

It's All In The Follow Through

“Sh Boom Sh Boom” to “Macarena” spans four decades of one hit wonders.

These beauties zoomed like meteors up the Top 40 charts while their composers fizzled on the launch pad. Authors and athletes have also had their share of a solitary shot heard round the globe. Harper Lee’s only novel, “To Kill a Mockingbird”, sold 30 million copies and garnered Oscars. Bill Mazeroski is the only player in history to end a seventh game of the World Series with a walk off home run. All are singular moments of brilliance.

Follow through was missing; carrying some project or intention to full completion. In sports, it’s the final part of a stroke after smacking or releasing an object. Fail to do it in golf and your shots may be scenic and hysteric. Fail to follow through during a backhand tennis volley and you’ll bury it in the net.

The end of the swing reflects the beginning of the attack and the excellence of the intent, with people and sports. Omitting the “last full measure” of excellence will lead to chaotic morale, corruption of quality and eventual failure. Fire the employee in need of a little attention and you’ll pull the trigger so often there’ll be no one left to shoot, except you.

Caring for the last inch ensures the sanctity of the first miles. Starting projects with the end in mind gives vision to see over horizons as well as dissect close-up details. In pool and politics, snooker and snookering, if the follow through of the stroke is off, you might as well retire your cue. Follow through breeds mutual back scratching and sets standards of consistency by honoring commitments. We model those who do it and acknowledge their authority to lead.

Folks fail at follow through for many reasons: Lack of organization, incorporated cultural fear, poor communication, little experience with the fruits of courage or ownership of finished tasks and too much familiarity with just getting by. Overwhelmed or unfamiliar with change, we let promising projects slowly die. Talent is often not matched to terrain.

Fairfield support for the arts was about to be cut. A compromise was struck and a resolution passed promising money and forgiveness of some fees. If the city follows through with infra structure reengineering and smart business practices, an arts consortium can succeed.

The consortium is not just about the arts, just as the Artys Theme Song Contest and New Playwright Contest were both tangible as well as symbolic. Both were intentional public proofs of principle by their designers of what can happen when you follow through.

Soon, expert’s and opinion leaders will form a team to build a consortium. Its first proof of principle will be a gala on May 22nd. The city will honor its word and forgive fees for “tent-tech-ticket and toilet”. In addition to cable and web access, the consortium will consistently need a little of the time and talents of crucial city staff afforded through smart business reengineering. The goal is an E ticket ride that educates, enthralls, entertains, enlarges and excels.

The arts are one inroad to better governance, better life, less apathy, safer streets, revitalizing the city and delighting customer voters to become engaged.

Comprehensive plans that are practicable, job saving and revenue generating that require smart business decisions are being reviewed right now by our new city manager, Sean Quinn and Community Services Director, John Delorenzo.

Fairfield needs a symphony of solutions soon, not just the one hit wonder of a laudable but unfinished resolution. Will the city be a superb financial steward who can wow and delight their customers? Will city leaders be agents of change and invention and ingenuity?

This is not just about the arts. It is about keeping faith, good management, and leadership, keeping jobs, saving money, rebuilding downtown and acting like a smooth compassionate business.

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