

Quotes To Take Action Upon

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Meetings can sometimes drag on without inspiration and without conclusion. Other times great decisions and surprisingly good ideas come out of conversations when you don't expect them. Over the last few weeks of meetings, I've heard some good word-pictures and stories that prompt thought and action.

“Cauldrons of Discovery” is a phrase Dr. Tim White, President of the University of Idaho, used when describing the research and learning focus-points of the university. Picture it, exploration, steam, heat, interaction, and results. Envision stirring, mixing, adding ingredients, subtracting elements and having results. Reach for a new thought, add it to a pot or work-area big enough for new ideas to be explored and ask some questions until you discover a new and improved way of doing things. Cauldrons of discovery sound exciting, invigorating, a little edgy and definitely interactive. What cauldrons of discovery are you stirring each week?

“Culture of Philanthropy” is another phrase used by Dr. White when describing the university. The examples shared include encouraging students to give to those in need and the University's modeling of giving by offering 10 full-ride scholarships to students affected by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. An observation: unless we model what we ask of others a “do what I say not what I do” atmosphere is created and that atmosphere cycles down into an abyss of low morale, lost productivity and diminished creativity. So, check out the culture of giving and philanthropy in your organization. When someone needs a ride home from work, does someone else offer to help? When tragedy strikes at work or off-site, do people band together to help out?

And one more favorite phrase and resulting action list from the last few weeks: “Proficiency in a Language.” Another educator speaker, who's name escaped me, suggested that adding together listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills and writing skills is what makes someone proficient in a language. How proficient are you in the language or languages that you speak? What can you be doing to improve your proficiency?

Whatever you choose to do this week, consider your cauldrons, your culture and your proficiencies along the way. That way you can have some fun, discover something new, and improve upon the things that are already good.

Action Items: Listen for the great ideas, sentences inspiring action, and provoking questions that come up in every day conversation. You may just discover your favorite quote for the month. And you may even discover a motivator for ongoing action that you know contributes to the good of all involved.

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