

Beyond the Road to China



by
Andrew C. Jacobs

Beyond The
Road To China

再叙我的中国之路

Andrew C. Jacobs

Contents

Dedication . . . . .	.5
Foreword . . . . .	.7
Introduction . . . . .	.9
Chapter One	
<i>January 2006</i> . . . . .	.11
Chapter Two	
<i>February 2006</i> . . . . .	.26
Chapter Three	
<i>March 2006</i> . . . . .	.34
Chapter Four	
<i>April 2006</i> . . . . .	.72
Chapter Five	
<i>May 2006</i> . . . . .	.82
Chapter Six	
<i>June 2006</i> . . . . .	.103
Chapter Seven	
<i>July 2006</i> . . . . .	.114
Chapter Eight	
<i>August 2006</i> . . . . .	.128
Chapter Nine	
<i>September 2006</i> . . . . .	.167
Chapter Ten	
<i>October 2006</i> . . . . .	.192
Chapter Eleven	
<i>November 2006</i> . . . . .	.213
Chapter Twelve	
<i>December 2006</i> . . . . .	.237
Glossary of Terms . . . . .	.265
Andrew's Name Locator . . . . .	.267
Colophon . . . . .	.269
Also By Andrew Jacobs . . . . .	.271

Dedication

To all of my employees who have adopted my dream as their own. They have ended up working in areas, which they had not planned; gone to places that they never anticipated, and utilized resources within themselves they did not know they had. Thank you for joining my adventure.

And to my dog, Hershey: I think of you often and will always miss you. I hope we can meet again.

Foreword

It is always interesting to go back after a year and read what you were thinking about before events actually occurred. How you were right in some areas, wrong in others, and found out later you were actually right anyway. Having a written journal is a double-edged sword, in that you can actually look back as to how you saw something but you do not have the luxury of allowing yourself to forget or alter the events.

I make lots of decisions, some good, a few disasters and a bunch that I hope I will never repeat. Often, that is the job of being “the boss.” You never know what is “right” and you use the facts at hand, your judgment from your experiences, and add in some common sense to come to a decision. You hope that the events of the day, like people not doing what is in their own best interest, do not color your directions too much. In the end, you do the best you can do. Hopefully, your moral framework will stay in tact, and you can look at yourself in the mirror and say you are proud of what you have done.

Introduction

Up until 2003, the biggest chance I ever took in my life, besides marrying my wonderful wife, was putting in a printing plant at our location in Maplewood, New Jersey. It worked out very well, and we were debt free within twelve months after we started.

In 2005, I took the second biggest chance, by putting another plant into China. When I started, I knew virtually nothing about the country, the people, their society or customs. I just knew I had no choice if I wanted to stay a player in our industry. Our company had to become global and it had to be done immediately. To say I was fortunate in having met my partner in China, Ben Meng, is putting it mildly. Stories are rampant about American entrepreneurs and large companies going to China with the idea of making a killing and coming back beaten, with nothing to show for their efforts except a lot of broken dreams and debt.

I had no such lofty ambitions when I went over there, except to survive and break even, so I could protect the business for my company in New Jersey. What I actually got was the chance to build a new global dream. It would have the potential to make us very successful on a global scale. In this case, ignorance, and the lack of greed and pretensions allowed us to grow quickly, but not too fast. We would move into new areas, like injection molding, which would have been impossible only from the US side.

Having Ideal Jacobs Xiamen or IJX has enabled us to quickly grow into new areas. It has given us the chance to launch into new product that can have profound implications on the growth and health of our companies for many years to come. This book is a continuation of my journal from last year. I hope it continues to give a flavor of what it is like to try and build a team combining two countries, two cultures and two work forces.

We are not there yet, but we have made great strides. The combined sales for our two companies are more than a third higher than the previous record year, so we must be doing a bunch of things right. I would like to thank my partner and friend, Ben Meng, for his patience, understanding, hard work and his tireless efforts in promoting and benefiting both companies worldwide.

For the future, the first step is to pay back the loan we took out to launch IJX. When that is done, in hopefully less than two years, we can look toward creating our third location, which at this point seems to be in Eastern Europe. It has been an amazing ride and a lot of fun. I hope you enjoy my book.

Chapter One

12/31/05

11:50PM

New Year's Eve - New Jersey - Home

It has been a fantastic year and it is now time to look ahead.

Hopeful projections for next year:

- Movement to continue to sell more to small and medium sized companies
- Launch a new program to convert telecom parts to our new metal-plastic material and start selling whole units to customers instead of only labels, insulators and cable assemblies.
- Install CNC routers in China and the US. CNC are machines that create finished parts from blocks of material like aluminum and plastic.
- Launch a new book and use it as a networking tool to bring in more customers, suppliers and contacts
- Possibly have our part-time salesman go to full-time and have him travel throughout the United States.
- More travel for myself throughout the United States, Europe and Asia.
- Have our other top people also travel worldwide.
- Ben Meng, President of Ideal Jacobs Xiamen, will sell throughout Asia.

This is a lot to accomplish and it is really exciting if the metal/plastic product group either becomes important or moves us into a new area.

1/1/06

10:35PM

New Jersey - Home

Last night I woke up at 3:00AM. Besides having to go to the bathroom I realized that the original figures I had for our financial projections for IJUS (Ideal Jacobs United States) and IJX (Ideal Jacobs Xiamen, China) meant that I was only thinking of a holding action without putting myself "out there" to go for something bigger. I have now altered them radically upward and let's see what happens.

Vinnie Santoro, our head of global manufacturing, is over at our China facility and Ben called me via Internet phone tonight. The call covered basic operations including our tenant who has just moved in. There are always changes and problems when things change and I feel

that things will iron out smoothly with the tenant within the month. Since they are also a customer we will strive to keep the problems to a minimum and do our best to increase our business with them as much and as quickly as possible.

I told Vinnie and Ben that we had to get the CNC Machine situation worked out right away as I wanted to be able to offer machined parts, done in-house as quickly as possible. I see a market there and I want to capitalize on it now. In addition, Ben and I both want IJX to have its own art department, which, I hope, doesn't cause a "turf" problem with the guys from IJUS. We have discussed the creation, training and on-going supervision for this new center but again everything new can cause problems and I am trying to reduce the potential for trouble as much as possible.

I seem to spend a lot of my time trying to make sure trouble doesn't happen or if it does, it occurs at a much lower level of urgency and potential catastrophe than it would otherwise. We have started the transition of all Asian accounts over to IJX and have already turned over some to Ben. He can handle them as he likes just as long as IJX makes money.

While traveling in Hong Kong, Ben also took Vinnie to see their ink and polycarbonate suppliers. There seems to be a block regarding buying certain materials in China and hopefully we can break the logjam regarding these two products. If not, we may have to buy them here in the US and send them over which is not only inconvenient but also very expensive.

