

College Newspaper - Insights

At the start of my junior year engineering school I thought the school needed a newspaper. The previous one had gone out of business several years before. So I started talking to people about the idea. Bill Lewis, a junior in another fraternity, expressed interest in helping to organize the effort. Interestingly Joe Griffin, one of my fraternity brothers and a member of Blue Key (the most prestigious honors society on campus), told me that I was being considered for Blue Key, but they didn't like people who attempted things and failed. **Thus he advised not starting the newspaper since I might fail - this just made me want to do it to prove I could do it. INSIGHT: I CAN SEE I WAS AN ENTREPRENEUR WITH A SILICON VALLEY MENTALITY – I WANTED TO DO IT & FAILURE DID NOT BOTHER ME.**

Bill and I decided that I would be the editor while he would be the business manager. As it turned out I ended up doing about 80% of the work since the creative side took a lot more time. **So I started to assemble a team to handle all the creative aspects of the newspaper - not an easy task since I had never been the editor of a newspaper. But I was able to find people who had worked on a newspaper in high school or who had talents in the areas the newspaper needed.** I then worked with them to design a newspaper that was really more of a magazine since it only came out once every two weeks – there wasn't a lot of news at our small engineering school. **INSIGHT: I WAS A NATURAL LEADER AND MANAGER – WHICH I HAD ALSO SEEN IN HIGH SCHOOL.**

One innovation I was very proud of was our photo section. We would get people to go around and take pictures of day-to-day activities on campus or unusual happenings. I remember one great picture of the parking lot at the side of the main building during a rain. It showed the problems the commuters (who were over half of the student body since the fraternity houses were all in town) faced in trying to park there and get to class. **The picture was very humorous but it provided the opportunity to pressure the administration to pave the parking lot.** Dave Robinson helped me do the layout on that section and we did lots of creative things with the pictures. **INSIGHT: THIS WAS THE START OF ME BEING AN “ANTI-AUTHORITY” PERSON, BUT NOT IN A CONFRONTATIONAL WAY. EVEN THOUGH I WOULD GO ON TO BE A CEO & CFO I ALWAYS THOUGHT “YOU CAN NOT TRUST AUTHORITY”.**

Another interesting feature was our "Personality of the Month". We would do an article on a faculty member, someone in the administration or sometimes a student. Plus I had Jeff Brugos do a sketch of the person instead of their picture.

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Being the editor also gave me the opportunity to write editorials on whatever subject I so desired. **I am amazed at how conservative my editorials were – real Ann Rand stuff.**

INSIGHT: AS I HAVE GOTTEN OLDER I HAVE GOTTEN MORE LIBERAL AND PROGRESSIVE

What I remember the most was trying to make the deadlines. We had to have the paper at a printer 20 miles away by first thing Monday morning. I was the one who usually ended up driving it up there at midnight on Sunday night. **I really put my heart into the newspaper and was so proud when it would come out.** **INSIGHT: I HAVE ALWAYS DONE MY BEST WHEN MY HEART, AS WELL AS MY HEAD, IS INVOLVED IN A PROJECT OR A JOB.**

INSIGHT: HAVING SO MUCH PASSION AND BEING SO DRIVEN TO PRODUCE THE BEST PAPER I COULD GOT ME SOMEWHAT UNBALANCED AND STARTED TO AFFECT MY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE. I ENDED UP QUITTING BASEBALL THAT YEAR TO HAVE THE TIME TO DO THE NEWSPAPER AND KEEP UP MY GRADES.