

WELCOME

Welcome to our spring edition. We hope you are enjoying the special gifts of this inspiring season.

Our quarterly newsletters are written with a broad readership in mind: not only clients and other people who know us but also anyone who happens upon our website while browsing the Internet.

In this edition we have a short update on property maintenance, remembering Storm Doris. We also share some further thoughts on the theme of feedback, learning and growth – an enormous topic that is central to our vision. Bernard M Baruch said, “The art of living lies less in eliminating our troubles than in growing with them.” We think this applies equally to the business world, where the climate for small companies remains very challenging. In response we want to learn all we can, becoming more resourceful, expanding our toolkit and honing our creativity in order to design win-win solutions to problems as they arise.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

When Storm Doris swept across the Midlands and other parts of the UK in February, we were very fortunate indeed to escape relatively unscathed. Many people were not so lucky: some parts of the country endured winds of 94mph and thousands of homes lost their power.

We had a few repairs to make in the aftermath of the storm, but nothing major. Several fence panels were damaged and a couple of roof tiles were lost. The photos below show one of the fences before and after it was repaired.



Fence panels down



Fence repaired

There has also been some routine maintenance work to do over the past quarter, such as oiling the kitchen worktops in a property that our team refurbished many years ago. The worktops are solid beech and the oil brings out the grain beautifully.



Beech worktop

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Three properties have seen recent changes of occupancy as the tenants have chosen to give us notice and move on for various reasons. We found new tenants very quickly in each case and they are all getting settled in their new homes.

Over the years our check-out and check-in procedures have become more thorough, as has our inventory system. These help us manage the portfolio more efficiently and demonstrate the value of nurturing a mindset of learning and growth.

LEARNING FROM FEEDBACK

Over the years we've found that feedback is a rich resource that nurtures our learning and growth. This idea is not unique to us. Dr Joanna Macy notes that "every system needs a feedback loop." In her view individuals, organisations and societies all suffer if their feedback loop is blocked: how else can they self-correct?

The idea of self-correction has been well explained by Brian Tracy: "life is a series of approximations and course adjustments. [...] When an airplane leaves Chicago for Los Angeles, it is off course 99% of the time. This is normal and natural and to be expected. The pilot makes continual course corrections, a little to the north, a little to the south. The pilot continually adjusts altitude and throttle. And sure enough, several hours later, the plane touches down at exactly the time predicted when it first became airborne upon leaving Chicago. The entire journey has been a process of approximations and course adjustments."

We couldn't agree more. We also draw strength from Bill Gates who famously said, "Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning."



Welcoming fresh perspectives

Uncomfortable though it is at times, we welcome all feedback. We are grateful to everyone who takes the time to get in touch and share their personal experience. How else can we see how well our vision is working out in practice? When problems arise, we want to know about them promptly so that we can trace them to their source and see where our systems need to be improved.

Suggestions too are welcome – even those that cancel each other out or don't meet our criteria (for instance, our need for solutions to be win-win, benefiting our client group as a whole and making

business sense for the company). The dialogue is always instructive and often prompts us to see things from an angle that we may not have considered before. A fresh pair of eyes can be invaluable.

Much has been written about "failing forward" and we find it encouraging to see more and more organisations catching this vision. Taking an honest look at failure and what it can teach is not for the faint-hearted, of course.

One example that we find especially inspiring is Engineers Without Borders (Canada). Ashley Good has been working with the company's Failure Report team since it started in 2008, and has gone on to serve as founder and CEO of Fail Forward, EWB's spin-off social enterprise.

She believes that "dealing with failure intelligently will be the driver we need to improve the way we learn, innovate, and find the agility to stay relevant and competitive. In many ways, our relationship with failure either unlocks our full potential, or keeps us from ever realizing it."

If you'd like to read more, here are the links: <http://reports.ewb.ca/> and <https://failforward.org/>

According to James Joyce, "Mistakes are the portals of discovery." This gives us courage, as do these words of Michael Jordan's: "If you're trying to achieve, there will be roadblocks. I've had them; everybody has had them. But obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it."

NEXT EDITION

Our summer edition will be out in July. For news and information before then, please visit the website or contact us directly.

Thank you for your continued interest in Giroma.

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

"The future is not some place we are going, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made. And the activity of making them changes both the maker and their destination." (John Schaar)