

Wayne Out There (.com)

wayne-out-there

Stuff that matters to Wayne

Ingenuity: A Byproduct of Quality Problem Solving

Posted on March 04, 2013 by Wayne Taylor

My mom sent me this link to a recent [TED Talk](#) where a gentleman named Wade Davis very eloquently and convincingly talks about how Shell and other industrial giants should pack their bags and get out of Northern BC's dodge. During the presentation he displays some of the prettiest pictures I've ever laid my eyes on and he talks of how the native people of the area need our help defending themselves. My knee-jerk reaction was to side with him and jump on board but within a few seconds I started thinking about my friends who live in Kitimat and other such northern towns. What this presentation didn't address (and of course I don't expect him to get into other views since he only had a few minutes) was the fact that the world is full of systems. Some of the systems are broken or not working well. Due to our world's system, there is a demand for things like oil. If there wasn't, Shell wouldn't be looking at opening up shop in BC's north. Bad things are typically not produced if there isn't a hunger to consume them. So since there is a global hunger for resources and that doesn't appear to be going away any time soon, would it not be better to openly invite industry as long as they agree to meet stringent environmental criteria rather than saying "Go and destroy Africa or Brazil if you want but don't you touch my Canada with your dirty oil machines." That, my friends, is not really any more longer-term thinking than the people who are moving in to grab some quick oil. We as people need to get back to the basics of problem solving, and businesses in particular. Billy is walking down a forest road when he encounters a big log blocking his path but ravines on both sides. He only has a jack knife and a few hours of food and water left. What should he do? Wade Davis would suggest he just pack up and hope to make it home again. The mining companies would suggest he pull that knife out and start hacking as fast as possible at the log so Billy can get through and on with his money plans. Wade doesn't consider that we can't simply turn back and the mining company doesn't consider that hacking for the sake of hacking might not be the best use of energy. What we really need here is a new and creative solution. Maybe Billy should use the knife to create a shovel out of a piece of the log and then tunnel his way under the obstacle. Or maybe he could just cut a piece of the log open and harvest enough ants and bugs out of it to feed his hunger to get him back to where he can choose another route. The point is, we have to really think about all parts of the system when we make decisions, not just the part that we are directly involved with and care about. This also makes me think of a really interesting company called [M & R Environmental](#). I recently had the honour of meeting one of the owners of this company as well as read a brief biography. As far as I understand it now, no one was really recycling oil cans in BC before they came around. Some were attempting to do it, and some were doing it fraudulently (not doing it at all). The problem in a nutshell, was that there wasn't an easy way to get the oil out (hazardous waste) and no one wanted to pick up and carry a bunch of air (empty oil cans). But M & R came in and after much struggling and creative thinking, solved the problems and turned it into a viable business that not only created profit for them but helped significantly the environment. Can we not do the same in mining and oil? I'm just throwing it out there. I'm not trying to take sides but instead suggest that our ability to solve problems effectively is the problem. Now enter government regulation. Some people are against any form of government regulation, but I, on the other hand, think that it has its place. Take, for example, franchising. In Ontario you have to disclose many things when you sell a franchise to someone, but in BC it's the wild west and buyer beware. Needless to say, a lot of abuse is happening

towards franchisees in BC. Same goes for food safety. Restaurant owners get annoyed by the food inspectors and know that they don't perfectly work, but at the end of the day they all know they are important and that it's better for the greater good to have some standards rather than serving up ecoli burgers to innocent victims. Government should say 'Sure. Build a mine by this lake but make sure that you follow this list of rules.'" Then we can all get metal to make our forks and coins and even make a few bucks instead of turning Wade's pictures into tar pits.

http://www.ted.com/talks/wade_davis_gorgeous_photos_of_a_backyard_wilderness_worth_saving.html??utm_share

Posted in: Business | Tagged: Bc, Environment, North, Problem Solving, TED, Wade Davis | With 0 comments