



Failure's Four F's (or is it five??)

Now I know this isn't necessarily anyone's favorite topic. It's not mine either. Having said that, there is something of value in the "mine." We just have to extract it. So, here we go...

Risk Failing Frequently

Whether you're Thomas Edison or Joe Blow, don't let frequent failings foil you. The story is told of how Thomas Edison was once asked why he kept trying to come up with an alkaline battery, having failed 10,000 times. *When are you going to quit?* Edison replied, "I haven't failed 10,000 times, I know 10,000 things that don't work. Something will work and I will find it."

Your failures aren't final

Let's be honest. We all fail. Some more than others. © Failure is a part of the human experience; every human's experience. Your (my) failures don't have to be the final outcome. Don't let your failures get the last word.

Fail fast

A young executive on a great leadership track shared this idea with me. He's learning to fail fast. Be willing to cut your losses. Say you hired the wrong person. Cut your losses early. Build the muscle that makes you slow to hire; quick to fire. Most of us do that one backward. And what does that do for your team? Your culture? Get this one right!

Don't allow the fear of failure to cause you to freeze.

Those of you who were around for the early days of Star Trek remember the opening monologue, *To boldly go where no one has gone before*. Captain James T. Kirk didn't let the fear of failure keep him from going where no one had gone before. And when he was at the helm of the Starship Enterprise, he didn't allow his fear of failure to cause him to freeze. Look at what happened!

This fifth one is kind of a restatement of the one I just shared.

Don't let that fear hold you captive.

We so often create our own prisons. When we put ourselves in prison, we must come to a point where the realization hits us: *Not only did I put myself here. I also have the key to unlock the prison door.* Once that realization happens, don't wait! Let yourself out. You weren't meant to live in that prison. Set yourself free! You'll be glad you did!