

Human Infrastructure Magazine: A Blueprint For Integrity And Performance



A Possible Guide To Integrity And Performance

by Greg Ferro

Many years ago, I was a salary slave for Anixter, back when selling cabling AND networking gear together made sense. Each new employee was given a copy of the "[Blue Book](#)." A senior manager then walked us through the pages. Here's a selection:

More than 45 years ago, our founders presented our beliefs and defined our business style in what was the first Blue Book. While we have grown and changed dramatically since we were established in 1957, one thing has remained constant: our commitment to the values presented in the Blue Book.

I imagine startup founders and DevOps consultants will be deeply surprised to learn that building company culture has been around since the turn of the century. But I digress.

Here is the section that hit home for me about truth.

TRUTH

We tell the **TRUTH** to each other
and to our customers and suppliers.

We tell the whole story, not just part of it.

We don't stretch it, bend it or avoid it.

And if someone raises hell when
you tell the truth — let them.

Just say it like it is.

One little lie and you're a liar!

At the start of my time at Anixter, the culture outlined in the Blue Book was very real. There are some high standards that are difficult to accept, but senior managers would follow them and enforce them as needed.

Over time, there were management changes, and those who got promoted also got lazy. When the business came under pressure, the philosophy was, well, "adapted" to the situation.

In particular, managers found it easier to ignore the philosophy for short-term goals such as their Friday golf games on the company's money.

Today, I continue to re-read the Anixter Blue Book regularly. It's a personal reminder of basic ways to behave with grace and respect when under pressure:

OUR PHILOSOPHY

- 1 People come first.
- 2 Our word is our bond – we are reliable.
- 3 We are serious about service.
- 4 We cannot afford the luxury of a poor day's business.
- 5 We want to be the best.
- 6 We are realists. We believe in candor.
- 7 We're accessible and easy to do business with.
- 8 We are aggressive...we are "doers"... we work hard.
- 9 We are often pleased but never satisfied.
- 10 We properly reward our people.

The EtherealMind View

I've used the Anixter blue book as guide to my professional life for the last 20 years. If you want some guidance on integrity and personal and professional conduct while balancing the need to make money, a quick read of this short book might inspire you.

Reference:

Source: [Anixter Blue Book](#) (Retrieved 2018-04-16)

Sponsor: Paessler PRTG

Is Your Security Really Secure?

Most IT pros don't think of a network monitoring tool like PRTG as an integral part of a security strategy. You may have the latest security software and a rock-solid firewall, but none of that matters if you don't have the right network monitoring strategy in place. By implementing a level of 'meta-security' you can protect your security with an early warning system.

To learn about how PRTG can be an integral part of your security strategy, read our eBook [“Is Your Security Really Secure?”](#) Also, be on the lookout for Paessler’s upcoming podcast with security expert Troy Mursch where we will discuss how PRTG Network Monitor can mitigate cyber-attacks on your network.

'Balance' Is An Excuse Not To Go All Out

by Ethan Banks

In 2007+8, I was studying for the CCIE certification. It's a demanding exam, so I developed a life-consuming preparation method that was above and beyond my prior certification efforts.

During the CCIE prep months, I did not have a good balance between “work” and “life”. Work/life balance has been much discussed in the context of tech careers lately. The current rule, and one I generally espouse, is that it's

not worth sacrificing your personal life on the altar of your career.

Exceptions To The Rule

However, there are exceptions. I recently watched a documentary that made the point, “Balance is an excuse not to go all out.” Many people like the idea of having achieved something hard, but they don’t want to do the work. Their excuse to not do the work is some approximation of “work/life balance.”

I’m not here to tell you that it’s worth destroying your marriage to become a CCIE...which some people have done. I am saying that in order to get hard things done, your life will have temporary imbalances if those hard things are truly important to you.

Intense Focus

There was no balance in my life for many months. If I wasn't at work, I read badly written chapters of a complicated CiscoPress book and tried to make sense of what I was reading. I logged into a rack of switches and routers and performed lab exercises. I wrote long blog

posts trying to get back out of my head what I'd been stuffing in there. I slept. I went back to work.

I was (and am) married, with kids, cats, and a house. I did my best to keep up with those things, but I doubt I was good at them. I put minimum effort into my personal life. My understanding spouse tolerated my inadequacy.

