



## Organization Development

# Who Will You Bring Along?

by **Devon Walker**  
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Congratulations Pepperdine University class of 2014! Today is your last step on the first leg of a long journey. It's your final journey, maybe your only journey, and you are determined to make it a good one. It's a journey we call life and I'd like to share three pieces of wisdom to help you along the way:

1. "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind." A quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson. Follow the ancient Greek maxim "Know Thyself." Seek to understand who you are and what you value. Build a foundation and never compromise its integrity.
2. Memento Mori. Carpe Diem. Two renaissance cultural maxims, which roughly translate to "Remember That You Will Die." And, "Seize The Day." The former reminds us of the inevitability of death, and therefore the preciousness of life. The latter reminds us that taking action is the only appropriate response to this fact.
3. Choose your companions wisely. I believe this third piece is the most important and urgent choice you must make when you graduate college.

Important, because if there is one thing I've learned, it's that nothing "good" is achieved without difficulty and nothing difficult is achieved alone. If this is true, then good companions are an essential determinant of success in our quest to live a "good" life.

Urgent, because you are now sitting amidst the largest, most qualified pool of potential companions you will ever encounter. You have had unrivaled access to thousands of virtue laden, value driven, and now, supremely educated individuals. You've interacted with these individuals in virtually every way imaginable. You've likely built a large community and founded many amazing friendships. But, starting tomorrow you will witness a stunningly sudden dispersal of the community you've built. Your relationships

will be attacked by distance, time, money, and a host of daily concerns. Eventually, the realities of life will slowly but surely destroy all but the strongest of bonds.

My advice is to make choices now about which of those bonds survive into the future. It has been said that you are the average of the top five people you spend your time with. Who will those five people be over the next ten years? Are they sitting here today? It's up to you to decide.

In order to decide, ask two questions: Where do you want to be at the end of your journey? What are the qualities of the people that can help you get there?

Here's what I came up with. Choose companions who:

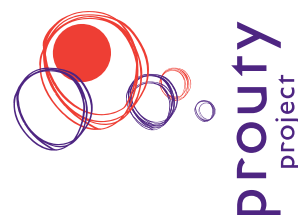
- You've chosen to love as a brother or sister. Whose interests you hold equal with your own.
- Have courage. Courage to search for truth. Courage to fail.
- Are resilient. Who rebound from failure again and again.
- Are fueled by the process of learning and discovery.
- Have a relentless drive to examine their lives.
- Believe that there are no such things as rules, laws, or the answer NO.
- Believe there are only choices and responsibility for those choices.
- Thrive in challenge.
- Are not nice; find people who are good. Nicety be damned.
- Believe that life has a meaning and a purpose.
- Make you a better version of yourself.

What's on your list? Find these people, and once you have found them, stop at nothing to surround yourself with them. It's not what you choose to do or how you choose to do it. What really matters is who you choose to do it with.

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**Q2**  
2014

# A Big, Big THANK YOU to the Kaplans

**Thank you Sam and Sylvia Kaplan** (former Ambassador to Morocco) – for hosting our STRETCH 2014 team at your home on March 20. The dinner and conversation were absolutely wonderful and prepared us well for our STRETCH Expedition in Morocco, departing April 25.

**Please welcome Andrea West** – to our team. Andrea joined us March 3 and brings 10+ years of marketing, advertising, and public relations experience. Andrea received her undergraduate degree from St. Olaf College and her MBA from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. We're excited for you to meet Andrea.



Andrea West

**A special thanks** – to the entire team at the Miraval Resort in Tucson, Arizona. We appreciated all your hospitality and guidance in our firm's strategic planning process in

January. We all felt it was a "miravalous" four days of strategic thinking. Thank you.

**Enjoy our Q2 newsletter** – filled with "commencement addresses" from Mike, Peter, and Devon. Given the spring graduation season, I asked what they would share if Winona State University (Winona, Minnesota), Cornell University (Ithaca, New York), and Pepperdine University (Malibu, California) asked them to give the 2014 commencement address. Enjoy their thoughts and our graduation photos.



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## "C" NOTE QUOTE:

*"I don't care how good technology gets at letting us talk to each other digitally. There's no substitute for being together over lunch, in meetings, at a conference table, and coming up with ways to create content and exploit it."*

## Know the quote?

If you know who said this quote, please send an email to: jayna.wallace@proutyproject.com or call 952.942.2922 by **Monday, May 5**; one guess per individual. If we have more than one correct answer, we throw those names into a hat and draw the winner of a \$100 gift card.

## Last issue's "C" Note Quote winner is...

**Matt Kline, Rust Consulting!**

**Matt Kline knew that William Arthur Ward said the following:**

*"The pessimist complains about the wind, the optimist expects it to change, and the realist adjusts the sails."*

**Congratulations, Matt!** Matt says, "I will be using the card for a dinner out with my wife – it will be our time to recoup and reconnect from the challenges of the day."



Matt Kline

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## Board and Team Development

# Risk, Spirituality, and Love

by Peter Bailey  
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Thank you...thank you very much. Thank you for your applause...thank you.

While I might not have been the first person to parachute onto a football field to deliver a commencement address in a tuxedo, I will admit to you that it was the first time I have ever parachuted... and I wanted to share it with all of you. It seemed fitting, that as you all step out into the unknown future of your lives that I symbolically take the giant step into the unknown with you.

I want to touch on three key topics in this short talk as my gifts for you...one about **risk**, one about **spirituality**, and one about **love**.

