**Bloom Speech (No. 15642]**

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Remarks to be inserted in Jill Bloom’s speech kicking off the 2016 “Best of Success” roofing contractors educational event, sponsored by *Roofing Contractor* magazine.

YOU KNOW, THOMAS EDISON ONCE SAID ABOUT HIS LONG AND PROLIFIC CAREER AS AN INVENTOR: *“I HAVE NOT FAILED. I’VE JUST FOUND 10,000 WAYS THAT WON’T WORK.”* AND BILL GATES — YOU’VE HEARD OF HIM, I SUPPOSE? — ONCE OBSERVED THAT *“IT’S FINE TO CELEBRATE SUCCESS, BUT IT’S MORE IMPORTANT TO HEED THE LESSONS OF FAILURE.”*  WELL . . . OUR PURPOSE HERE AT “BEST OF SUCCESS” IS TO HEED BOTH THE LESSONS OF SUCCESS ***AND*** THE LESSONS OF FAILURE, FOR I’D BE WILLING TO BET THAT EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM HAS EXPERIENCED BOTHOF THEM. OUR AIM IS TO LEARN FROM EACH OTHER ALL THE VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH WE MIGHT HAVE FAILED IN OUR BUSINESSES, AND ALSO THE PRACTICES WE’VE FOLLOWED THAT’VE LED TO OUR SUCCESSES.

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NOW, YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT IT THIS WAY before, BUT THERE ARE ACTUALLY FOUR *DIFFERENT* KINDS OF SUCCESS, AT LEAST THE WAY I SEE IT.

THE FIRST TYPE IS WHAT I CALL “EXPECTED” OR “PREDICT-ABLE” SUCCESS. BARRY BONDS AND KEN GIFFY, JR., ARE TWO EXAMPLES of this. BOTH THESE MAJOR LEAGUERS WERE SONS OF MAJOR LEAGUE BALL PLAYerS, AND BOTH of THEIR FATHERS WERE ALL STARS SEVERAL TIMES OVER. THEIR FATHERS PASSED ON to them THEIR INHERENT talent AND THEIR LOVE AND KNOWLEDGE OF the game, AND BOTH THE SONS BECAME ALL STARS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT as well — JUST AS ALL THE EXPERTS PREDICTED. IN FACT, KEN GRIFFY JUNIOR WAS RECENTLY ELECTED TO THE BASEBALL HALL of FAME IN COOPERSTOWN. BUT EVEN THOUGH THEIR SUCCESS WAS PREDICTABLE, IT WAS UP TO BARRY BONDS AND GRIFFY JUNIOR TO LIVE UP TO THEIR INHERITANCE AND FULFILL THE PROMISE OF THEIR GENES

through hard work and dedication. for as COaches and managers say all the time: “will beats skill every day of the week!”

the rockerfellers are another case of predictable success. after john d. had amassed what IN THE EARLY 1900’s was the world’s largest fortune, he spent the last decades of his life giving his money away, becoming the greatest philanthropist of his day. his sons and grandsons and great grandsons and great-great grandsons inherited both j.d.’s vast fortune, and also his passion for charity, and they’re carrying on his philanthropic work to this day, through the rocerfeller foundation and other initiatives.

NOW THE SECOND KIND OF SUCCESS IS WHAT MIGHT BE CALLED “ACCIDENTAL” SUCCESS — SUcCESS THAT NO ONE could have PREDICTED AND WAS BY NO MEANS EXPECTED

BUT that HAPPENED ANYWAY. so for example, when ROY PLUNKETT, WAS working as A CHEMIST FOR THE DUPONT COMPANY, HE’D BEEN TASKED TO COME UP WITH A NEW REFRIGERANT THAT DUPONT COULD SELL TO THE HEATING AND COOLING INDUSTRY. ONE OF HIS EXPERI-MENTS TURNED OUT TO BE A TOTAL flop, BUT BY ACCIDENT, IT HAPPENED TO PRODUCE A STRANGE NEW KIND OF PLAsT-IC, VERY SLIPPERY AND VERY SMOOTH. SOON THEReAFTER, THE COMPANY PATENTED PLUNKET’S ACCIDENTAL DISCOV-ERY UNDER THE TRADE-NAME of TEFLON.

