



DECEMBER 1, COMMUNICATION

“Judge a man by his questions
rather than his answers.”

Voltaire

If you know me at all, you have certainly heard that I believe in the power of questions. It's nice to know that Voltaire and I share the same idea.

So much of what we hear in today's world comes from an "expert" who believes only in the power of her/his own thoughts and doesn't pay enough attention to the wants and needs of others.

Make 2020 your year to ask more questions to improve your communication. Then you'll be able to say what you want to say to get what you want to get.

Keep asking!



DECEMBER 2, COMMUNICATION

“What has to happen to make the information you want to communicate more understandable?”

Ken D. Foster

There are at least three important questions to ask before communicating. 1) Who is your audience? That includes things such as their level of knowledge, background, interest in the subject and how well you know them.

2) What do you want to communicate and why? You should be able to put your ideas into words that make sense to any kind of audience.

If you understand your audience well, it will be easier to tailor it to the right level and amount of input. Your reason(s) for communicating this information is essential. Know your intention and what result you want.

3) What does your audience want to hear? An expert who gives too much information for the audience to handle creates problems.

If you know why your audience is listening to / reading your input, you will be able to give them what they want, and they'll be able to give you what you need.



DECEMBER 3, SUCCESS

“However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at.”

Stephen Hawking

In my childhood I often heard: If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again. Life has been good to me. But of course, there have been difficult times.

We often look at the big, terrible picture when things are going wrong. Suddenly everything is bad, and we can’t see any way to move forward.

What we need to do is look for the small things to start with. If we can make them a success, it gives us the drive and energy to keep on trying for the bigger pieces as well.

As soon as we realize that we are not a total failure, things start getting better. We get that little boost of energy and start to see everything more positively, even if all our problems are not solved yet.

Go out today and look for a small thing to start with. For me it was this post every day during Advent. I’m getting more momentum and other tasks don’t feel like mission impossible. I wish you the same.



DECEMBER 4, SUCCESS

“What does your life look like when
it is working the way you want?”

Ken D. Foster

I chose this question because it is so difficult for me to answer. I’ve never wanted big amounts of anything.

It is hard for me to set goals and then really find the best way to achieve them. This year I’m using some new tools to do so to try to improve myself and my track record in this area of my life.

Contact me if you’re interested in finding out about these tools. I want to have a more organized plan of broad goals and the smaller targets underneath so that I can keep track of my progress / success and be able to share it with others who are keeping me accountable.

I’m also willing to help you with this one-on-one on a peer level. If that’s interesting for you, please contact me.

Let’s see what our success plans for 2020 look like and if we have actually achieved them a year from now.
Good luck to all of us!



DECEMBER 5, ORGANIZATION

“Deadlines aren't bad. They help you
organize your time. They make you get going
when you may not feel like it.”

Harvey Mackay

When I first read this statement, my reaction was, how true! I love to put things off to later, and I’ve always said that I do my best work under pressure, so I procrastinate often.

When I do, the outcome is usually good, but life could be better without so much stress at the last minute. So, I’m writing these entries early and not all at the last minute in an effort to improve on this aspect.

This does help me set priorities and I have a better feeling that I’ve worked ahead. Even if I don’t feel like it, I know that you are reading this and expecting a new post every day.

Thank you for helping me get going, even if I don’t always feel like writing. I appreciate you reading my thoughts and want to fulfill your expectations.

I hope that you find ways to reflect that help you move forward.



DECEMBER 6, ORGANIZATION

“What is your organization philosophy?”

Ken D. Foster

I chose this question because I wasn't really sure what it meant first. That's why I'd like to explore it with you today.

During the past few weeks I've been looking hard at how to plan my year 2020. I've tried to figure out how I can optimize things like time management, and I guess that part of that comes back to my organization philosophy.

I've found lots of tools to help me, but I think the one that summarizes it best is the story of the rocks and pebbles and the sand. If you're interested there's a nice short video which tells the story in a quick and pleasant way:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5ZvL4as2y0>

I think that goal setting gives us the big picture, but then we have to actually organize what we're going to do with the priorities we've set. I hope you agree that rocks, pebbles and sand are a good tool and a good metaphor to help us think about that.

