

Subhash Paluru's Remarks
Terry Oliver's Retirement
August 11, 2017

Terry, congratulations on your upcoming retirement! Your many outstanding accomplishments here at the Bonneville Power Administration and elsewhere in the industry have left a legacy which many of us can only dream of matching. Best wishes to you and your family on a long and happy retirement as you leave one facet of your life behind you, and embark a new in another.

As I was preparing my remarks, two things hit me. First, you know you're getting older when you start attending retirement functions such as this, and instead of just listening to others reminisce and share a funny story or two, instead you're the one being asked to provide a funny story or two.

Second, an interesting story about failure caught my attention the other day and it helped reinforce some advice you had shared with me when WAPA first approach you about lessons-learned when trying to set up and sustain a fully functional technology and innovation program.

Terry had advised that once a successful technology and innovation program, once up and running, should expect and be prepared to accept a failure rate of about 90 percent. As WAPA is a governmental organization, and one which is generally risk averse, most of you can probably only imagine what my thoughts were at that time when I heard the number.

While I was still trying to gather my thoughts, Terry went on to say however, although you want as many of your projects to be successful, if it is going to fail, you want it to fail early and fast. Similarly, once you experienced a failure, it was important to learn from those failures if you were to succeed, since it is only through learning from our failures, we can turn our failures into successes.

That's when my second thought hit me. Many of you probably have heard of Charles Osgood. Mr. Osgood is a news commentator and regularly provides insights about people and everyday life in three-minute sound bites on both the radio and television.

Well the other day, Mr. Osgood talked about the Museum of Failure. Located in Helsingborg, Sweden, Helsingborg has a total population around 270,000, making it the fourth largest city in the country. It's a regional trade center—some light industrial manufacturing, and small tourism industry. And by the way, it is got this very interesting museum called the Museum of Failure.

Among its interesting items: Harley-Davidson's line of perfume and cologne called "Hot Rod"; Kodak's DC-40 digital camera; Sony's Betamax; a can of New Coke; frozen TV dinners from the Palmolive-Colgate toothpaste company; and the forerunner to Apple's iPad and iPhone: the Apple Newton. The common denominator to all of these iconic relics from the past

is that they came, they stalled, and they failed – fast. But as in the case of the Apple’s Newton and New Coke, from these failures, lessons were learned which ultimately resulted in the creation of the Apple iPad; the Apple iPhone, and Classic Coke.

Terry, you were right, although the path to success may often be littered with failures, the important ingredient is that we must learn from those failures if we are to be ultimately successful. Terry, you came, you stayed, you learned, and you are leaving with a legacy that any one of us would be forever proud. We have always appreciated your insights, advice, and suggestions.

Before you ride off into the sunset, on behalf of the WAPA, I would like to present you with this certificate of achievement award which states: ***“in recognition and appreciation of your many contributions to WAPA’s Innovation, Inclusion, and Technology Program.”*** So, congratulations, Terry, accept my very best wishes on your retirement, and good luck in all of your future endeavors!