We had gone to one of our biggest customers who makes extruded metal products and explained that we wanted to go into the short and medium run thermoplastic injection molding business. This process converts extruded metal parts over to a less expensive injection molding process that utilizes plastics that contain metal particles inside them and mimic the same attributes of aluminum and steel. We offered to work in conjunction with them and as a supplier but so far they have not been pleased with our move into this area. I hope they do not try and force us to stop; the situation could become ugly very quickly and I don't like the idea of being pushed around.

1/2/06

Vinnie emailed regarding the CNC machines and we are making progress. Within two weeks we should have our first set of molds for one of the telecom front panels utilizing the new plastic/metal material. It is very exciting and I look forward to seeing the final result.

For the short-term I am cash poor and hope that enough money comes into the business this week so I can pay the government the taxes I owe them (they are not due until April) and also provide for my wife to run our household. Things are not dire by any means; it is just

a typical business owner's struggle to pay all the bills and still go after new areas.

I feel good about our path; we just have to stay on it.

Dad called me today worried about the weather. He is going to see a doctor tomorrow in the city and there is a winter storm happening. Hopefully the precipitation will stay as rain.

1/5/06

Our tenant in China is giving us grief regarding what they will and will not pay for. However, since the tenant is a good customer domestically (and will hopefully be one in China) we will live with it for now but this does not bode well for the future. With our two companies going after the same type of customers for the same type of business I can only see trouble for the future. Still, they will do as they wish and so will I. This does not feel like a great situation.

Once the metal/plastic area is running, tested and working well we will attack everything and probably bring our part-time salesman on to full time.

We will then go aggressively after the small end-user company market with face panels and labels and then move up to the middle area. Eventually our business with the tenant will become less profitable and less important to us. As we start taking significant market share from them and we will be in direct competition.

Our relationship at that point will most probably be finished quickly. Then we will see how fast we can build a super profitable business in this new niche, pay off the loan for the China facility and eventually go into Eastern Europe and become a truly global supplier. The plan is the same as it was before - stay in the profitable pieces of business in niche areas and let the others fight over the cheap stuff. We will need more people once this gets going but we can build as we go unless the market explodes in which case we will have to do the best we can. It could be a good problem.

1/6/06

10:39PM

New Jersey - Home

Things are a lot clearer now. Fate has once again paved the way for us. I now understand the reason we were not able to buy a CNC machine in China. We were meant to put a CNC machine into our New Jersey facility first so Vinnie could learn it here and then train employees in Xiamen later.

We will shut down the imprinting operation (it was not great from an environmental point of view) here in New Jersey to make room for the new machine. We may also put in a new film output center so we do not have to rely solely on the thermal film system we have now.

Vinnie will move into the CNC area and Oscar, our lead pressman, will take over as manager of the press lines.

1/7/06

I spoke to Alice in China this morning; she and her husband traveled to Shanghai without trouble. I have been thinking further about changes to make in our manufacturing area that could also include possibly adding an injection molding line.

The first course of action that will need to take place is dismantling the imprinting room. We might be able to donate the equipment to a local college or sell it along with our poster making equipment that we barely use anymore. Vinnie will have to become familiar rapidly with all of these new areas. Knowing his abilities and talents it will not take a lot of time for him to do so. This will be a lot of new work for him so the press lines will need to be supervised by Oscar with Vinnie's input provided only when needed.

1/9/06

9:50PM

New Jersey - Home

I saw my friend Dave Williams (nicknamed "Uncle Dave") yesterday for biking and he mentioned he needed more sales. I suggested he help us find companies that want to set-up operations in China. He would get a portion of the fees and a small percentage of the joint venture itself, if there were any. Dave liked the idea.

I also mentioned that often when a company began operations in China, it was often necessary to downsize domestically and possibly move out of their current space to find new accommodations. Since he is in real estate and would get the exclusive to help with the re-location, Dave really started loving the plan.

Meanwhile I was re-energized about the idea of bringing companies over to China and emailed our part-time salesman to be on the lookout for possible candidates. We already have one tenant and have room for more, especially if we get a piece of their business.

My trip to Solectron in Mexico is probably not going to be fruitful in the short-term because I was told that they have a favored vendor who would be hard to dislodge. The suppliers are known for very cheap prices of long runs with a medium quality level. This is definitely not our niche. We specialize in shorter to medium run complex orders that are needed in a quick turnaround. I can easily see that over the next few years there will be a shift in our accounts and possibly the business sectors we deal with. It doesn't matter what we make as long as it is honest, profitable and has the potential for more.

For now another big focus is accumulating the funds to pay our taxes due in April. It is great to make the money but you always have to

pay the government which is rarely far out of my mind. The company has been very fortunate - 2005 was a very good year for us.

How different it must be for people who do not own their own business? Many of the worries I have would be non-existent if I worked for someone else or a big company. Of course, I would probably go crazy not being in command. Therefore, I am just as happy using my powers of worry to directly enhance our bottom line. I do not want more debt but now is not the time to be cutting back. Instead we must expand and follow my gut.

Things to go over during my trip to Mexico and Arizona:

- Review our ISO system manuals
- Revise our company attack plan
- Final review/proof of my book (My Road to China)
- Write a short story for a radio program I like to listen to

I am not tired yet, hopefully that will come soon. I had a nap today and woke myself up from my own snoring. How strange is that? It is not the first time and it is also good I did not sleep too long. I am also looking forward to my trip to Florida next weekend - some sun, golf, tennis, swimming, writing, working, eating and sleeping.

1/9/06

We have a customer who wants us to set-up a website where we can sell his handle assemblies utilizing a part we would make with our new injection molded metal/plastic material. We would buy some of the components from him, set-up the rest ourselves, package it and sell it via the web. It sounds exciting and just the type of area I want to go into to.

Lucent Technologies (now Alcatel-Lucent) is also interested in these metal/plastic materials and has offered to help us get set-up and check our samples. It appears that injection molding will be a much more cost effective way to manufacture a great many telecom parts so we will pursue this area vigorously. The proposed CNC machine, machining center and injection molding line in New Jersey, augmenting the one already running in IJX, will fit into this plan nicely.

My editor called today and gave me an odd compliment. When I asked if she liked this book she said it was better than the last one. She said it was also good to see someone decided to do something, like put the plant into China and then carry through.

Dave Williams said the same thing to me when he was trying to find us joint venture partners. People don't see what we see; to them the dangers far outrun the possible benefits and they would rather wait. I want to move quickly and get to a new market first. I guess I am unusual in that regard. I wonder if this new area will work and where it will go.

1/10/06

New Jersey - Home

Vinnie and I spoke and he is in agreement with all of the new plans including moving out the imprinting equipment, putting in an injection molding and CNC.

Alice seems fine and getting along well with Ben. I think she is on her way to Bangkok with her husband, Mel.