Of course, I took breaks and eventually had to take some evenings off, but mostly, it was all packets all the time. I remember falling asleep trying to solve lab challenges in my head. I had dreams about the lab exam. I also gained weight, as eating was my main distraction.

My lack of balance, a.k.a intense focus, led to ultimately passing the lab exam. I was a CCIE for many years. Was the payoff worth the effort? To me it was, as I was able to capitalize on my shiny digits in a variety of ways.

Living Above Laziness

Let's recall the earlier quote, "Balance is an excuse not to go all out." If you have hard goals you can't seem to

achieve, the question to ask is whether you're using “work/life balance” as a excuse to be lazy. “Lazy” is a harsh word, but it’s the one you’ve got to be honest with yourself about.

“In 2017, Netflix spent \$6.3 billion on original and acquired programming,” according to [this ReCode article](#), and they’ll spend \$8 billion in 2018. By [Digi-Capital’s measure](#), video gaming was a \$165 billion industry in 2017. Netflix alone offers more programming than you can ever watch. More games will be released than you can possibly play.

I use those as examples of things you might need to let go of to achieve difficult goals. You don’t need these activities if you have difficult goals in mind. Sometimes, you need to go all-in to get something done.

Historically, I have written and podcasted a lot about prioritizing work/life balance. Perhaps this article feels counter to that. Consider that everything has a place. Personal sacrifice can be equally important to balance in the larger scheme of your life. Those times of temporary imbalance are needed, too.

Sponsor: Cisco

Connecting Security & GDPR Compliance

The General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR, codifies data privacy and protection obligations for companies that handle the data of EU citizens. Those obligations include a duty of care to prevent loss, stringent breach notification requirements, and serious fines and penalties for violations.

Meeting these requirements will require significant effort. There's no one single policy or product an organization can implement to comply.

On [Priority Queue episode 147](#), the Packet Pushers delve into GDPR requirements with Equilibrium Security and ePlus/IGX, two leading Cisco partners who share practical insights and advice for dealing with GDPR, including how to break down and understand the law's requirements, the importance of a risk assessment and gap analysis, and how to use security and management tools to comply with the regulations.

You'll also hear a real-world customer case study that walks through the challenges and solutions of an actual business.

If you need to get up to speed on GDPR, listen to [Priority Queue 147](#).



Thanks Internet!

All kinds of things wash up in our social feeds. Sometimes they're worth sharing.



Joey Ellis
@joeyellis



ENTER PASSWORD.

WRONG.

WRONG.

WRONG.

WRONG.

WRONG.

WRONG.

RESET PASSWORD.

NEW PASSWORD CAN'T BE OLD PASSWORD.

sets fire to computer

7:21 AM - Aug 17, 2015

♡ 54.5K 💬 48.6K people are talking about this



Internets Of Interest

Links to stories you might find interesting, curious, enraging, or otherwise worth your time.

Put Down the Pitchfork, AWS Didn't Steal Your Dunning-Krugerrands

If you haven't heard already, attackers executed a cryptocurrency heist through a combination of BGP hijacking and a man-in-the-middle attack that used self-signed digital certificates. A lot of reporting around the story focused on the fact that the 1,300 IP addresses involved in the hijacking belonged to Amazon's Route53 DNS service.

Corey Quinn, who writes the snarky [Last Week In AWS](#) newsletter and blog, came to Amazon's defense, noting that the real issue is that BGP is a protocol developed in a more innocent era of the Internet. As he [notes in the blog](#):

"The internet is fundamentally broken in this way; bad actors can cause disruption and woe for huge numbers of people. It's a giant problem, to be sure-- but it's one for which Amazon isn't (for once!) responsible. Blaming them for this issue is at worst dishonest, and at best intellectually lazy ."

[LINK](#)

Datacenter History: Through the Ages in Lego

Stephen Foskett has written a blog post that combines Legos and a history of computing. It's so dense with delightful nerdery that it might collapse into a geek singularity.

Before that happens, head on over and [see what he's done](#).

[LINK](#)

Recent Podcasts

The last five podcasts published on Packet Pushers

- [PQ 147: Connecting Security And GDPR Compliance \(Sponsored\)](#)
- [Datanauts 131: Masters And Mentorship](#)
- [Network Break 181: Russia Accused Of Infrastructure Attacks; US Targets ZTE](#)
- [Show 386: Building Trusted Network Infrastructure With IOS XR \(Sponsored\)](#)
- [PQ 146: Practical Python For Deploying BFD](#)

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The End Bit

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