

## Leave the Past in the Past

Written by David Specht Jr.  
Monday, 31 December 2012 07:58 -

---



Recently, I sat down with my executive team to review the past year and look to the year ahead. While planning, we pulled out our reports from last year to dissect what could be expected and what gaps needed filling.

I thought of Simba the Lion...

There is a valuable business (and life) lesson that can be learned from the movie, "The Lion King."

In the movie, the heir to the throne, Simba the lion, runs away from home because he believes he is the cause of his father's death.

After many years, he runs into Rafiki, a wise baboon from his homeland who encourages him to go home and take his place as king.

"I can't go back there after what I have done in my past," Simba argued.

At that point, Rafiki smacks Simba in the head with a stick.

"Ouch! Why did you do that?" Simba asks.

## Leave the Past in the Past

Written by David Specht Jr.  
Monday, 31 December 2012 07:58 -

---

“Doesn’t matter. It’s in the past,” Rafiki replies.

“But it hurts.”

“Yes, the past can hurt.”

The lesson to be learned is that while we should learn from things in our past, we need to realize that we cannot change those things.

Whether we are business leaders, retired or members of a family, we need to review past performance to learn what worked and what didn’t work. But, we should not dwell on the failures (or successes) in the past.

As we enter 2013, there is much to be concerned about, from the fiscal cliff to the moral decay in our nation. However, that doesn’t mean we should “fold up our tents.”

We should already be making preparations for the possibility of difficulties in the year ahead. Truly successful business leaders know that there is no such thing as a completed plan for success. The plan must be continually improved.

Henry Ford learned this lesson early on. After inventing the wildly successful Model T automobile, he ran into a major problem. He could not fill all the orders that were coming in. He was a victim of his own success.

Ford realized the problem was in the production of the Model T. Workers in the plant could only produce small number of vehicles per day. The method of production (a team of workers would build a Model T one at a time) was too inefficient.

## Leave the Past in the Past

Written by David Specht Jr.  
Monday, 31 December 2012 07:58 -

---

Ford came up with the idea of running a conveyor through his plant and having his workers assemble only one part of the vehicle as it passed by. Efficiency went through the roof and the assembly line was born.

That was not the end of Ford's challenges, but each time he came up with innovative solutions to the problems.

I hope you are looking forward to the future as one of tremendous opportunity, along with the realization of major challenges ahead.

Learn from the lessons of the past, without dwelling on them, and think of innovative solutions to the challenges your business will face. I believe when you look back on things down the road, you will be pleased with the outcome.

---

David A. Specht Jr., is Vice President of Specht Newspapers, Inc., and publisher of the Bossier Press-Tribune. Read more of his blogs at [www.DavidASpecht.com](http://www.DavidASpecht.com).