Our part time salesman will probably become full time in the next few weeks. I have never had any luck with salesman; maybe this time will be different.

We should have our first injection molded plastic panel sample in about 2 weeks. I can't wait to see it. I got word from the man I wanted to see in Nogales that we are on for the meeting. It has been a good day. I am on the final edit for my book. Then it goes back to the editor for one more glance for typos, then sent to Ben and finally my Dad. We are scheduled to start launching our new products in February. Then it is back on the road part-time until summer. In a way I am glad that my daughter Kayla is not involved with the local softball team this year, in another I am not. I loved being with her but it was tough game and practice schedule. The road is calling and I will answer.

1/13/06 - 10:33PM

New Jersey - Home

I got an email from Ben today. It seems that one of the employees from our tenant in China has been throwing his weight around with our Asian staff and is over utilizing our driver and car. If it has reached the point that Ben is actually asking for my help then it must really be bad because he never complains. I emailed the President of the company in the United States and told him the situation had to change immediately and maybe they should buy or lease their own car. Since the tenant is still a good customer I had to tread somewhat lightly but I was strong enough for him to know I was serious.

My son Ben is home from Israel. He had a great trip and leaves for college on Sunday. It has been good to see him; I love him a lot. We don't get to spend a lot of time together but the bond is strong and I am very proud of him.

My tennis injuries are mounting. It is good I am traveling Sunday-Tuesday. It will give my body a chance to rest and mend. I find it hard not to exercise when I am home as the thought of becoming overweight, a residual fear from my youth, is much stronger than having to deal with the pain from the resulting problems from the over-use of my body.

1/15/06

10:49AM EST

In Flight to Houston

I started out the day getting up at 5:00AM to shovel the driveway from last night's snow/ice storm. I had to get it done before going to play tennis with my brother because I am going to Mexico later this morning. It was a beautiful early morning when I got outside to the driveway. It was still dark. The air was very crisp but not overly cold. I got to work with my new shovel. It was being taxed by the combination of ice and snow so I utilized my large ice chopper to break up a majority of the mixture first and then gather it later with the shovel. I felt bad about making the noise since it was still early but I had no choice as I had to leave for the airport directly from tennis and would not be back to the house. I was not sure if the cars would be able to get up the driveway if I had not shoveled so I attacked the ice and snow with the time I had.

Tennis with Ira was fun but my injuries were bothering me. We are currently on our way to Houston but are running late and I doubt if I will make my connection to Guadalajara, Mexico. There are however, later flights so I will get there eventually sometime today.

I have a great deal of work to do and it doesn't matter where I do it so I am reasonably calm.

My initial reason to go to Mexico was for a piece of business that we were fighting for against one of our main international competitors. In the meantime, however, our situation has changed and I probably will let the business go to the lowest bidder and we will move onto the new niche area that I have been describing. We cannot be everywhere and have to pick our own spots to concentrate our marketing efforts. I do not plan on fighting for unprofitable business but it is tough to give up even when you feel there is something much better on the horizon.

I originally was going to Solectron in Guadalajara to set-up a depot to house our products if necessary to try and ward off the international competitor. Instead, I will go to see how much business is actually involved, what we have to do to keep it and if it is worth our efforts to try and hold on to it. Perhaps we have not been getting the true story about how things are operating there. Therefore, I will wait until after talking to them before making any decisions or plans.

I don't want to tip off the market as to our plans for the composite material until we are ready to launch. We will go after the small and medium-sized market first and leave the big companies for after we prove ourselves.

1/15/06

3:26 PM EST

In Flight

I made my connecting flight and am on my way to Guadalajara. So far so good and everything is fine. We are a little late but no big deal; I still have hopes for a walk, a swim, dinner and a good night's sleep.

1/15/06

7:54 AM CST

Intercontinental Hotel - Guadalajara, Mexico

I got to Guadalajara with no trouble and the people here have been very nice. I got a cab at the airport driven by a man named Armando. An effervescent lover of life, we hit it off immediately after my feeble attempts at speaking Spanish with him. We had a nice talk during the ride to the hotel and as promised the Intercontinental is a very nice place. It was very warm this afternoon close to 80°F. I had thoughts of getting in a swim but the combination of fatigue, hunger, and lack of a bathrobe or sandals knocked out that idea.

I went to one of the hotel restaurants that had a great buffet and then stopped by the pool on the way up to my room to sit for a while in the cool evening air. Armando will pick me up tomorrow morning and we will go to Solectron and if there is extra time to meet maybe one other customer. Then it is off to the airport and on to Tucson where I will be met by a driver to take me to my hotel.

For now I will be up for a while. I got some email from Ben I need to answer.

1:15 PM CST

I got up at 4:45 this morning and it was it was beautiful. I began exercising and finished it with walking along the outside pool area. It was cool, early morning, still dark with a clear sky over looking the sleeping city. I spent part of the time walking and listening to music. The balance of my time was spent practicing for my lecture that I am giving at our local university next month.

As per my usual ritual I had breakfast in my room with food I had brought through customs with some trepidation. The customs form coming into Mexico asked if I was carrying food. I answered the box yes figuring it would trigger a bag search but I really wanted my various food staples and did not feel like throwing them away. Once I got to the baggage area it was chaos with only one customs agent on hand. She was so frazzled by the time I got there that she passed me right through. The end result being is that I still have some of my food left and will have to decide whether to bring it back into US. I am not doing anything wrong I am just not sure I will want the hassle of the extra time not declaring the food by the end of the day.

Armando, my taxi driver, was waiting for me when I got down to the lobby and we started out to Solectron. Once we got there he was a great aid as my translator to help me find the various people I needed to see. One of the reasons for my journey was to see if there was indeed a chance for business here and whether it was worthwhile to go after it. The people I met seemed happy to do business and their main concern has been that we were not a local supplier. I offered to put six months or a year's worth of inventory into their local warehouse that they did not have to pay for until they used it. This made them very happy and there now seems to be no problem.

Dealing with Lucent Technologies can be difficult and my offers of aid to their various suppliers for help in obtaining CAD drawings and finding people to help answer questions seems to make a big difference. We also had some other customers in common where we might be of assistance so I left the meeting feeling very glad I had come.

It was during this set of sales call I began to hear a strange buzzing sound coming out of my laptop bag. I could not figure out what it was and I started to get very worried that someone had planted a small bomb in my case. After some frantic searching it turned out to be my electric toothbrush and as I wrestled with it in the waiting room trying to turn it off, the buyer I was meeting came in and became hysterical as I told her what happened.

I will submit a formal proposal regarding stockpiling our inventory in their storage area later in the week. Since we normally over-run all orders anyway sending in additional inventory for us is not a big deal and is seemingly a great solution to this situation. We can also offer them our standard free artwork, no set-up charges, no tooling charges and no stocking charges so I think we have a decent chance at holding the business we have and gaining more. This visit alone made the whole trip worthwhile.