Please feel free to share here what your organization philosophy is. I'm sure I have lots more to learn.



DECEMBER 7, GOAL SETTING

“Setting goals is the first step in turning
the invisible into the visible.”

Tony Robbins

As I mentioned in the last post, goal setting has always been something very difficult for me. I know how important it is to have a focus, but I also know how easy it is to get caught up the details, in the sand.

If you’ve learned anything about time management, was what’s important and what’s urgent, etc., you can probably understand that I think it’s easier to do the urgent small things and get them over with, but then I don’t always have the time or the energy to work on the big things.

My biggest goal for 2020 is getting my goals and priorities right. I haven’t had enough quiet time yet to actually do this, but it helps just because I’m writing it here and know that you all know about it now. I look forward to some quieter moments when I can really sit down and make the plans I need to make for 2020.

My wish for you during this season is that quiet time and clarity about your goals. If you need an accountability partner or would just like to talk about this, please contact me. I’m sure we can help each other.



DECEMBER 8, GOAL SETTING

“What is your theme for next year?”

Ken D. Foster

I’m sure you know what I’m thinking when you read this question. All my problems with goal setting may come from the fact that, until now, I have never chosen the theme for the year.

So, I decided to make this the first time I have an annual theme. My biggest problem is still trying to figure out exactly how to express this theme.

I have lots of good ideas. Some of them include: getting my new business, Commpolium, up and running, making sure that I take better care of my health, and working on relationships in my life that will help me sustain all these other goals. So now you’ve heard what I think I’d like to work on.

But I still don’t know exactly what to call this as a theme for next year. I’m not sure if a word like transition (from one business model to the other) is good, or for example, new beginnings. Maybe you have some thoughts.

If so, please let me know what you think. This is still definitely work in progress, maybe for you too. Let’s work on this together and find our best theme for 2020.



DECEMBER 9, COMMITMENT

“Commitment and credibility go hand in hand.”

Zbigniew Brzezinski

Today’s topic is much easier for me to talk about. I consider myself a very principled person and making commitments is something I don’t take lightly. I think if you speak to others about me, one thing they will tell you is that if I say I’m going to do something, I do it.

Maybe you don’t know this, but I grew up on a dairy farm, a farm with cows, in Pennsylvania in the US. My grandfather was one of the best-known farmers for Holstein cows in the US. My grandfather was also known for his reliability, or as our quotation for today puts it: credibility. If you shook his hand to make a deal, the deal was definitely made, and his side of the commitment was always fulfilled. I never met anyone who didn’t believe in what my grandfather said.

This is a role model I’ve tried to live up to my whole life. To be committed and then to go forward and actually do it shows how commitments and credibility go hand-in-hand. I don’t think it’s possible to have one without the other and be a person that others can believe in.

I hope this is an area of your life that you believe is important. I know how much doing so has helped me through the years. I wish you the same.



DECEMBER 10, COMMITMENT

“What actions can you take to maintain focus
on keeping your commitments?”

Ken D. Foster

This is a vital question. For me there are three important aspects to making sure we keep our commitments.

Number one: make sure that the commitments you make are those that you really want. you're asked to do things and say yes because we don't want to feel guilty or disappoint someone. We simply don't make sure that it's the right thing for us. So, part of number one is making sure that we know how to say no. This is very difficult, and we all need to work on this.

Number two: once you've made the commitment, make sure you understand what you'll have to do to fulfill this commitment. This means not only looking at this commitment, but at the other things you're doing to make sure your priorities are set correctly. Many times, making the commitment is not the problem, but if there is a time element involved, sticking to the deadline seems to be the problem.

And number three: if there's a reason why you can't fulfill the commitment, make sure you inform others about this as soon as possible, giving good reasons why, and making a suggestion about how to make sure that this commitment gets fulfilled either later or in another way. Nobody's perfect and if we're open and honest with those we communicate with and make commitments to, then our lives will be much easier.



DECEMBER 11, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

“Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development.”

Kofi Annan

Kofi Annan is no longer here, much of his wisdom still remains. What plans do you have for your personal development in 2020? Our education is one of the most vital aspects of our lives.

