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Comprehension.

FEATURE ARTICLE

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An unparalleled level of understanding.

My first 'real' job was as a scooper for the late, great, Izzy's Ice Cream. Izzy's, for those of you who are unfamiliar, was a small, family-owned ice cream shop that got its start in St. Paul, MN back in 2000. Unlike many, I look back on my first job quite fondly. The leadership and life lessons I learned along the way continue to prove valuable to this day.

As with any job, the first stage of my employment was to undergo training procedures. I will never forget the first thing we learned; how to fold a rag. At the time I remember thinking to myself, *really? They're going to teach us how to fold a rag?* but as is true for most things worth remembering, there was a method to the madness. The owner had devised the most efficient and effective way to fold a cleaning rag. Not only that, he had created a tactile way to discern between understanding and comprehension.

As we sat there folding our rags, the owner could see that we were understanding what he was teaching us. But the beauty in this training exercise came when we began to fold our rags that

way even when nobody was watching. It was at that point that we'd begun to truly comprehend the reasoning behind it. To this day, I still fold my rags the Izzy's way.

Achieving a similar sort of communal understanding/comprehension in the corporate world is exceptionally difficult, but when done so successfully, it can open the door for incredible things. At Clientek, understanding our client's business **IS** our business. We make a concerted effort to entrench ourselves in the day-to-day operations of every client we serve. It is this "*dive-in*" mentality that allows us to create an atmosphere of continual learning and success.

We take great pride in our ability to ask the right questions. From technical specifics to operational processes, it is vital that our teams fully comprehend the businesses of our clients to deliver the highest-value solutions. Solving business problems with technology isn't as simple as throwing a mobile app at a problem and walking away, it requires time and attention to identify and truly understand the innerworkings of the organization.

For us, *diving-in* is not something we do when it's convenient, it's integral to how we operate. We create a community of knowledge and understanding within our teams and clients. By doing so, we become experts on the businesses we work for. This means future engagements have an elevated starting point and our teams/individuals feel immediately comfortable contributing and asking questions, resulting in continuously improved delivery.

While Izzy's will always hold a special place in my heart, you don't need to become a scooping apprentice to experience the benefits of comprehension. Achieving this environment of commonality just requires time, attention, and the willingness to learn. Even simpler yet, you could always just work with us!

Go on, jump in.

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