



From The Desk of **Tom Mauk**

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Crises Into Opportunity

I read an interesting article over the weekend that I would like to share with you. It related to the questions of "How great companies turn crisis into opportunity." In our case, that would be governments, or more specifically, counties.

The first point is – relating to us – that in times of great duress, tumult and uncertainty, you have to have "moorings." Successful companies have an incredible fabric of values, of underlying ideals and principles that explain why they survive and even flourish. For Orange County, that would be a belief in the following:

1. That Orange County government serves a positive and productive purpose in the lives of our "customers" – our three million citizens and taxpayers.
2. That we believe in our elected officials as policy makers and our executives, employees and managers in that process – each of you individually and all of you collectively.
3. That great companies do not "cut corners" or cheapen their products in tough times – they work harder – and so will we.
4. And for my part in Orange County, we have a strong value of fiscal soundness and responsible, long term stewardship of the taxpayer's resources ... so we will balance our budget ... as strong private sector survivors do.

The second point made was that strong companies really understand it is the caliber of their people that get them through crisis. If there is a storm on the horizon, more important than the plan is the people you have with you. So...

1. Our people (18,000 of them) – from the Board of Supervisors to the men and women in the field are the best.
2. That we believe in our elected officials as policy makers and our executives, employees and managers in that



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process – each of you individually and all of your collectively.

3. Attacks on that team effort are destructive and set an organization and its individuals back rather than contributing to success. Instead, we should commend team efforts that work to save jobs and balance a difficult budget - for example, the exemplary efforts by the managers of the Health Care Agency.
4. Successful organizations set “cheap shots” and divisiveness aside and keep their eye on the end goal – survival and hard work in times of crisis.

The third value the article talks about as respects survival in times of crisis is that successful companies actually take advantage of such times to bolster their talent, i.e. you! And in Orange County’s case, to also bolster our belief in OC’s core values.

So we are consolidating ... eliminating vacant positions, transferring potential layoffs to other Departments ... eliminating and consolidating some management positions and asking our talented employees at all levels to take on more work ... and therefore, to work harder ... and many of you are stepping up!

So thanks for “listening!” I needed to “talk” to each of you. Out of these thoughts, let’s consolidate into a few core values of historical success in OC that will contribute to our success and to OC flourishing as we move through this economic crisis:

1. OC government achieves valued and productive purposes.
2. We believe in our system of democratic and appointed government and in our elected and appointed officials.
3. We will not cut corners but will work harder to do the right thing.
4. We believe in sound fiscal policy and balanced budgets.
5. We believe in teamwork and each other.
6. We will not be distracted by attacks (unions, press, blogs or individuals) but will continue to pursue excellence.
7. We will save every job and employee that we can by bolstering our talent ... through transfers ...unfreezing some vacant positions and combining duties and responsibilities.
8. We will support each other and the Board of Supervisors.

And, in conclusion, the most important value for me in this time of crisis is that I believe in each of you!! Let's make something positive happen!

I hope you had a good weekend and that you enjoyed the exciting Super Bowl game.

Thank you,

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County Executive Officer