If we don't move forward personally, it's very hard to set new goals, to help others on their journey, and to achieve all of those things that we may now only be dreaming of. We need to believe in the power of transformation.

When I look at my own life, I cannot believe all the things that I've learned and all the wonderful experiences I've had in my personal development. Education brings new vitality to entire communities and countries but don't forget that it starts with each of us individually.

Look for your own freedom, look for the right to make decisions the way that suits you best, and make sure that your path is taking you to greater sustainability for yourself, those you love, and those you work with.



DECEMBER 12, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

“What would have to happen for you to smile more?”
Ken D. Foster

This is a question I think most of us rarely think about. When was the last time that you smiled and were aware of it? Do you ever really think about what makes you smile? If not, today's a good day to take a moment and do so. There are so many small things that make us smile which we have no control over: comments we receive from other people, the satisfaction we have when we achieve something.

When I try to answer this question, I've decided to concentrate on small things. Some examples are finishing a project I'm working on, like these posts. The world gives us so many choices. We never really know which is the right one. But if we think too long, we never move forward.

One of my goals and ways to smile more in 2020 is to just decide on something, to take it on completely and move forward with it to achieve my goals.

What's going to make you smile more in 2020? I hope you can find the answer on your own. If not, feel free to contact me. Maybe together we can discover ways to smile more with each other and for each other.



DECEMBER 13, RELATIONSHIPS

“Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships.”

Stephen Covey

Trust is one of those words that we grew up with. Maybe someone told us classic statements such as the one on US money: the phrase that says in God we trust.

Not everyone has the same definition of trust. Today's relationships and communication make it more difficult to decide what trust is in our relationships with others. Having a relationship with someone only online may cause us to think differently about trust than we did in the past. The lack of a handshake or a kiss on the cheek or just seeing the sparkle in someone's eyes directly may mean that we have to define trust differently than before.

But I also believe trust is the glue of life. We only interact with people over a longer period whom we come to know, like and trust. How do you define trust in your life? Has the definition changed? Is it different if your communication with someone takes place directly face-to-face or online?

So many questions think about for relationships, communication and trust. Let me know what your opinion is. I'm sure we can all learn from each other.



DECEMBER 14, RELATIONSHIPS

“What qualities or behaviors do you search for in potential relationships?”

Ken D. Foster

Before reading this question, I had never looked at a relationship through the glasses of qualities or behaviors. So, I sat down and tried to think of relationships I have now, and what makes them special. Would I be able to apply things from these relationships to new potential relationships?

What does it mean to search for a new potential relationship? In business, this often means looking for new potential clients, but I have relationships with many people who are not clients, and our relationships are very special.

I’ve decided to take a different look at people when I meet them for the first time. I’m not sure if I have a list of qualities that I would search for, but I do know that there are some qualities or behaviors I do not value, and I’m trying to avoid people who display those qualities.

I think this is a question that we need to revisit often. I wish you great success in finding out what you are looking for in your new relationships in 2020.



DECEMBER 15, MISSION IN LIFE

“My mission in life is not merely to survive,
but to thrive; and to do so with some passion,
some compassion, some humor, and some style.”

Maya Angelou

This statement really touched my heart. I’ve always seen myself as someone with a mission. My mission is to make sure that those people I work with and otherwise touch through my life can improve their lives by having had interactions with me.

As a coach, this means helping people discover where they are in their lives and where they would like to be and what role I can play in helping them get there. Just as Maya I don’t only want to survive or to help other people survive, but to make their lives better, to thrive.

I love what I do. There’s a lot of compassion: I take the needs and lives of other people very seriously and do everything I can to support them.

Humor is one of those things that I’ve always had. I think we learn so much by laughing at things in life: at ourselves and at situations we deal with, because it relieves the tension and helps us move forward.

My style is something that I don’t know exactly how I would define, but I would like to refine it more in 2020.

Let me know what your mission looks like. Maybe there’s a way I can use my mission to help yours.



DECEMBER 16, MISSION IN LIFE

“What gifts do you bring to the world?”

Ken D. Foster

The gifts I bring to the world are those that I’ve cultivated over a long period of time. I believe there are gifts we are born with, but I also believe to have them be really useful, we need to keep working on those gifts and seeing how they can be applied to help others.

