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LATEST NEWS FROM TYGES INTERNATIONAL - INDUSTRIAL
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What If I Could Make It So the Garden Weeds Itself?

By: Steve Sanders - VP/GM of Industrial Practice

I read a book recently called *Think Like A Freak* by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner, the bestselling authors of *Freakonomics*. The book outlines how to set aside biases and begin to think more like an economist. It is an excellent read and I highly encourage you to have a look but rather than give you a book report I wanted to highlight a particularly intriguing idea. The authors provided an example of an idea they called "teaching our garden to weed itself" using the band Van Halen- popular rock band from the 80's with a larger than life front man named David Lee Roth.

Essentially it worked like this: Van Halen had a very large road show with complex lighting, pyrotechnics, and sound systems. The set up of this equipment often would fall to the host venue and many times there were problems with the set up when the band arrived on the day of the show. The result was that the show would need to be delayed or the quality of the performance was less than what it could have been if the set up had been done correctly. In order to correct the issue, the band would need to have their personnel go onsite at the venue to oversee the set up and make sure things were done correctly. This was a costly and time consuming approach for the band.

Apparently the band's lead man, David Lee Roth, hit upon an idea that didn't necessarily fix the issue but certainly gave the band some indication that there were likely to be problems with the setup. In the entertainment industry it is common to have riders in the contract that outline the venue's responsibilities in minute detail. Given the complexity of the set up required the rider was very detailed as to the construction of the stage, lighting, pyrotechnics, etc. In addition to the logistics of the set up, the band also required certain food, drinks, etc. be provided in the dressing room and some of these requirements could be quirky to say the least. For instance, Van Halen required the venue to provide a bowl that contained a large amount of M&M's.

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The idea that David Lee Roth came up with was to require, in the rider, that the venue remove all the brown M&M's from the bowl. The M&M bowl served two purposes: the first being that the band really liked their M&M's. But, secondly, was that the presence of M&M's or lack thereof was an indication of how closely the venue adhered to the very detailed instructions in the contract rider, i.e. - if the band arrived and there were brown M&M's in the bowl then it was a pretty good indication that the entire set up needed to be gone over with a fine tooth comb for errors.

The authors went on to explain how this idea can be used in other instances. The basic tenet is that processes can be designed such that the non-conformances become readily apparent like the presence of brown M&M's in the bowl. Next month I'll write about how these ideas can be applied to the hiring process. Until then spend some time thinking about how you can create a garden that weeds itself.

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Please note: I want to direct you to a blog that our firm started the first of 2014: www.reinventingrecruiting.com. It deals with a multitude of topics and I encourage you to follow it and make comments or ask questions. Please check the blog out and follow us to receive some great content and give you the ability to actively interact with discussions.

Should you be interested in learning more about any of our current job openings or Impact Players, please contact us at caroline.mutch@tyges.com. We look forward to working with you in the future.

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