MUCH THE SAME THING HAPPENED TO PERCY SPENCER WHEN HE WAS AN ENGINEER WORKING ON RADAR AT THE LABORATORIES OF RATHEON. ONE DAY HE WAS WORKING ON A NEW RADAR device, AND HE NOTICED THAT THE CANDY BAR HE’D BEEN CARRYING around IN HIS POCKET HAD MELTED. HE CONCLUDED THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN caused by the MICROWAVES emanating from the radar

set, and thus was born the micrwave oven — totally by accident!

still another example of accidental success was the discovery by alexander fleming of the drug, penicillan, which he discovered in a bit of mold that had formed on a piece of bread he’d left sitting on a window sill in his laboratory. that accidental suc cess has saved tens of millions of lives since FLEMING’s discovery in 1928.

one of my absolute favorite examples of accidental success was that of dr. arthur fry, a chemist at the 3m company, who was trying to invent a super-strong adhesive, stronger than anything of its kind that had ever been marketed. his “failure” to suc-ceed in this quest resulted in the creation of a super *weak* adhesive instead, and after his disapp-ointing results lay gathering dust for years in a

laboratory drawer, the company FINALLY FOUND A USE FOR THE STUFF. THEY ultimately turned this feeble stickum into a multi-million dollar product — a little invention they called “post-it notes!”

then, there’s a third kind of success — the kind i call “success against all odds.” and by far the most impressive examples of this kind of success are the thousands of athletes who compete every four years in the paralympic games. talk about suc-ceeding against all odds! if you’VE ever watchED these games on television, youD’VE see athletes — powerful, accomplished, gutsy athletes — who are blind or darned near blind . . . athletes who are missing arms or legs or feet or hands . . athletes with damaged spines . . . athletes with brain injuries of all kinds . . . athletes who’ve lost their hearing . . . athletes with muscular distrophy, or spina bifida, or multiple sclerosis — in short, athletes who’ve

had to struggle against the most unbelievably dif-ficult odds just to survive, let *alone* compete in any sort of athletic competition.

if you happened to watch any of the 2012 paralympic games from london, FOR EXAMPLE, you might have seen the american joe berenyi, a 48 year-old cyclist who’d lost his entire right arm and his left kneecap in a construction accident, but who nonetheless went to the games and came away with two gold medals!

or you might have seen great britain’s david weir, whose congenital spinal cord malformation caused him to loose the use of both his legs, win *four* gold medals while flying down the track in a wheelchair.

or you might also have had the pleasure of watch-ing britain’s jose pearson, paralyzed from the waist

down in a car crash in 2003, set *three* world’s records in the discuss throw, all while she was sitting in a *her* wheelchair!

now, while some of you might have enjoyed a bit of inherited success — if your father or uncle, for example, passed down his roofing business to you — i don’t SUPOSE there are too many predictable suc-cesses or accidental successes in THE ROOFING BUSINESS. and i reckon that very few of you, if any, have had to fight the kind of odds that paralympians have TO face in their lives every single day.

so that brings me to the fourth and final category of success, the category I call “grinding-it-out.” both thomas edison and bill gates are perfect exam-ples of this kind of success. as edison observed, his experiments failed way more often than they suc-ceeded, and he recorded that he and his team at

menlo park tried more than a hundred different combinations of filiment and gas and bulb design be-fore they came up with what historians agree was the first truly practical and mass-pro-ducable light bulb. they just kept grinding away and grinding away until they finally had that great “eureka!” moment.

bill gates spent nearly 10,000 hours immersed in what was then the brand new field of personal computers before he and his colleagues developed the computer language call basic, which formed the foundation for virtually all computer languages that came afterward.

ernest hemingway’s first novel “a farewell to arms” was rejected by no fewer than nine publishers before scribner & sons picked it up and published it

in 1929. even after he’d become relatively well known, his novels still got rejected. like most writers, then and now, hemingway had a huge drawer full of rejections slips, but he just kept grinding away until he finally won recognition.

thomas a. burgess, a bronze medalist in water polo at the 1900 olympic games, tried eleven times to swim the english channel, and finally succeed on his twelfth attempt. talk about grinding it out!

i would guess that most successes in the roofing business are grinding-it-out TYPE OF successes. ten-hour days and six-day weeks . . . bids that have to be re-written several times . . . customers needing con-stant hand-holding . . . vendors you can’t always depend upon and who force you by their tardiness to devise one work-around after another: that’s the life of a typical roofing contractor! so no:

success doesn’t always come easy in this business and it’s seldom predictable. it’s a constant grind. AND YET we love it!

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