

Five Lessons from AMCAD

Lesson #1 **Doing the “right thing” is easy**. AMCAD struggled with its corporate ethos given both its company history and its operational challenges. As a result, managers struggled daily with doing the right thing. Whether it was customer conversations, or interactions with fellow team members, the engrained culture did not support this conventional dictum. For me it was easy, as an outsider, it was far easier to examine the facts around any issue or conversation, and react with candid action or communication. However, more importantly, doing the right thing lead me to being completely comfortable after my time had ended with AMCAD, knowing that although one may question the reputation, I would not question my character.

Lesson #2 **Cash is king**. No matter how well or how poorly a business is being managed, ultimately, cash flow allows the manager sufficient time to understand, develop and then execute any series of actions. Thus, the lesson so to speak, is being sure to understand the financial posture of the organization and more importantly, the financial backers of the organization. Be it privately owned, founder owned, or in the public markets; financially, how well positioned is the organization.

Lesson #3 **Over communicate**. One cannot over communicate to ensure there is a shared vision. Scenario planning for years has been the life blood of emergency response, military, and even sports teams. What does this look like? What happens when this occurs, or better yet, when it doesn't? How will you respond? What do you mean when you say green, and what does your colleague mean when they say green? Communication, intent, speaking plainly are valuable commodities that should not be underestimated or not practiced. Early and often 'check in' to be sure that constituents understand the environment and challenges that you operate under. Customers, employees, family members, it doesn't matter, be sure you are pro-active in your communication.

Lesson #4 **Strive for insight with purposeful action**. Know the difference between actionable intent and action from insight. Some days, you will not have insight to understand the course of action. Thus, when you act, be sure to understand whether or not your actions are based on incomplete information, and leave room to adjust as you gain more insight.

Lesson #5 **Take a chance**. You do not need to be a risk taker, to take a chance. All you need to do is believe in you, and know that life is a journey and a learning opportunity. Heck, this lesson is the easiest for me. Had I not tried, I would never know whether I could.