I had the time and wanted to go visit Sanmina-SCI but I was not sure where it was so I took the chance and called one of their employees in the United States who gave me the contact information. Armando drove me to the building and I actually got to see the man in charge of the labels. What a great trip this has been.

Throughout my whole time here the Mexican people have been extremely pleasant and I am happy I could keep them continually entertained by my sincere, but pathetic attempts at speaking their language. I did however sense progress as the hours passed and I do feel I could become decent at speaking Spanish if given enough practice.

I am now in the waiting room of the Guadalajara airport waiting for my plane to Houston and then onto Arizona. I am scheduled to land about 7:30PM, let's see what happens.

1/15/06

8:38PM CST

Houston Airport

We were supposed to have taken off about three hours ago but due to a combination of mechanical difficulties and weather we are still sitting on the tarmac. The good news is that we will hopefully make it into the air. If not I will abort my call for tomorrow and just fly home. More good news is that I am not missing a connecting flight and I have been extremely lucky in my travels for quite a while and if trouble was going to hit, this was as good a place as any. I will try and stay patient. It also gives me a chance to email with Ben in China so at least that is a good thing. In the meantime, I will try to edit and write, listen to music and burn calories mentally. I wonder if that works? It will probably be a short night's sleep tonight but I will have at least one nap in the cab tomorrow to Nogales, Mexico.

It is interesting being on a flight with a long delay. Most of the passengers accept the situation and are calm, good-natured and try to get along. It is a testament to the goodness of people that they can pull together in situations like this and remain civilized and not degrade to an unruly crowd.

10:31PM EST

We are finally in the air running about five hours late. The good news is I finished a good part of the editing for my book. Now we have to get the cover design finalized and have one more formal proofreading done by someone other than me.

Unfortunately, over the last five hours the pilots did not tell us what was going on and after all that time of frustration the camaraderie of the passengers evaporated and people are now angry. It is a good lesson that even when you have no updates, just letting people know that you are trying and nothing has changed it will make a world of difference. All people often need to hear is that you are making an effort and they will stay with you.

We should be landing in Tucson about 12:00AM Central time and I hope I still have a taxi ride and a hotel room. My revised plan for the evening will be to order a salad and fruit from room service, exercise a little to loosen up my cramped body, take a shower and get some sleep. Tomorrow I am still scheduled to go to Mexico but I plan to sleep as much of the taxi ride both ways as possible. Now I am really glad I am not driving myself.

I really liked Guadalajara; I wonder how I will like Nogales.

I do not think there is any chance of getting an earlier flight home tomorrow after I get back to Tucson so I should get back to New Jersey about midnight and home by 12:30AM. I will take a quick shower and get a few hours of sleep, wake up at my normal 4:00AM and start my

day. I am sure there will be many emails to catch up on and it will be great to have Alice back from her Asian trip. I look forward to my normal routine.

Being on the road is very stimulating in short bursts but I don't know how the people do it all the time. There are many who stay out of the office continuously for months. The pace is grueling and the burn-out rate must be very high.

1/17/06

8:10AM MST

I am on my way to Nogales, Mexico with my new driver, Mike. I got to my hotel room about 1:00 AM and finally fell asleep around 2:30. I chalk it up to leveling the odds. Most of my flights have been so good lately that I was due for something to happen. This was a good place since I did not have an appointment or a connecting flight. I got up at 4:45AM to exercise and contrary to normal procedure, I did not eat in my room but ate at the hotel restaurant, which turned out to be excellent.

Mike was on time and we are now on our way to the border and just passed a bunch of cactus. In conversation Mike pointed out some of the more rare cacti. For a man from New Jersey they all look interesting but I will stay focused on my call for this morning. As it turns out not many taxi drivers want to cross the border into Mexico so I will have to switch to another cab that is manned by a man named Oscar who allegedly speaks some English. Since I speak some Spanish he should have a great time laughing as I try to communicate. This will be another one of my bids to foster international relations always trying to help the other guy with a laugh.

I spoke to Alice this morning and she had a great trip to Asia and is ready for more. I am glad she went with her husband Mel not only for companionship and protection but also because he is great in usual situations and is a good person to have around anytime.

Arizona is currently very dry. It is supposed to be the wet season but there is a drought and things look brown. They had very little rain since September. It is amazing that anything can grow at all in conditions like this. Typically July and August get a lot of precipitation and more in the fall and early winter but there has been very little this year. We are passing some active copper mines. I mistook the land that they dug out for a small mountain range; it is amazing what can be done with big machines.

I woke up this morning and it was 30F, a lot colder than I thought it would be but I was prepared from living in New Jersey so that my morning walk was pleasant, especially watching the dawn come over the incredibly clear skyline.

I think my sore back is getting better because the pain has started

to move and usually when this happens it is a sign I am back on the road to recovery. I'm thrilled about this because I am slated to play tennis tomorrow morning.

The Santa Rita Mountains just came into view and they are pretty.

Good news! We just got the phone number for Oscar, the driver who will take me across the border. I'll see if he's available to drive me.

1/17/06

1:19PM MST

I am in Tucson Airport. It was all a wild time. Mike and I got to the border early, he parked and we walked across to Mexico a few blocks from the arrival area because Oscar, whom had been contacted, could not go to the taxi stand because he was not waiting in the formal line. Mike left me in Oscar's capable hands and he and I went off looking for Motorola. He got me to the right building but unfortunately we could not locate the person I was trying to see. Time was ticking by and my appointment time was fast approaching. But we eventually did locate him and I ended up seeing two people instead of one. I spoke with the customers about what our company could offer. We were already doing business with some of their other groups and had all of the necessary certifications. Hopefully they will consider us for more business.

Our company will have to go through a qualification process and would probably initiate a program where we stored six months or a years worth of materials in their own assembly centers and they paid us as they used them. I offered to make them some free prototypes that they accepted; we should get some drawings by next week. They were also going to send us some names of other people to contact in order to become a world-approved supplier for them. I also showed them our new metal/plastic composite products and they seemed interested so I will send samples as soon as they are ready.

This was a great meeting and I left with the feeling of positive potential for the future. Oscar drove me back to the border crossing. I felt a little out of place being in a suit and carrying a computer amongst the local residents of the area. I truthfully felt a little uneasy until I got to the other side of the border where Mike was waiting for me.

We stopped to get some lunch and then he brought me back to the airport where he had picked me up about 12 hours earlier. Arizona is pretty and I would have no problem going back to Nogales if the potential for business is there. If I travel to this area in the future I will try to use Mike and Oscar again.

1/21/06

4:41 PM EST

Lake Worth, Florida

I got down here yesterday, visiting my fabulous in-laws and have so

far spent the day eating, playing tennis and playing golf. The weather has been sunny and about 80° F.

