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The "Different Perspectives" Newsletter

It can be fun to step back and look at the world from a different angle. Here, we step back and look at commonly used words in business and life, ask a provocative question, and see what others are doing differently by applying a different lens on life. I hope you enjoy "Different Perspectives" and that you begin to step back when needed and observing what else is possible.

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Word Choices

Risk /risk/, noun/verb. Def - the exposure to the chance of injury or loss; a hazard or dangerous chance.

Last week we explored what an entrepreneur is and we discussed their comfort with risk and the power of initiative. Let's dive deeper into what risk is.

Per the definition, it is doing something knowing there is an exposure to the chance of injury or loss. Some people are extremely cautious and fearful of the chance of injury or loss. Some people are totally fine with risk in specific cases. For Elon Musk and his Space X, it is said that when he launches a multi-million dollar rocket and it blows up on launch, that he is not upset and has been known to say, "we learned so much from this failed launch." I know these days, you may have your opinion of Elon, and I certainly do, but you have got to give him credit for taking risks. Where would we be with PayPal, Tesla, and SpaceX?

Risk can be real, such as stepping into a pit of poisonous vipers to see if they will bite you. Risk can also be perceived. The perceived risk may not have immediate consequences, nor a real rationale for the perception, such as the fear of flying

because it is risky. Flying is one of the safest forms of transportation and a wild stat I found while researching this to put this into perspective is that you could fly every day of your life and not have an accident in 19,000 years. It is that safe! Now, accidents do happen but flying is not nearly as dangerous as driving a car.

The two fundamental inborn fears are the fear of loud noises and the fear of falling. These can be seen in babies when they hear a loud noise, they will flinch and then ultimately cry. The Moro reflex in babies can be seen in newborns when you lower them quickly, their arms will spread out and their eyes will widen. The rest of the fears we have are taught to us. So, the fear of risk must have come from somewhere. Maybe a kid was told over and over again not to climb trees because they might fall and hurt themselves. Learned behavior. Or, something traumatic happened, such as being in a car accident, and thus a fear of driving becomes a risky activity.

Luckily, we have many mental health providers in this world who are trained to help us overcome these fears. The same could be said for the workplace and for entrepreneurs - the fears of the risk of running a business can be worked out and the limiting beliefs can be reduced to allow someone to move forward.

If you notice some fear or risk avoidance, seek professional help.

Question of the Week

1. What is your risk tolerance on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is you can handle any risk that comes your way, or 10 which means you strictly refuse to take risks?
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Lessons from the Camino

Travel to some can be an incredibly risky thing, depending on where you go and what you do. Sure, taking a trip to jump off a bridge with a bungee cord strapped to your ankle or strapping yourself to another person who has the parachute and then jumping out of a plane can be seen as inherently risky.

For me, the Camino trip was a big risk. It was a foreign country that I was not skilled at the language. The trip planners were a local Spanish country that made all of my plans for me without me seeing or knowing where they were or what they were like. Did I pack the right clothes? Enough socks? Enough band-aids? The risk list went on

forever.

However, what I gained out of this trek where I knew NO ONE was a new set of realities, skills, and confidence. Risk is essential to growth. If we are not pushing the boundaries of risk, then we are not growing. I remember saying goodbye to my daughter who walked with me for the first 7 days and feeling the crush of fear about the next 4.5 weeks alone. I had two choices - go home or move on. I chose the latter, taking risks every day to explore new towns, try new foods, figure out how to speak when I didn't know what to say, and if there was a side trail that wasn't clearly marked, I just kept going.

Often the fear associated with risk is the fear of failure. What is failure, really? I love to share the pneumonic for failing, which is F.A.I.L. = **F**irst **A**tttempt **I**n **L**earning. If we didn't take the risks as babies to stand up and take our first steps, we would all be lumps on the ground doing pretty much NOTHING. Get out there and take risks. Eleanor Roosevelt said that she did something everyday that scared her. Take that advice and run with it (within reason of course!)

Did You Know?

Fun facts and considerations about Risk and Risk Tolerance:

[UCLA study.](#)

[BetterUp](#)

[Risk and Entrepreneurs](#)



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