

Zàijiàn (Goodbye - Chinese)

The problem this week: "Good is not good enough when better is expected"

Yes, It is a vague problem statement but let me elaborate. As a child growing up and even to this day, this has been the motto in which my dad has used to motivate me, inspire me and kind of scare me when it came to everything in life. From school to sport to anything that I put my name by, he has always said that no matter what you're idea of good is, better is always expected and in essence this is where my team comes in.

Having enjoyed such great successes in the simulation and as a team (through great communication, efficient meetings, succinct problem solving and collaborative decision making) good has always been our reality, yet better has always been our strategy. We always strived to be aggressive and risky, yet calculated with decisions and there is no doubt that it paid off, but when we began to slow down in our progress and other teams began to catch up, we started to see a big shift and we were not performing, 'good' or 'better'. What happens then? What can we do as a team, to get ourselves back to the way we were? What was causing our solid teamwork to stumble and why were we straying from our successful path?

I reflected a lot over these points, and one in particular that I mentioned last week. Having come off a bad rollover, our team went into a frenzy and as I noted, all our successful work in regards to team dynamics went out the window and we had no method to our madness. Yet, this week it was refreshing to see the old team back, as methodical and analytical as ever. So it definitely could not have been due to team dynamics. I observed some factors that could've played a part in why we were not performing as well and began to question them. Where were we not being aggressive enough? Were we making too many changes? Were we shifting our focus from the long-term strategy and focusing too much on each yearly rollover? Were we not making enough tradeoffs between good losses and bad losses? Or did we just have the wrong mentality and got a bit too arrogant?

When searching for ways to rectify these problems, I was so happy when I saw my team members come to meetings with ways in which they believed could help the problems in their departments, which for me showed great dedication and care to the cause. We had some members trying to go back to past decisions when we were successful, selling capacity and staff, reducing and reallocating costs and so forth and as the 5pm rollover came around, my team and I were devastated that we had actually done worse, when we felt like we came back this week with better heads on our shoulders. Linking it back to my problem and the motto my dad used to engrain in me, I raise another issue and point. We had never really discussed what we would do as a team, when things went wrong. We never talked about contingency plans, or as we made decisions, how we would rectify them if they went wrong the week before. We hadn't given ourselves the security to know that although we may not always be on top, we know how to get back there. Guess that's something to work on personally and for the future in the workforce, in sport and in anything really. So as I pack my training bags, for boxing tonight, hoping not to get too hurt in a spar and as I get my report analysis ready for Monday meeting with my team mates, I reflect and I find comfort in this saying: Just because I face a defeat does not mean I am defeated.