

Our Vision is "To teach, inspire, and assist people to experience enjoyment, fulfillment, and personal growth in their work while contributing to the success of themselves and their employers."

The Koval Eagle

Making People and Profits Soar!

Issue 9
September 2009



Welcome to Fall! It's certainly been an unusual year weather-wise, but as I write this it is a perfect autumn day!
(And the Giants are 3-0!)

The Koval Eagle, our quarterly newsletter, intends to educate, inspire, amuse - and keep you informed about how Koval Associates can help you to cultivate a happy, motivated, high-performing workforce.

This summer - July 20, to be exact - was the 40th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing. As Neil Armstrong stated "This is one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." Forty years later women have also experienced the adventures of space. This issue's feature article focuses on women pioneers in spaceflight.

Also in this issue we have the final installment of our review of a book called "Future Think: How to Think Clearly in a Time of Change." Last issue we focused on how mathematical concepts can help us understand societal events and trends; this issue our focus is on how using metaphors can help free our thinking from bias.

And don't forget to check out the Humor at Work section! In honor of the conclusion of our Future Think series, it focuses on ironic predictions about the future - humorous because of who made them!

Happy reading!

Sue Koval

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Are You Looking for a Speaker for Your Organization?

Susan Koval is available to speak on a wide variety of topics - from various business topics, to time management, to women in non-traditional careers.

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Female Pioneers in Spaceflight

Becoming an astronaut today would certainly be a non-traditional career choice for a woman - but just barely! The Department of Labor defines a non-traditional field for a woman as one in which 25% or less of those employed are female. Currently, about 26% of NASA's astronaut corps are women.

Although most people in the United States probably think of Sally Ride as the first woman in space, she was actually preceded into space 20 years earlier by a female cosmonaut, the Russian Valentina Tereshkova, who became the first woman in space in 1963. And although Ride was the first American woman in space, the first American female astronaut was Jerrie Cobb, in 1960. All three women took different paths on their journey to becoming an astronaut or cosmonaut.

Valentina Tereshkova flew aboard Vostok 6. She was a textile mill worker, but also an expert amateur parachutist. As there weren't many female pilots, her parachutist expertise got her recruited into the Russian space program. Tereshkova spent almost 3 days in space and orbited the earth 48 times. This was more time in space than the combined times of all the American Mercury astronauts who had preceded her.

Although Tereshkova turned 70 in 2007, she said it was still a dream of hers to fly to Mars - even on a one way ticket!

The U.S.A. could have had the first woman in space. The first female American astronaut, Jerrie Cobb, never got the opportunity to fly in space. Jerrie Cobb earned her commercial pilot's license at age 18, but in 1949 the aviation jobs available to women were as flight attendants, not pilots. So Cobb got a job at the Miami airport and consequently met Jack Ford, who had a business that ferried aircraft around the world. She convinced him to hire her, and thus flew all types of aircraft around the world. This led to her invitation to the Lovelace Clinic to undergo the same testing the Mercury astronauts did, and in 1960 she passed the same physical and psychological tests as the Mercury astronauts.

After she passed this testing, she then helped recruit 24 other women, twelve of whom also passed the tests and were chosen to undergo further testing at the Naval Aviation Center in Pensacola, Florida. These women became known as the FLATs - First Lady Astronaut Trainees, or Mercury 13.

Unfortunately for the women, many of whom had quit their jobs in anticipation of this round of testing, they never got the opportunity to train as astronauts. The Navy would not allow the use of their Pensacola facilities for testing, as there wasn't an official NASA request for the training. There was still much resistance by members of NASA to women becoming part of the space program. Without the testing, they could not proceed into the Mercury project.

Jerrie Cobb, along with many others on her behalf, have lobbied NASA to get Cobb onto a flight into space, but efforts have so far been unsuccessful. When John Glenn flew back into space at the age of 77 in 1998, her hopes were renewed. She even stated that she'd make the trip even "if I knew I wasn't coming back."

It wasn't until 1978 that NASA truly opened its doors to women. This class marked the first year that women were chosen to be astronauts. The 1978 was chosen specifically for the space shuttle, and six of the 35 were women, including Sally Ride. Sally Ride became the first American woman in space in 1983.

Dr. Sally Ride, an astrophysicist, flew on the Challenger STS-7 mission, as a mission specialist, thus becoming the first American woman in space. She flew again on the Challenger a year later, on the first flight to include two women. On that flight her friend, Kathryn Sullivan, became the first woman to walk in space.

The first female space shuttle pilot was Eileen Collins, in 1995. She piloted another shuttle in 1997 and then made another historic first, becoming the first woman to command a space shuttle in 1999. This was such a momentous occasion that it was announced by President Clinton at a White House press conference.

The year 2007 brought other historic firsts. The second woman to command the space shuttle, Pam Melroy, and the first woman to command the International Space Station, Peggy Whitson, marked the first time there were two women commanders in space at the same time.

A sign of progress for women in space is that this 2007 event wasn't exceptionally remarkable. In an October 2007 speech given by Michael Griffin, NASA Administrator, he remarked that "In my usual clueless fashion, I had failed to notice - until receiving a question from a member of the media - that this is the first time we have had women commanding both the Space Station and the Space Shuttle."