I have come up with an acronym for my gifts called FIT. F stands for flexibility. In many interactions I have with others, people often tell me how easy it is to work with me because I’m so flexible.

The I stands for insightful. Having worked with people from more than 70 countries, I can often look at things from a different perspective. I’m more than happy to then share the insights I have with others to help broaden their horizons.

Tolerance gives me the chance to look beyond my own view of the world, to take in those things which are new for me, and to help pass them along to others.

So, what are three gifts that you bring to the world? I’m sure there are many more, but sometimes it’s nice just to sit down and think about your top three. If you like, share them here. But don’t forget, we all have gifts. We were given these gifts to be able to share them with others and to make our lives and the lives we touch better.



DECEMBER 17, BUSINESS

“Life is an exciting business, and most exciting when it is lived for others.”

Helen Keller

Helen Keller is one of my heroes in life. Becoming handicapped at a young age, not being able to see or hear or speak is a challenge that many people would not take on. Helen had lots of help, but Helen mostly had the idea that life is there to be lived and that if she could overcome her difficulties, it was her duty to help other people do so as well. She still finished her studies at a college and then went on to give talks to help people in more than 25 countries.

The inspiration she could give and the motivation she could share with them made her life valuable, to herself and others. Helen and I both believe that living life for others is what makes life worth living.

I love the fact that my work with others helps them become better communicators in their business. I’ve always admired Helen Keller, but now I’m taking her statement and going forward for the rest of my life to remember how exciting it is when I can live my life for others as she did.



DECEMBER 18, BUSINESS

“What are the greatest lessons you have learned
in business?”

Ken D. Foster

The greatest lesson I’d like to share today for my business is the fact that business only works on the basis of giving and taking. It’s fortunate that, at least in the English language, we say give and take. It’s so important to give first.

With our very self-centered society, everyone looking out for his own benefit and advantages, we often forget that anyone or anything being first can only be a part of what is going on in our lives.

Of course, it’s important to take good care of ourselves, to try to improve, to make things better for those who are near to us. But the best way to do that is to first look at others. There have been so many times in my life where I didn’t know what would happen next, but when I reached out to someone and gave them support, my questions were answered tenfold.

So, the greatest lesson that I would like to share today, and every day, is to make sure you give so much that not only the person you have given to, but many others, will see that you’re not only interested in yourself. Then they will be willing to give things back so that you have something to take.



DECEMBER 19, CONTRIBUTION

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life
by what we give.”

Winston Churchill

The first time I read this statement, I was impressed by its simplicity and its profoundness at the same time. For someone like me, whose making a living has so much to do with the rest of her life, I realized how these two are so entwined for me.

I realized that much of what I get, which would be considered my making a living, only comes to me when I am also giving people things, which is making up my life. I know that, for many people, these two aspects are not as closely related as they are for me.

At this time of year it may be important for us to look back at what we’ve done and decide how much of what is making our living, or what we have received, has to do with how we make our lives, or how much we give.

I hope that you find the balance that you need to make sure that you can make your living by receiving from others but also to know that when you give, you’re really making your own life and the lives of others better.



DECEMBER 20, CONTRIBUTION

“In *what* areas do you make a difference
in the world?”

Ken D. Foster

For a very long time, I looked outside of myself to see what others wanted, to try to provide the things that others needed, and to make sure that I was good enough to fulfill the expectations of others. At this season in my life, I’ve decided to switch gears.

I’m looking much more into myself. I’m listening when others tell me what contributions I’ve made to their lives. I’m looking for a new way to combine these two aspects, to do those things that I love, that fulfill me, and that made me feel valuable in and of myself, combined with making sure that I’m still providing value and support and inspiration for those around me.

It’s a wonderful feeling to know that as I get older, this is becoming easier and easier. The consequences it brings with it, however, are not always easier. There’s so much I don’t know yet. Then I remember this question. How do I want to make a difference in the world? I want to make sure that people can move forward confidently and express themselves clearly. I want to make sure that people remember me as the person who helped them during a time when they wanted to make progress in their lives.

