



*Good Companies – Troubled Projects*

**Newsletter**

**Sept. 2008**

### **GOING SOFT**

My friends and I were cruising on our bikes on the Newport Beach Peninsula boardwalk on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. We stopped by the grade school to watch these incredible remote control dune buggies go screaming around the playground. As the buggy guys were packing up their equipment and we were starting to leave, a small group of 14-15 year old boys came flying by on bikes. I'm not sure what happened, but all of a sudden one kid went careening across the asphalt in a big pile. Shirtless and shoeless he was now sporting some outstanding new asphalt burns on various parts of his body. Without a word and no hesitation he grabbed the bike, hopped on, and blasted off. This was too interesting. I took off in pursuit slipping in behind his buddy. The balance of the group was a duo on a bike built for two bearing Fred Flintstone brakes (flip flops). They were keeping pace close behind me.

Uninvited I had now included myself as part of the pack. As we shot along I ventured to ask, "What happened back there?" The kid in front of me curtly responded, "Who knows. But he got right back up and that is the only thing that counts!"

While I don't sport any of the body armor I see many of my biking peers wearing, I must admit my days of riding brakeless with reckless abandon on a crowded boardwalk are over. In fact, I even thought it best to let Bam Bam and his partner pass me by. The sound of their flip flops screaming for traction every time we slowed down was a bit unsettling.

If you would like more information on any of the topics discussed in this article, please contact:

Jeff Blanton  
[jblanton@wpldrs.com](mailto:jblanton@wpldrs.com)

With my own storvbook of nicks, banas and scars I have a

---

more cautious approach to life. At 52 versus 14 I am sure most would agree this to be sensible. However, I cannot help but wonder the cost of this guarded approach. What about project teams? Does the combined fear of its member's impact project outcomes? Is there a point where fear can actually kill the project? What if we threw caution to the wind and followed the wisdom of my biking buddy, *"But he got right back up and that is the only thing that counts."*

While you are receiving this latest newsletter I am careening down the rapids of the Grand Canyon. My young biking companions would be proud. Of course I have one of those insurance policies where they will come get me if I get stuck head down in an endless whirlpool. Not sure why but a friend thought it was prudent and bought it for me.

So rally the team today and fearlessly take a hill. Make a 14 year old proud!