The element of **risk** in our lives today is significant. And while so much of our society is designed to minimize risk...it is inevitable...and critical to the quality of life you will choose for yourself. You of course have all heard the aphorism, "Boats are safest in harbors...but that is not why boats were built." I want to amplify the sentiment of that statement by saying that we will

entire cosmos is conspiring on your behalf to see you through to the next world as best it can...and the sooner you realize that there are powers that be out there, in here, and all around you...the sooner you allow yourself to tap into that energy, that manifests as help from people, coaches, family, friends, bosses, the trees, the wind, the animals, and the natural world around you...the sooner you will walk in a new world...*a gifted world*...just for you. Sure, you can refute this idea...but why not avail yourselves of the positive forces at work on your behalf? That is a risk I wouldn't want to take.

And now...a word about **love**. There will be no greater risk in your life, no greater opportunity to tap into your spirituality, than to give your full-hearted love to another person and to accept full-hearted love back from them. In the past four years you have learned a myriad of information about a dizzying array of subjects. And yet, how have you been prepared to be a friend, a partner, or a parent? This will be one of

## We will never know what we are capable of unless we try something...dare I say, everything!

never know what we are capable of unless we try something...*dare I say, everything!* Everything you do, from waking up in the morning, to driving all night to climb Devil's Tower in Wyoming, to marrying your high school sweetheart...it comes with risk...and the gift of risk is awareness. Awareness of yourself and an awareness of your capacity to face challenges.

This brings me to my next topic, **spirituality**. Risking each day, in all the ways you will risk...will go a lot more smoothly if you have a sense that there is a power greater than yourself to call upon. You are not alone in this world. Often seemingly unbeknownst to you, the

your greatest challenges ahead, much like jumping out of an airplane. At times you will feel like you are floating to earth on the gentle wings of your parachute...and at other times, you will feel like you are hurtling to Earth, out of control, twisting towards impending doom.

**Risk, spirituality, and love** will be constant companions on your life's journey...and they will continually serve you well, and better, once you allow yourself to get to know them. I leave you with three questions:

How will you risk? How will you cultivate a sense of your own spirituality? And how will you love? I wish you peace.

**Thank You**

A very special thank you to the following individuals who introduced us to new clients in 2013! We always appreciate our clients and friends sending us new business referrals.

We put each person's name in a hat and drew Teresa Daly as the winner of the \$1,000 donation to the charity of her choice! Teresa has chosen to donate the \$1,000 to The Raptor Center. Congratulations Teresa!

**Referral Recognition**



**Tom Bengston**  
Northwestern Financial Review



**Teresa Daly**  
Navigate Forward



**Chad Eckes**  
cSquaredE



**Patty Grove**  
Oak Ridge Hotel and Conference Center



**Liz Jordan**  
Oak Ridge Hotel and Conference Center



**Judie Knoerle**  
Red Cup Presentations



**Bobby Kroog**  
Sugar Lake Lodge



**Tom Kulikowski**  
Penco Products



**Bruce Larson**  
Capital Safety



**Ron Leonhardt**  
Smiths Medical



**Kent Lillemoe**  
Field Nation



**Charlie Maxwell**  
Meristem



**John Ohman**  
Mortenson Construction



**Lee Roper-Batker**  
Women's Foundation of Minnesota

### No Photo Available

- Tim Doherty**, Doherty Employment Group
- Val Doherty**, Doherty Employment Group
- Georgine Madden**, GEORGE: Purpose, People, Performance, Ltd.
- Bill Scrimgeour**, Zinpro
- Molly Simmons**, Tonka Bay Equity Partners, LLC
- Fred Sutter**, Motion Tech Automation
- Dave Wicker**, Savigent Software
- Tom Wiese**, WieseLaw Contract Studio



**Chad Simons**  
Sugar Lake Lodge



**Doug Wilke**  
Foremost Farms



## Strategic Planning

# Don't Let Your Life Become One Long, Run-on Sentence

by Mike Felmlee  
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I can't count the number of college commencement addresses I've attended over the years. And, to say I've enjoyed them all is not true. Yes, I'm happy for those being recognized on these occasions, but I have to admit, I've tolerated these addresses at best.

I'll never forget the applause a speaker received from the student body (which included my son) at a major university's commencement ceremony this last spring. Ironically, this iconic outburst was strategically reserved for when the speaker uttered the fateful words, "In conclusion."

How many of you can actually remember who your college graduation speaker was and the topic or message he or she delivered to you? Not many I imagine.

If ever given the opportunity to address my alma mater, I would offer them two things to think about:

1. Define who you are and do it your way. I recently attended the funeral of a beautiful man, the father of my brother-in-law. He was 84 and grew up during the Great Depression; the last of ten children. He was a great singer, described as a Frank Sinatra knockoff. Every summer, his father would take him and hop a train running west out of Minneapolis. At various railroad stops, the son would entertain people when his father said, "Sing for them, Johnny boy!" He was so good that at age 23 he was asked to sing with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra. But, he soon quit because it wasn't right for his growing family. He and his wife returned to Minnesota, raised eight boys, and he shared his singing talents with many patrons in small town bars and restaurants. He never returned to the big time and never complained.

I wiped away a tear as we listened to a recording of him singing Frank Sinatra's classic "My Way" at his funeral. My advice to you – figure out who you are early on. And, live your life the way you want. Do it your way and you'll be much happier.

2. Don't let your life become one long, run-on sentence. Don't live your life as two independent thoughts connected by a transitional phrase such as "moreover" or "however." It seems so boring. Pursue life boldly and without regret. And, know it is ok to pause, take a breath, reflect, and express gratitude for those around you. As Maya Angelou so eloquently reminds us, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." So, focus on the really important things in your life. Make the ordinary things you do extraordinary, use strong action verbs to convey your commitments, and always make others feel good about themselves. And, since you only have one life to live, make it worthy of three exclamation points!!!

Best of luck to each of you, and I understand if you don't remember me or what I said here today.

**My advice to you – figure out who you are early on. And, live your life the way you want. Do it your way and you'll be much happier.**