Times are changing, and opportunities for women to play significant roles in our country's space program are increasing. This will not only be beneficial to the space program, but also for encouraging girls and young women to pursue scientific and technical careers, whether in the sky or on the ground.

Future Think Part IV

Parts I, II, and III of the book "Future Think: How to Think Clearly in a Time of Change," by Edie Wiener and Arnold Brown, were discussed in the first three articles in this series. The book is a guide to understanding change and how best to respond to it.

The book is broken into four main parts. Part I is about the personal biases that we each have, that may prevent us from seeing change or understanding it. Part II is about organizational biases, which throw up roadblocks to making changes. Part III is about freeing our mind to see the big picture once we can begin to get past the personal and organizational biases that influence what we see.

Part IV of the book is about using metaphors to free our mind from biases by shifting us away from the expected, or by providing a story or image to help us see more clearly. The authors describe five metaphor-based thinking techniques: Three-Legged Stools of the Political Agenda, Right-of-Way, Football Meets Shopping, Managing by Harnessing Evolution, and Self-Defeating and Self-Fulfilling Prophecies. As they do in each of the previous parts of the book, the authors provide numerous examples for each of these ideas.

You may have heard it stated that the reason that the railroad industry declined in the U.S. after its heyday was because the railroads thought they were in the railroad business - when they were actually in the transportation business. Wiener and Brown argue that the railroads' major error was in not realizing that they were actually in the right-of-way business. The railroads allowed telegraph, telephone, and mail delivery to use the land along their tracks in exchange for free services. The railroad industry thereby shortchanged itself of "the opportunity to own and profit from the entire communications business. They gave away their right-of-way."

The authors then compare the railroads to the Internet. Both were begun by the federal government using government resources; then the private sector investors moved in, and using the technologies of the day, "lay down the track" to the general public. The authors explain that all businesses and professionals spend much time, talent, and energy to lay down their own commercial tracks - but then don't understand how to take advantage of this right-of-way (to their customers, employees, suppliers, creditors, etc.) Utilizing the Right-Of-Way thinking technique enables one to avoid the key mistake the railroads made - giving away one's access to its customers and future customers.

According to the authors, most businesses today think they've locked in their right-of-way to their customers due to being customer-centered - when in reality they are sales-centered. This means that their focus and attention is on acquiring a new customer - while subjecting existing customers to poor service and inattention. (You can probably think of a few instances in which you've experienced this yourself!) In general, the cost of acquiring a new customer is 6-7 times the cost of getting an existing customer to buy again. So not only is it more expensive to focus on new customers, by "ignoring" existing customers a business may lose many future sales. Take Amazon for example - they started by selling books, but now sell all sorts of other goods to their existing customers - by utilizing the right-of-way access they have to those customers via the Internet.

What right-of-way to your customers will enable you to serve them in other ways, or enable others to do so through their relationship with you? In what ways can you expand or alter your access to your customers in order to reach and serve them more effectively? How can you take full advantage of your right-of-ways as the economic and business landscape changes? How businesses answer this question may well prove vital to their success in the future.

Highlighted Program: FREE No Obligation Consultation

Would You Like to Explore Strategies for Improving Your Business?

Susan offers a FREE No Obligation Consultation to business owners who need help with Planning, People, Processes, Promotion, and Profits. Please call 732-792-1311, or email sue@kovalassociates.com to schedule an appointment.

Humor ... at Work

Interesting Predictions about the Future

"Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons."

-- *Popular Mechanics, forecasting the relentless march of science, 1949*

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."

--*Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943*

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."

--*Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977*

"This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us."

--*Western Union internal memo, 1876.*

"The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C,' the idea must be feasible."

--*A Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith's paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service. (Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.)*

"Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?"

--*H.M. Warner, Warner Brothers, 1927.*

"We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out."

--*Decca Recording Co. rejecting the Beatles, 1962.*

"If I had thought about it, I wouldn't have done the experiment. The literature was full of examples that said you can't do this."

--*Spencer Silver on the work that led to the unique adhesives for 3-M "Post-It" Notepads.*

"So we went to Atari and said, 'Hey, we've got this amazing thing, even built with some of your parts, and what do you think about funding us? Or we'll give it to you. We just want to do it. Pay our salary, we'll come work for you.' And they said, 'No.' So then we went to Hewlett-Packard, and they said, 'Hey, we don't need you. You haven't got through college yet.'"

--*Apple Computer Inc. founder Steve Jobs on attempts to get Atari and H-P interested in his and Steve Wozniak's personal computer.*

"You want to have consistent and uniform muscle development across all of your muscles? It can't be done. It's just a fact of life. You just have to accept inconsistent muscle development as an unalterable condition of weight training."

--*Response to Arthur Jones, who solved the "unsolvable" problem by inventing Nautilus.*

"If you need more than 15 or 20 meg of storage on a hard drive, you should do it on the City's main frame."

--*1986 the head of the City of Dallas Information Services Department*

(And of course, the most famous one...)

"640K ought to be enough for anybody."
--Bill Gates, 1981

Thanks to michaelclark.name for the humor!

Koval Associates offers a wide range of programs and services - including internet-based assessment tools, management development training, team training workshops and keynote speeches - to help you develop superior people and increased profits. Koval Associates also offers special programs about women in non-traditional careers.

Susan Koval
Koval Associates LLC

Helping You Attract, Train and Retain Top Performers!

Special Programs About Women in Non-Traditional Careers!

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