The stock market plunged over 200 points yesterday and people are blaming oil prices, the problems with Iran and numerous other things. Regardless of the reasons behind this recent drop, it is obvious the world is feeling the stresses from many areas.

This is an email I sent to our senior staff:

Hi everyone,

You probably noticed the US stock market went down a lot yesterday over fears about everything. I just wanted to give the following optimistic view of the world situation.

1. Oil prices will be rising

This is true but it also means that it will cost more to move goods around the world. This means regional suppliers will have an actual and mental advantage for buyers to stay local. Since we have two locations it will help us to stay in the “high use” category.

2. The world economy will slow down because of the fuel and worldwide political problems.

Another possible very good thing for us is those companies with very high levels of infrastructure and overhead like a few of our competitors will begin to have much greater problems as the market tightens. We should be free to ebb and flow with the market as needed.

3. There will be less business to get.

In my experience, tough times are those when our abilities, brains and willingness to try new things enable us to capture much more market share than “normal” times.

In other words, having a world full of stress, unknowns and difficult situations is where we react best. We have to be concerned but also happy since this is a world we where can succeed at the fastest pace and the highest levels.

We have assembled a fantastic team and I believe we are ready.

In other events - we just got our ISO 14001 Registration in China. This is a great event for them. They are now one of the few formally recognized companies in China with an accepted Environmental Management System (EMS).

1/22/06

1:45PM EST

I got up this morning in the beautiful Florida weather and after breakfast and exercising I went to play tennis with some friends of

my mother-in-law's. I figured that the people would be a generation older than me so I was prepared for some nice fun tennis with no killer playing or stressful workout. The three other people in our group included two women and a man. They were all good players and it was a lot of fun. We eventually got rained out but the precipitation was short lived so I went back to the apartment and then went swimming. The sun was out at the time but the breeze was constant which looked magnificent through the waving leaves of the palm trees. I later went back to our apartment and hung out until my father-in-law drove me to the airport where I sit ready to go back home.

I have to pickup dinner on the way home and plan on nothing more athletic than working on my lecture, reading, snacking and getting home to my wonderful family. My niece and her boyfriend just announced their engagement and there is a party today for her twenty-fifth birthday in New York City so I should see my wife and daughter later today after they return. When I come tomorrow I will catch up on what Friday's events and hopefully start getting in the samples from our new injection molding process. We have to move quickly on finding a CNC machine that we will need to modify the blank panels we produce and help launch this new product line quickly. All of our staff is ready. We just have to make sure that we have the necessary equipment, technology and ability to work on new projects as they arise. The last thing I want to do is put people on hold who are interested in doing business with us.

1/22/06

9:44 PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Our ISO 14001 re-certification process begins in two days. Once approved, we will go to the new standard. I now plan to go to Europe the first full week of March and Asia during the third week. There will be a party for Jess and Joe the last weekend so I need to be back for that. During the month of February I will lecture once a week at our local university as well. I like to be busy.

1/29/06

9:43PM

We got the next group of front panel samples from China with the metal/plastic material and they continue to look good. We have multiple customers interested and are now waiting for their drawings so we can make actual samples. My new book should be out by March and then I can use it to help sell these new parts. As of now I will got to the Netherlands during the first full week of March, probably Germany, England and maybe Ireland. Later it will be Asia. We must deploy quickly but as quietly as possible so our competition does not

find out what we are doing until we are already doing it.

We have been offered the chance at more business in Ottawa, Canada but I don't think I can go right up there since I am being issued a new passport. We may send our salesman or one of the guys from the office. I will discuss this more with them tomorrow.

Sales for the month have been good which means more profits but also more taxes. Our debt is under a million dollars but it is bothering me. We have to reduce it as soon as possible for my peace of mind. It is hard to talk about reducing debt when we are launching a new product line, putting in new equipment to help IJX and probably lose of one of our better customers. Still, it really doesn't matter; we have to do it and we have to do it now. I will try to keep my worrying in its proper place.

Just payroll alone, without me, is closing in on \$2,000,000 per year and our overhead is high, I hope this gamble pays off.

1/30/06

9:57PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Our industry is not that big and when someone gets hired or fired we usually eventually hear about it. An old time salesmen from one of our competitors got let go and wants to discuss the possibility of working for Ideal Jacobs. His contacts must be unbelievable and I am happy to talk to him. One thing that ran through my mind was if he was fired from his last job it may have been for good reason.

A bunch of us are going to Canada next week; there is business to be had and we want it!

1/31/06

9:51PM Home New Jersey

We will now have four people at the meetings in Canada including our salesman, Vinnie and Mike Valentine. Mike has been doing a great job and I am trying to give him more responsibility to see how much he can handle.

Alice is in Turkey. It is her eldest son's wedding (he married a very nice woman from there) and they are all having a great time. I want her back. Our staff is doing great and I hope business continues to get better so we can hire more people. No word yet on the CNC machine but we have a good prospect.

My tennis partners are all improving and I am having trouble keeping up but the workouts are great for my body and the losing is good for keeping my ego in line. I sent a copy of the galleys for my new book to Mom and Dad so they could make any changes and did the same for my business partner, Ben Meng. It is coming down to the wire to go to press. It will be good to have this project completed.

Chapter Two

2/1/06

9:41PM

New Jersey (Home)

Al comes home tomorrow and I look forward to her return, I count on her counsel and I need her back here. I teach the first part of my course tomorrow and I am nervous. Anna (former student and now an employee) will be there with coffee and bagels, as I requested so I hope all goes well. It will also be a good chance to help train her.

We have an employee who is perpetually late and I am going to have to fire her. It is not a pleasant task but I am pretty sure it will have to be done.

2/2/06

9:51PM

New Jersey (Home)

We called one of our contacts at Motorola and asked them if they would be interested in converting some of their metal parts to our new metal/plastic injection molded composite material (MPIMC). While he might have interest in the future, he was more interested in having us to source a vendor in China to make his metal parts. Doing this kind of metal work, through IJX in China, could be a welcome addition to our product line and a good source of new sales. We might even consider putting in fabrication equipment into China if enough business is generated. The new CNC machine we are putting in can work with steel as well as the MPIMC material.

Our customer who moved into our space in China called to say they were moving more business from the US to China. They still do not seem to know or care about the injection molding research we are conducting, maybe they think we are incapable of moving into this new area.

Business seems to be a little slower but I will try not to panic too soon. Alice is back from Turkey. She looks great and is happy to be home.

I am still trying to set-up my next trip to Europe, I am not sure if I will go into Lucent or not. Our Underwriters Laboratories representative called to say we are now accepted to make labels for both types of the MPIMC material so at this point I believe we are the only company in the world who can do it. The advantage being that if any company uses these materials we are the only label company accepted to make labels to adhere to them.

My first teaching class for this semester at Kean University seemed to go well. There appears to be one potential employee there, we shall see.