One of my aspirations for 2020 is to ask myself this question again and again and to make sure that I’m making the difference that I can make.



DECEMBER 21, QUANTUM BREAKTHROUGHS

“I always did something I was a little not ready to do.
I think that's how you grow. When there's that
moment of 'Wow, I'm not really sure I can do this,'
and you push through those moments,
that's when you have a breakthrough.”

Marissa Mayer

Recently someone asked me how I found the time and the energy to do all the things that I do, at my age. This person was older than I am, and maybe thought it was time to be grateful for the things I had in life and not be striving for anything else.

Unfortunately, I'm not wired that way. I love the fact that today's technology, a global lifestyle, and integration of so many aspects of our lives can give me new opportunities. Every time I try to do one of these new things, I often sit there and say to myself, “Should you really be doing this?” That little voice of doubt, that devil, is challenged by the angel voice that says, “Of course Rhonda, this is what you want! We can only get there when you're willing to try. Sure, you'll be outside your comfort zone but guess what? All the good things are there for you. You can get your breakthrough when you try this out for the first time and see how far it brings you.”

I think we're never too old to try to do things that maybe even until yesterday we were not really ready to do. Let's keep trying! Let's keep looking for those moments and seeing what our breakthroughs will bring us in our lives.



DECEMBER 22, QUANTUM BREAKTHROUGHS

“Where can you find the answers
to get what you want in life?”

Ken D. Foster

Finding answers is one of those things which can only come after we've figured out what the right questions are. What do we really want in life? Maybe we're sure, maybe not. Maybe this changes from time to time. Some things get taken away; some things get added; some things get changed.

But no matter how often this happens, we still need to know where to look for the answers. Even when questions change, we still need to find answers first before we can go on and ask the next question.

So where can we find answers? I think there are many sources for answers, depending on the question. The place to start is deep within ourselves. Although this is sometimes very difficult, it's essential to know that we're trying to answer the questions that are vital to us personally. If we don't know what those questions and answers are, then it's time for us to move outside ourselves, to talk to others, to look for information and input and support from other places from people who've had the experiences that we are trying to sort out for ourselves.

With so many sources and so many answers to be found, let's try first to make sure we've got the right questions. If you need someone to talk to someone who could help you by asking her own questions to help you find yours and then hopefully to find some answers, please send me a message.



DECEMBER 23, HAPPINESS

“Happiness is when you think, what you say,
and what you do are in harmony .”

Mahatma Gandhi

This statement has given me so much to think about. What things do we think, what do we say and what do we do? And of course, not only should there be overlap but there should be harmony according to Gandhi. We have a world full of thoughts and hopes and dreams in our minds. We say those things to certain people and not to others. And of all of those things that we think and say, which ones do we actually do?

I would guess that one of the things that I dislike most about myself is my tendency to procrastinate. For a long time, I’ve said, “Yes, but when I do it under pressure, the results are better!” But then I worry about how to get it done on time and especially whether I will be happy with the results.

I’ve decided that 2020 is the year when I will try to bring my thoughts, my words and my actions into harmony and see how much happiness it brings me, thanks to Gandhi.



DECEMBER 24, HAPPINESS

“What have you learned
that could empower you in the future?”

Ken D. Foster

On this final day of Advent posts, it's time to sit back and ponder on those things that I've been thinking about and sharing with you over the last 24 days. What have I learned to empower me for my future?

I've learned how to share my ideas and thoughts with you who are reading. This was not something very obvious to me, but in retrospect I'm very happy that I did it. I hope this gives me the power to go ahead and try other new things, to look for my happiness, to have my breakthroughs, to keep to my commitments to myself and others, to know that 2020 can be a better year than any one I've ever had.

But I think the most important lesson I've learned will not only empower me for the future, but for also for my everyday life, is to take a risk, to trust in the fact that life will show you the things that you need to learn, and that if you're willing to go out and try, that your life can be so much better than it was before.

I hope that if you've been on this journey with me you've also learned something that will be able to empower you in the future. If you're looking into that future and not quite sure what it should bring, or if you'd just like to talk to somebody about how we can shape this together, don't hesitate to write me a message and we'll find a way to empower each other for our future together.