others, expectations. It's not a matter of if you will fail; it is a question of how you react to failure. All reactions to failure fall into one of two categories: explanations/excuses or ideas.

When people pick out something we could not control and talk about it after we fail, I get a little uptight. Most of the explanations for failure are theories and really can't be proven. It's not wise to make decisions on what amounts to be far-flung theories. More importantly, if you react to failure with an excuse or explanation, that tends to cause people to close that chapter or give up. "Well that explains it. There is nothing we can do about it. It wasn't our fault. We don't need to change." Let's assume for the moment that the excuse is legit. Let's assume they are right. Something outside of our control caused us to be less successful. They still are not the first words I want to hear after a failure. Excuses lead to less effort.

What I would rather see is aggression, assertiveness, the "never say die" attitude, relentlessness, etc. So what? We were dealt a legitimate blow. It doesn't mean we could not have done five things to counteract the thing

that worked against us. I want people to think of ideas not excuses. What if we had five new ideas to get further down the continuum of success and then when we subtracted the setback, we would have ended up further along the road of success. It might not have been considered a failure if we had reacted with extra ideas rather than extra excuses or explanations.

Most of the explanations for failure are theories and really can't be proven. It's not wise to make decisions on what amounts to be far-flung theories.

My suggestion is to forget excuses or explanations. It's a waste of time if you are truly a relentless success-seeker. When you feel bad, want more than you have, or fail, program your mind to go to straight to ideas. Do not fall into the trap of explaining or making excuses. Don't accept or promote explanations. When you feel failure, let it trigger ideas. If you fail, make yourself and those around you think of ideas. Be blind to excuses and excited about ideas. Turn failure into excitement about ideas. *