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Q3 2020

To the donors of Second Spoon Inc.:

A journalist recently asked me why Second Spoon has been so successful. One word came to mind: Culture.

“Alright,” she asked, “But how?”

“Well,” I replied, “Have you met any of our team members?”

STD

Everyone knows this but it bears repeating: A strong culture is as good as any litmus test for an organization’s success. A few examples come to mind:

- College football recruiting visits are often inundated with flashy attractions. Extravagant meals, exclusive gear, photoshoots, etc. But at USC, I can remember being sold on something entirely different. An ideology rooted in the commitment to three words printed on virtually every sheet in the facility: Selfless, Tough, Disciplined. (It’s no surprise that an undefeated regular season featured three come from behind victories).
- Statistically speaking NBA playoff underdogs have virtually no chance at advancing deep into the tournament. Each year, the stars shine and the favorites win. Blah blah blah - the whole charade. What’s to make of the Miami Heat’s historic 2020 postseason? Well nowadays there’s no shortage of articles, interviews and merchandise related to “Heat Culture.”
- Watch what’s happening with the Coastal Carolina football program. A few months ago, they were chosen to finish last in the conference. Those choreographed locker room celebrations are bound to disrupt more than the Sun Belt.

SEAL Team 3

In those organizations, each team member acknowledged the circumstances and remained solution oriented. You want that to be you.

Jocko Willink, a heterodox even amongst his band of SEAL colleagues, has a worthy framework for this kind of thing. His problem-solving framework is best summed in one word: “GOOD.”

“Oh, the mission got canceled? Good... We can focus on another one.
Didn't get promoted? Good... More time to get better.
Didn't get funded? Good... We own more of the company.
Didn't get the job you wanted? Good... Go out, gain more experience, and build a better resume.
Got injured? Good... Needed a break from training.”

Altogether, our standards borrow from Willink and the teams before him. A prerequisite for solving some of the 21st century's most pressing issues *necessitate* a culture through which we a.) hold each other accountable and demand excellence (even when it's not comfortable) b.) ensure everyone has a voice c.) challenge our pre-existing notions, and d.) operate through a contrarian lens.

And most importantly: we celebrate this, promote it aggressively, and we do it together.

Geux Trojans

In the absence of a vaccine the only way to deal with the outbreak is to pivot and prepare. Quarterly letters 1 & 2 sought to expand on the former. Now seems like a good time to discuss the groundwork that is underway for a post COVID-19 America.

Second Spoon is expanding to Los Angeles, CA and Baton Rouge, LA.

Partnerships with two additional universities and athletic departments are indicators of a bullish prognosis for 2021. As we move past the despair of the pandemic, we are preparing for a year where student-athletes at Miami, Vanderbilt, USC, and LSU come together in their respective schools to deliver nutritious surplus foods in our outfitted trucks. In order to fall in accordance with university regulation, the following guidelines are in place until further notice:

- Volunteers will wear masks during deliveries
- Volunteers test negative within 5 days of delivery date

Moreover, with an adjunct podcast launching in January 2021, the expansion is part of a plan to create an ecosystem of philanthropy, innovation, and services that elevates our communities.

As Gary Friedman doubles down on brick and mortar retail, the Restoration Hardware CEO says it this way: “It is not a time to shelter and shrink, it is a time to expand and shine ... This is a time to be defined by our vision, not by a virus.”

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JPH', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.