

# A WEEK IN *Learning*

## TAKE THE RISK, BUT MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A PLAN

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So there I was, laying under a semi-truck, still alive and mostly unharmed. It had all happened so fast. A weekend getaway to San Diego turned into an unexpected accident, as our motorcycle faced off with the backend of the semi. The paramedics checked me over and all my vitals were normal. How can that be? I had just been thrown off a motorcycle and thrown under a semi-truck! ***Because I had a plan.***

Motorcycle riding can be thought of as risky and dangerous. Riders would agree with this, to a certain extent. However, life is full of risks we are willing to take. How boring would it be if we didn't? Making those decisions are not always easy - sometimes it's scary. We hesitate to take that jump because there could be a possibility of failure. It's understandable to be afraid of failure, or the judgement from others if we do fail. Still, if risks are not occasionally taken, we miss out on experiencing different learning opportunities, development, and the prospect of becoming more confident and resilient.

Most people have a healthy aversion to risk-taking. To overcome some of the fear, try starting small – take on a minor risk and see how it feels. Embrace the idea of setbacks, and rather than letting nay-sayers change your mind, *prove them wrong*. Most importantly, picture yourself succeeding!

Whether large or small, you'll need to visualize any possible roadblocks. Making calculated risks require us to justify it, consider alternatives, and plan for every scenario. Once the risks of your decision have been identified and considered, it is important to manage them. Below are four popular ways to manage a risk:

- Mitigate: Reduce the likelihood of a negative outcome by making a plan to deal with every possible scenario or roadblock.
- Sharing: Enlist help to solve or minimize the consequences of the risk. Seek support from



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someone else who may have taken on a similar challenge.

- Retention: There will always be a possibility of the *unexpected*. Try to accept the risk as-is and deal with the threats as they come.
- Avoidance: If you are not able to accept a risk as-is, you may need to abandon your goal before the risk outweighs the benefits.

Great opportunities may arise when taking professional risks. We learn, grow, and gain confidence in ourselves when stepping outside of our comfort zone. Success doesn't often fall into our laps - we have to be willing to pursue it. I challenge you to think of some things that may be holding you back from taking that leap. Here are some ideas to get you thinking:

- *Improving your skills for the next big promotion*
- *Suggesting operational change to improve efficiency*
- *Getting your degree*
- *Challenging stagnant ideals*
- *Participating in constructive conflict*
- *Requesting an addition to staff*
- *Setting a retirement date*
- *Accepting a new career path*

Whatever the risk may be, if you spend adequate time planning, you are that much closer to conquering it (even if it is preparing to 'tuck and roll' in the event of a motorcycle accident).

My friends described my tumble as pure acrobatic, and were amazed that I wasn't injured. They jokingly asked if I had practiced that dismount. My response: *that's how I planned it all along.*

Do the benefits outweigh the risk? Then go for it!

*"Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure...than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live in a gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat."* –Theodore Roosevelt