



Minding the Gap – September 2017

A Faith and Work Publication

Welcome to *Minding the Gap*, a monthly thought about faith in the workplace!

"Input, Output - Again?"

About three years ago we sent the below *Minding the Gap*. I'm sending it again because of its meaningfulness to me at this time. For me these days have been a time filled with challenges; a time when I'm finding it very hard to "step aside" from daily life to get some **input** from books, meditation and those around me. Believe it or not, I found the below thoughts challenging, but helpful.

Out of England came the work of a Christian-man, Frank Lake, who had the unusual background of combining psychology and theology into the study and practice of 'clinical theology'. Unfortunately Lake's work ended in 1982 when he died of pancreatic cancer, but his legacy is significant!

One area of research for Dr. Lake was that of "being-by-relationship". What Lake studied was the first-year relationship between mothers and their infant babies. His research demonstrated that the baby was brought from state of existence (**being**) to a state of **well-being** through its relationship with the mother. Well-being was facilitated in physical, mental, emotional and spiritual realms by the mother's 'communication' of **love, care, acceptance** and **sustenance**. Lake's work is now viewed as proof positive for the *cyclical nature* of our being: that we have an "input-output cycle". That is to say, throughout life we have periodic times when we need sources, which bring us from **being to well-being**. These sources

or "inputs" for bringing people to well-being range from relationships, to seminars, to books, to meditation, etc., and THEY ARE VITAL. When this happens a strong sense of status, of significance, of identification develops which motivates a drive to give to others, "output". But, when it is absent then selfishness, fear, loss of creativity, "yes/no" mind frame, etc. develops.

So one may ask "What's this have to do with the price of eggs in Alaska?", or more specifically with the world-of-work? Indeed, it addresses the dynamic of doing and being. Naturally, work has to do with "doing" - accomplishing tasks, projects, etc., and it clearly needs to be so. However, the "do's" will not happen in excellence if the **well** of our **being** is absent. Jesus was very mindful of this as the account in Mark 6:30-33 tells us: "The apostles returned to Jesus and reported to him every detail of what they had done and taught ("output"). 'Now come along to some quiet place by yourselves, and rest for a little while,' said Jesus, for there were people coming and going incessantly so that they had not even time for meals ("input"). They went off in the boat to a quiet place by themselves,". Yes, they needed input time for themselves to reignite the drive to give to others.

In my employment with Reell Precision Mfg., from time-to-time we'd find ourselves wrestling with a significant decision - lots of discussion with differing perspectives. It was not unusual for us to come to a point where we recognized the need for, and benefit of, each involved person to go away and reflect on their thinking and feelings regarding the issue - to provide space for an 'outside voice' or resource (input) to speak to her/him. We called this the "sleep-on-it" practice because it would frequently mean taking an overnight to step away from the issue - to think, reflect, meditate. It truly helped both the end decision AND, even more important, our relationship with one another.

The question naturally arises of: What are our sources/resources that will bring us to a point of well-being so that we can give meaningfully to others? And further, how do we bring those into our world-of-work to be applied in an effective manner? Blessings to all in your endeavors!

- Jim Grubs

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