



Sightings

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INSIGHTS...IN SIGHT

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Upcoming Events

Persuasive Powerful Proposals

June 1, New York City, NY
June 6, Chicago, IL
August 14, Washington, DC

A/E/C Essentials: An Intro- duction to the Design and Construction Industry

Co sponsored by The Society for
Marketing Professional Services. (SMPS).

May 31, New York City, NY
June 5, Chicago, IL
August 15, Washington, DC

More information about
seminars can be found at:
www.longview-group.com/seminars.html



1980 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight Regency Sedan

That 1980 Oldsmobile 98 Diesel Powered Land Cruiser

by Dennis Schrag

The recent increases in fuel prices reminded me of the 1980s. Some of you geezers will remember when diesel-powered cars were introduced to save the consumer a ton of money at the pump. The cost of the diesel powered passenger car was about 30% higher than gasoline powered engines.

I am a chronic early adopter. Mea copa. When a new product hits the market, I am the first to go for it. So it was with the diesel engine cars. I purchased the most beautiful car I have ever owned: 1980 Oldsmobile 98. It was at least 38 feet long and had very subtle but noticeable fins.

(Not gaudy fins like the earlier model Caddys) It was deep dark blue with an interior beyond belief. Upholstery buttons and dark blue velveteen tufts made the inside look like the eternal sleep cushion of a classy casket. Trust me—I looked so good in that car.

I paid a couple thousand dollars extra for the diesel model. Dealers felt obliged to hit on the early adopters.

You will remember that Detroit was not famous for quality in the 1980s. Quality was NOT job one. Can you say Corvair?

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There was just one little thing about diesel powered engines in the 1980s. They would literally “freeze up” in the winter. The fuel would turn to jelly and clog every fuel line in the car. My beautiful blue finned 98 would often just quit during the months of November thru April. I really loved that car, except when it would not move. NO GO.

It seems that EVERYONE who bought a diesel powered car in those years had the same problem. NO GO. There was zero trade in value on the car. No one would buy it. NO GO.

I developed a reasonable if slightly shady solution. I would drive the car to Chicago in May. It would be polished and clean. I would park it on a prominent street in a rough neighborhood, roll down the driver’s side and passenger’s side windows and leave the keys in the car. I went shopping for three hours. I prayed for thieves. NO GO.



I still owned those immovable blue fins. Three trips to Chicago and two to St Louis produced no results. No street value. NO GO.

We do the same thing in our businesses. Make an acquisition here that turns out to be a deadly dud. We hire a shining star that becomes a nightmare. We spend a lot of money to start a new service,

only to find that no one wants it. There are many great opportunities for exceptionally expensive NO GOs. Trust me, no one wants to pay good money for bad judgments. Try as you may to convert it to a sweet deal on the street, it seldom happens. NO GO.

Learn from MY mistake. Do not waste your time and energy trying to convert a sow’s ear to a silk purse. It will hurt. Blanket your ego. Cut your losses. Make the decision now and GO ON.



The next fall I bought a new gasoline powered red Mustang. I paid the dealer an extra \$500 to take the Olds 98. It had no trade in value. He too knew it was a NO GO. It was an expensive error. It hurt my finances and really bruised my ego. You don’t look so good sitting behind the steering wheel of a car that will not move.

The red Mustang was a fine car.

HOW TO RECRUIT THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB

Put about 100 bricks in some particular order in a closed room with an open window. Then send 2 or 3 candidates in the room and close the door. Leave them alone and come back after 6 hours and then analyse the situation.

If they are counting the bricks.... put them in the accounts department.

If they are recounting them... put them in auditing.

If they have messed up the whole place with the bricks... put them in engineering.

If they are arranging the bricks in some strange order... put them in planning.

If they are throwing the bricks at each other... put them in operations.

If they are sleeping... put them in security.

If they have broken the bricks into pieces... put them in information technology.

If they are sitting idle... put them in human resources.

If they say they have tried different combinations, yet not a brick has been moved... put them in sales.

If they have already left for the day... put them in marketing.

If they are staring out of the window... put them on strategic planning.

And then last but not least... if they are talking to each other and not a single brick has been moved congratulate them and put them in top management.

WHAT IS THE LONGVIEW GROUP, LLC?

Seeking more efficiency and effectiveness in your professional service business? The Longview Group, LLC provides you INSIGHTS through training, on-the-job coaching, expert counsel, and extra-hands services.

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