



I recently had an encounter reminiscent of the “cobbler’s kids.” You know the story...

The cobbler makes shoes for others, but his kids have none...

Well, what’s my job?

Helping family businesses have the conversations they tend to avoid.

Beyond that brief description, I encourage people to:

- Don’t assume
- Get to the truth
- Clarify
- Peel back layers
- Seek more to understand than to be understood
- Ask, and then act on, “What is the wise thing to do?”

In family business,

In personal relationships, in all areas, before a rush to judgment, it’s important to give “the other” their day in court before rushing to judgement.

Recently, I failed to follow my own advice. I have a friend. (Yes, I do have friends – at least one. ☺) I received information about that friend. I assumed the information was *the whole truth*.

That word ASSUME got me in trouble once again...

I interpreted the information I had received and moved to action, as opposed to going to the friend for clarification. Parenthetically,

there is always more than one side to the story.

Often the truth is somewhere in between. In this case, it would have been more difficult (short-term) to start by peeling back all the layers to get to the truth. I took the “easy” road and jumped the gun.

More often than not, the easy road takes relationship down a bad path.

My rush to judgment put more than a little strain on the relationship with this friend. Now comes the harder work of trying to restore relationship. Henry Cloud, in a book I highly recommend, says:

We can do the hard work of facing a problem and making the necessary changes to resolve it, and then we will enjoy the easy road of having things right. But the hard comes first and must be endured. Or, we can take the easy route first and avoid fixing a problem. Then, as sure as the sun will come up tomorrow,

**the hard life will follow.
And it will last a lot longer
and will be a lot harder
than if we had chosen
the hard way first.**

In my case, the doing the harder work first would have been to go to this friend once I had the potentially-damaging information.

Truth is fleshed out as we press flesh.

So, in matters like this, go in person. You'll be glad you did!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!