2/6/06
9:52PM

I was just emailing with Ben in China. We are probably going to bring both Claire and Rosalyn, two IJX employees, over here to train in our pre-press area. There is no way that Mike from IJUS can go over to China and do all the training needed in one week. This way the two girls can get two weeks of intensive instruction here by our whole staff. They need the capability in Xiamen to be able to do their own art masters and get jobs ready for press and this is the fastest way for that to happen.

I am writing to other Performance Track Participants Association members tomorrow to offer the small business newsletter which I write, as the vehicle to which we can offer our response to the growing tide of people saying our program is not doing as it advertises. Critics are saying that the Performance Track Program is full of companies who are not completing their commitments and using the incentives to avoid inspections which allow them to pollute. I am interested in their reaction to see if they will let me do it. I am going to the aid of EPA, I like the idea. I think it is a good program.

One of the former heads of the EPA, Christine Todd Whitman, is under attack for saying that the area around Ground Zero from the 9/11 attacks was safe to live in. She is being personally sued and I think it is ridiculous. Being paranoid I will keep my thoughts about the Bush Administration and their part in this debacle mostly to myself. I think she is being railroaded and I hope she comes out of it okay.

I am supposed to have lunch with my friend John Rudder tomorrow.

I fired another employee, a press operator, on Friday that makes two people in the last two months. Actually, I laid them off, not fired them, but it amounts to the same thing. I do not like doing it but it had to be done.

2/8/06
5:10AM

Newark, Liberty Airport

I got my new leased car yesterday. A Lexus Hybrid and it is really cool. It will probably take a few months to figure everything out, especially since it's difficult to keep up with all the new technology these days. Still, the car is great and I'm already having fun.

I met Vinnie early at the office and we met up with Mike at the airport. One unfortunate thing, Vinnie forgot he had a small pocketknife with him that got confiscated at the security area. The tally thus far for the increased security is one knife for Vinnie, unfortunately a family heirloom, and three Swiss Army knives for me. To whoever gets all this cutting power I hope it services you well. Although I can't think that we would have been much of a threat with them I can still see why they are prohibited. Speaking of security, it is tight and I never mess

around with the people involved. All I want to do is get through to my plane. It is amazing that security has become one of the great stress points of traveling.

We are going to Sanmina-SCI in Ottawa and if that ends early enough we have another call in Montreal before we come home. If all works well I will be home by 9:00 tonight, but for now we are in the hands of fate and we shall see where it leads us.

We should be getting samples of the MPIMC material this week from IJX and I will send one to the material manufacturers to keep them in the loop. So far everything is going forward, once the compliance tests are done at one of our customers then we can really see how much this new process appeals to potential customers.

2/8/06

4:31PM

Montreal Airport

We went to Sanmina-SCI and also saw people from one other customer. They all seemed happy with us and were especially pleased with our offers to not charge for their artwork, tooling, set-ups and inventory their products for free. We also offered to put our stock into their facility so they could pay for it as they use it. Finally they were also excited about the idea of the MPIMC material and converting a bunch of their parts. Drawings for parts that can be converted are supposed to start coming to us in a few days. We are due back in Newark at about 7:30 and so far we are on time. Mike and Vinnie all did very well and I am confident that they can handle themselves without me.

2/11/06

11:10PM

New Jersey

It is snowing for the first time in weeks. Tonight it looks like a big storm and I am ready to shovel tomorrow morning. Our snow blower is in position in our yard and we are set to roll as needed.

The new CNC machine was brought in yesterday and should be powered up this week. One of our new prototypes of the new MPIMC material did not perform as expected. It is highly unfortunate and we have to find out the problem before trying any more.

Still the possibilities are becoming even bigger and the excitement is growing.

Billing at this moment is ahead of last year. We need more money to cover my taxes; hopefully it will be coming. The new film processor should be in this week and we will make an office for Vinnie in the room that used to handle our product imprint center. We are officially out of the imprinting business; it is the right time to make this transition.

I am now scheduled to go to Europe during the first week of

March. Ben, Claire and Rosalyn should be here during the middle two weeks of March; it will be fun having them here. I am excited about the product launch and my new book coming out in the spring.

2/13/06

9:46PM

New Jersey (Home)

We got formal UL approval for both types of MPIMC material. One is twice the price of the other but we will try them both.

Tomorrow is Valentine's Day. Flowers for Wendy and Kayla are already preplanned. There are two cards for Wendy upstairs and I don't think I need to do anything else. My 50th birthday is Thursday and my party is at the end of the month. This Saturday we will be going to the Berkshires for the weekend and I will spend Sunday lunch and afternoon with my Father-in-law. Business is fine, we could use more money but since we have been growing a cash crunch it is not unusual. Everything is pointing towards good things happening, Ben is coming in from China and I want to take him to see the customer in Massachusetts who rents space from us in China. I also want to take him to some other clients but we will have to see how the timing goes.

March looks to be very busy with Europe, New England and Asia. The twenty-second snow fall of this season happened last Sunday and is now history but I am still sore from shoveling. Tennis was tough this morning but will hopefully be a little easier tomorrow. My new car is awesome. We have inquires from another potentially giant customer for the MPIMC material, the possibilities are amazing.

2/14/06

9:38PM

New Jersey (Home)

Valentine's Day, I am a very fortunate man.

I am getting the feeling all I need to do sometimes is get out of the way of the people who are with me so they can do their jobs and get things done. If I hire people better than I am then I should let them do their jobs. Sometimes easier said than done but I will keep trying. Vinnie is working on the CNC machine along with Dave and the new film processor unit will be in this week.

Things seem to be moving along well except for the ever present wave of nerves in my stomach. With taxes coming due, I will probably be in debt almost \$900,000.00 by the end of March unless we start collecting more money. We have to be ready to pay for more tooling as I won't charge the customers for some of the injection molds, one of our big selling points, so it will mean more money from us up front. But I feel that the tooling is a major issue and if we negate the problem then

the whole market opens up for us.

More tests with the MPIMC materials, each type has its strengths and weaknesses. I am not bored.

2/21/06

9:50PM

New Jersey (Home)

Some companies are talking about partnering with us; I will believe it when I see something concrete.

My 50th birthday party is coming up and I need to figure out what to say, here is what I have so far:

Thank you all for coming. That you were invited means that you mean a great deal to me and are very important in my life. The fact that you actually came reinforces this even more. I would like to say how proud I am of our three children Kayla, Alex and Ben. I know I say it to you all the time but I am continually in awe of all three of you. You are all good, kindhearted wonderful people and it is an honor to be your Dad.

You know being 50 years old is a milestone in a person's life. It makes you want to think back to all of the things you have done, mistakes and triumphs and wonder if it has been the road you wanted to travel.

