

18 LESSONS FOR BEST BUSINESS PRACTICES

On the occasion of Zwicker Electric's 60th Anniversary Celebration on May 3, 2007, David Pinter, the firm's president, reflected on the sound advice he has learned from his father, Ernest Pinter, as well as life experiences along the way.

I just wanted to thank everyone who helped make this milestone happen. Everything I know I probably learned from my dad, and he always believed in celebrating happy occasions and that we should cherish these opportunities when they occur.

It's nice to toot your horn once every 60 years or so, and Sam Pace, Neil De Vincenzo and myself are the luckiest people in the world. We love what we do and the nice, smart people we work with. We have clients whom we genuinely like and who genuinely make us feel appreciated, while our suppliers have always been a big part of our staying power.

This is just our way of thanking everyone who has made this a wonderful journey and to thank our friends both new and old. It is especially gratifying to have friends such as Irwin Miller and Marvin Mass who have been such a part of our history here and even predate myself. It is also gratifying that some of our friends from labor are here, as we do consider them our partners in our endeavors to build New York and keep it a union town.

Over the past few weeks I have been jotting down my reflections and thoughts, and I would like to share a few of the lessons and best practices I have learned during my years at Zwicker Electric:

1. Don't keep unpleasant news a secret until it is too late to remedy.
2. All companies have essentially the same structure; it is the vision and the people which make them unique.
3. By nature, labor and management are adversarial, but our goal of creating work opportunity and employment in our industry is the same.
4. Most problems are created by poor communication.
5. It is management's role to establish good lines of communication.
6. Most problems can be solved over a meal.
7. Charity and philanthropy should be part of the corporate DNA. It feels good to give, and it's also good business.
8. Hire people smarter than yourself, and don't be insecure about surrounding yourself with talent which will enhance your effectiveness as you bask in their glow.
9. Respect your co-workers needs for personal and family time and encourage vacations. It is not always necessary to work well into the evening 6 or 7 days a week.
10. Don't underestimate your competition.
11. If you screw up, the blame is with management (one of my dad's favorites)
12. Be intimately familiar and conversant with your financials. Know as much as your CFO.
13. Encourage outside interests. Talking contracting really isn't that interesting to the rest of the world.
14. Keep abreast of technology. Being a mature company does not afford the ability to stagnate.
15. Your best salesmen are your field forces. Your best advertisement is your last project.
16. Pay fairly and expect a lot in return.
17. Treat your vendors and suppliers as you treat your clients
18. Take time to smell the roses.