

**Openings:** The German philosopher Goethe put an interesting spin on the idea that we create our own reality.

*"The way you see people is the way you treat them  
and the way you treat them is what they become."*

Adhering to this philosophy, seeing people as team members is certainly the most productive vision to hold.

**Spotlight:** When employment decisions are driven by considerations of workload, the results are unsatisfying for both employer and employee. Unless people are employed in appropriate, well-intentioned tasks, the enterprise is diminished. Pursuing the quest of right livelihood is simply good business. That this quest also raises the quality of life for the stakeholders in an enterprise is further evidence that the surest route to a solid bottom line is through serving the people who are your enterprise.

When people are assigned tasks that do not stretch their capabilities, they begin to shrink and contribute less to the enterprise. A fully engaged person does not look for distractions to fill their day as their tasks blur the line between work and play. A fully engaged person is open to the opportunities that arise during the course of their daily interactions and transactions so that they are able to create profitable solutions.

There are no inhuman tasks; there are only the inhumanly intentioned tasks. Any task imbued with respect and dignity is suitable for human labour. Pay scales and working conditions are secondary considerations. The human spirit flourishes just as well in a field under the noonday sun as it does in an air-conditioned corner office.

Even when a task is challenging and well intentioned, it may not be cost effective to employ a person to perform the task. The means to automate, integrate, and eliminate business procedures abound. Using people for tasks better suited to machines is as much a concern to stockholders as to social activists because people are much more costly than technology.

Expect more from the people in your enterprise, envision only dignified and respectful tasks, and be vigilant in applying appropriate technology. Aim high and be pleasantly surprised when your expectations are exceeded.

**Links:** The following two links are great places to push your limits. Be certain that you have some free time before you enter these sites because they are certainly the stuff that Lewis Carroll speaks of as Alice's rabbit hole.

At [www.do-not-zzz.com](http://www.do-not-zzz.com) you will find an introduction to Zen philosophy that would make Lao-tsu smile.

At [www.willing-to-try.com](http://www.willing-to-try.com) you will find a world of wonder where the only response is try, try again.

**Musings:** As the days lengthen and warm, blossoms and buds appear and thoughts of what to plant begin to surface. While we are not all gardeners, it is difficult to imagine a person who does not appreciate the beauty of a garden.

A basic design element in every garden is the mix between annuals and perennials. Annuals complete their entire life cycle in a single growing season while perennials survive through the winter to grow again the following spring. The brief, vivid bursts of colour of annuals are magnificent and exhilarating while the slower growth and more muted shades of perennials are calming and enduring. Annuals require a great deal of attention while perennials almost take care of themselves.

When you look at the garden that is your enterprise, does the mix of annual and perennial projects provide sufficient variety and balance your resources?

**Facts & Figures:** In an effort to protect pedestrians against reckless and impatient drivers, police in Berkeley have set up decoys—plainclothes officers—in local crosswalks. In a recent sting operation, police handed out 34 tickets in less than two hours.

**Lexicon:** The source of all strength is courage. Bravery, fortitude, gallantry, and valour are all strains of courage exhibited in different situations. What can be easily associated with brawn is actual a quality of the heart. The root of the word is *cor* from Latin for heart and no matter the magnitude of the undertaking; it is a gentle heart beat that fuels all action.

**Quote:** Norbert Wiener—the founder of the science of cybernetics—had the following to say about the tasks people perform:

*"When human atoms are knit into an organization in which they are used, not in their full right as responsible human being, but as cogs and levers and rods, it matters little that their raw material is flesh and blood. What is used as an element in a machine, is in fact an element in the machine."*

**Just For Fun:** Farmers throughout the European Union have 90 days to put a toy in every pigsty or face up to three months in jail. The new ruling is designed to keep pigs happy and prevent them chewing each other. Official instructions are to give pigs "environmental enrichment" by providing "manipulable material," which is being interpreted as balls of different colours.