When I was in high school and staring up at the ceiling in our old house in West Orange trying to figure out what to do with my life, I decided I wanted to help people. To do that I figured you had to be trusted and I looked around and realized the most trusted man was Walter Cronkite, head of the CBS network news. His career made me decide to try for broadcast journalism. However, to help people you need power and the most powerful person was president of the United States so I decided I would be president. And I also wanted to be a publisher because I thought it would be fun.

Well, I am not a broadcaster, and as you all probably know I have promised my wife I would not become president of the United States, of course the job for emperor of the world is still open for discussion and in a way I have become a publisher. Those dreams are what launched me forward. True, some of the nuts and bolts did not go as I thought, but what I really wanted was an incredible career, freedom to do as I thought best, the willingness to take chances and have a wonderful family. This I do have which brings me to my wife.

In 2000 I decided we needed to go into manufacturing and I told my wife we were going to put in a plant and I would need a bank loan. She said she thought it was a good idea, had total faith in me and said go for it. She never wavered in her support

and never doubted my ideas or me for a second.

Things worked out well and we were out of debt in less than eighteen months. A little over a year ago I came back to her and said we needed to put a plant into China. She said go for it and never blinked even when the bank made us sign a lean on our house for the money because they did not think a loan in China was a good risk. She never faltered, never doubted me and never, ever thought my ventures would not be successful.

She is what I truly wanted which is why I dedicated my latest book to her. By the way you all have a signed copy in your goody bag along with a Tootsie Pop.

Anyway the dedication goes like this:

To my wife Wendy,

You are the rock from which I leap, without you I fall short, with you the sun is within my grasp. We move forward together.

*Love always,
Andrew*

I would not have wanted to do this without you, thanks for everything including this party and I love you.

2/26/06

10:36PM

New Jersey (Home)

My new book came out last Friday and it seems pretty good. We have already started handing them out and it will probably take about six months to fully distribute them. I am excited both to be done and the good effect they will have and keep people interested in the life of our company and me. My eldest son Ben is home for my party and his new music CD is good and I have ordered 100 for distribution to my customers but he may not sell them to me because it is for commercial purposes. He is an idealist in some ways. It is truly wonderful but something I feel will wear away for the future. In my case if I have something to sell and someone wants to buy it then that is enough for me. I think his music is good and my customers, friends and suppliers will like it. I hope Ben agrees to sell them to me.

It is wonderful having him home. We are trying to help him keep his car but due to three accidents in the last two years his insurance problems are adding greatly to our insurance bills and I am not sure we can swing it. If not then he will have to take out the insurance on his own.

Business has been good and we are ahead of last year. The new

area for the plastic assembly panels seems to also be moving along well. One of our customers plans to do compliance testing that will take about two months and then we will get a definite idea of whether our new system will work and how far it can go.

Other potential customers are showing interest and we are starting to give out prices although we are somewhat in the dark on the actual costs. If our philosophy of no mold charges work we should have a lot of good business soon, if not it may take longer or not work at all. I leave for Europe next week and I am excited to be back on the road. Our salesman is good to have around as he is an engineer and I am trying to absorb as much information as possible regarding the panel area.

Tomorrow is my birthday party and I am not sure if it will be a roast or toast, probably a mixture but I hope it will be fun for everyone. First though, it is tennis with my brother and then maybe a walk before the party starts.

Alex is back from Italy with his grandmother. They had a great time. It is good to have him home.

2/27/06

One of our employees may have cancer which means she needs to stay on our medical plan. I fired her husband but hired her daughter. I will try to have her stay on and keep her insurance. I hope her husband gets a job soon so I can cut back on her overtime, she is costing a lot but I want her to be able to keep her medical insurance and she must be able to afford it.

It was not the easiest day, the new film processing machine is not working right, we have decided it is not a good investment and want it removed from our premises but the guy who sold it to us is not willing to take it back. This is a lousy, potentially expensive situation. The CNC machine has no operator yet and we have to find someone.

My eldest son Ben can keep his insurance for his car but it means changes and it will cost a lot. My taxes for last year and the first quarter will probably be more money than we have on hand so we will have to go to the credit line. More debt, more pressure. I spoke to one of the salespeople for our customer who is renting our space in China. The company we are trying to partner with on this panel area seems not to want to partner with us. If it keeps on like this then we will go after the small and medium customers ourselves and leave the big ones for everyone else.

Our plans are moving forward. I just have to be willing to take on more debt before the profits come. The preliminary buzz on my latest book "My Road to China" is good; we are sending them out into the world and are also marketing the new product line at the same time. Everything appears to be ready, it is up to us to execute. We now have chances at some new companies with more coming. I think we can sell

25-30 % below the market price and make money.

I look forward to being back on the road on Sunday; I miss the thrill and the chances of new adventures. Being away for a short time is good, although I get homesick the second I leave. My 50th birthday party is over, and it was a lot of fun and brought back some great memories.

Notes:

Chapter Three

3/2/06

Thursday, 5:10AM

I listen to tapes of my mentor, Jean Shepherd, on the way to work. It doesn't matter his radio programs are over thirty years old. It is like he is still talking to me, and what he said almost always seems relevant. He was an amazing man and I am glad I can share, for a few minutes on most mornings, his wisdom, humor and views of the world. It is due to snow here today. First, I will play tennis and then shovel. My snow blower is ready and waiting if I need the help.

The first two months of sales have been very good and ahead of last year. Often my mood can shift based on my weight – examples of my unusual personality. I have to pay my taxes soon, which means more debt. I must keep my eye on the possibilities of the future. The debt will be wiped out quickly if my views are correct. When the debt is gone, I promised my family a vacation, which they will greatly deserve.

3/2/06

Thursday, 9:53PM

New Jersey – Home

Response to my new book continues to be good. We are sending a lot of them out, which cramps my hand after signing so many, but it is a “fun pain.” Many of them will have data sheets and samples of the new product line. While I will be in Asia, my mom is having an operation at the end of the month. I hope she will be okay.

3/5/06

Sunday, 6:08AM

Newark Liberty Airport, New Jersey.

I am in the gate area for my flight to London. We are on schedule to arrive about nine o'clock in the evening, their time. I then plan to go to my hotel and have dinner with my niece, Rebecca, who is spending a semester in London. I am excited to see her; I hope she is having a wonderful time there.

So far, so good; I got through check-in and security with no problems. I am ready for a new adventure. Over the last few days a lot has happened. On a humorous note, after roasting/toasting me at my fiftieth birthday party last Sunday, my wife is already looking for new material for my sixtieth. It did not take long to start giving her new ammunition, but I could not help myself. Wednesdays are usually date nights for us, and last week was no different. It is not usually anything fancy, just a quick meeting to be together, catch up, and be away from our wonderful kids. We had decided to meet at one of our local diners, a favorite of ours,

where we had turkey burgers and I ordered a Greek Salad.

Now, I mention the Greek Salad only because it comes with olives. I know many people love olives but I personally can't stand them. As soon as I see them, I usually pass them to my wife. If she is not in the mood, I push them to the side of my plate. Since this was a big salad, I thought about taking some home so I transferred part of the salad to another plate. In the transition, one of the olives appeared to jump off my plate and bounce onto the floor beneath me. Now, I am always worried about people slipping on things, which is probably part of my obsessive compulsive behavior, coupled by my OSHA health and safety training. Anyway, I started looking for the olive but I could not find it.

After we had left and went a few stores up to the supermarket, I mentioned I was going back to the diner to tell the manager about the dropped olive, to make sure it was found so no one slipped on it. My wife looked at me and said I was being ridiculous. She specifically told me to go home and stop worrying about such things. I agreed, but sure enough, as soon as we passed the restaurant again, I went in and told the busboy about the olive. He said he would take care of it, although I did detect that "are you crazy" look from him as I left. As I was walking to my car, I noticed another car that looked very much like my wife's, and sure enough she was parked in front of me. As I came near, she rolled down her window and yelled that she could not believe I had gone back to find the olive. We both laughed, and she thanked me for another great story for my birthday. I do love that woman.

We have gotten a request for using our new metal/plastic material to take the place of a "metal assembly." This means we will be in competition with one of our biggest customers who makes these kinds of parts. I was hoping to avoid such a direct confrontation for at least a while, but that does not seem to be possible now. We will submit our prices to see how we do against the all-metal version.

A little while later I got a call from the president of the metal company I just mentioned. He had heard what we were doing, and was calling to see if my company was going into the injection molding area. I told him yes and offered to partner with him. Again, he declined my invitation. They are still renting space from us in China and are just about ready to start shipping product there. This is rapidly turning into a very strange scenario. We are scheduled to be at their plant in Massachusetts a week from Monday, and it is going to be a long meeting. I would much rather work with them, obviously, than against them, but I will not give up this new area. I think it is the key to a lot of profitable business, and I want a chance at it. I know they need us both as a label supplier and the fact that we are their landlord in China. I would rather not play hardball, unless it is absolutely necessary. Why can't they just see the market that I do? Can I be so mistaken? We will keep moving forward on all fronts; if we stop doing business with

them then we will need to replace the sales as quickly as possible.

We had dinner with the Cohen's last night. Dan and Elana have been friends for years, and I love them dearly. He is also our Rabbi, and an unusual man who deals from a totally different viewpoint than me. He is an intellectual, and a great man. Like Wendy is for me, his wife is his "home base," the person who keeps everything together. He is lucky to have her and he knows this. Besides having a keen mind, his wife is also very good looking, so any time spent with them is always a pleasure. It is a funny thing about men; we can be such basic beings in so many ways. Feed us, keep us safe, warm and be nice to us, and we will usually be happy. Of course, there are the eccentric, crazy people like me who continue to think about being emperor of the world, but it is a position I probably would not really want, at least not now.

In this waiting room, they have music piped in that is too loud. The volume level on a nearby television is too high. I have my sound deadening earphones on, to try and block some of the noise. I hope my brother had a good time in Florida. He and his wife left last Monday, and I think they come back today. He needed some time away to heal his tennis injuries. It is the same in my case, as I will not play tennis until Thursday morning, which will give me a chance to rest some of my body parts, as well. I have my bathing suit and goggles ready, but I doubt I will have a chance to use them.

We should be boarding in about an hour. I will relax once we are in the plane, flying. Until then, I am not sure I can hold off eating my breakfast but I will try. I have oatmeal with me, and will supplement it from what the airline gives us. It is only a seven hour flight so theoretically, if I eat in the first hour, I will need to refuel in about five hours, which is fine since I have extra food with me.

It seems that our automobile insurance and family umbrella liability policy are finally settled regarding my son's car. That is a very good thing.

Last week, I had lunch with my friend Alan Holzman. His wife had a major operation and is still recovering. I have been praying for her and hope she is better, and the rest of the family is also okay. Life can be very fragile.

Yesterday, Kayla spent a lot of time with her cousin Jessica and her fiancé Joe. She was helping them paint a room in their house. Kayla is so great. I truly love my daughter and would think the world of her whether I was related to her or not. She is a good person and has a wild sense of humor. She is turning into a very pretty young woman, which means I will soon have to deal with boys. That will not be easy.

I decided to eat breakfast and took two pills for my headache. We should be boarding in about twenty minutes, finally.

3/5/06

Sunday, 10:04AM EST (3:06PM London time) - In Flight

We are 33,000 feet over the Atlantic Ocean, flying at a speed of 622 miles per hour, with less than five hours to go.

I have been thinking about how to price our new materials. Since we do not charge for set-ups, tooling, molds, artwork or design, I believe we should have a substantial advantage in cost when going against all-metal versions. We figure we have about twenty-four months before more people are in this area. Unless they are forced by market conditions, most won't go near the small and medium runs without tooling charges. Therefore, I think we have a great path. I don't just want to sell panels, or panels with labels. Instead, I want to sell whole assemblies and eventually build entire products. I don't see any reason why it can't work. I believe the large volumes with the potential for good profit margins are there, at least for the next few years.

Our biggest telecom customer has already told me they plan to convert from metal panels to plastic, so we need to attack now.

Thinking back, I underestimated how much things would cost to get this new project up and running, including all of the injection molding, machining equipment, new staff and marketing costs. Just the cost of getting the China operation running at full speed, not even including changes for the United States, will approach two million dollars by the end of the year. It is a lot of money, but the potential is astronomical. Uncle Dave thinks I am thinking too small, I will try to dream higher.

3/6/06

Monday, 5:49AM London time (12:49AM EST)

I am at Heathrow Airport and waiting at Gate 26 for my flight to Amsterdam. Last night went well. I saw my niece Rebecca and we had a very pleasant dinner. She is studying art restoration at the University of Delaware, the same college both her mother and I attended. She is spending a semester here and seems to be enjoying it. I brought her some peanut butter from home, since the brands here are not what she is used to. After dinner, I worked out for a little while and slept for about two hours. I got up, exercised a little more, met my driver Joe from last night, who was in early at 4:14AM to pick me up. I like that.

We zoomed off to the airport. So far, things are fine. Last night I had forgotten to pack three peanut butter and jelly sandwiches I had made for the trip. No worries though. I asked my wife to drop them off to the office so they would not be wasted. After all, they were triple-deckers and I made them myself. This forgetfulness on my part is bothersome on multiple levels, not the least of which is that my stomach has been bothering me a bit, and I am a little afraid to eat my cereal. Just in case, I bought two low-fat blueberry muffins. I do have some pretzels in my

suitcase, which will help to calm my stomach down.

Jeroen Kuniper from Lencon Corporation, a potential business associate, is supposed to meet me at the airport. Then we are off to the first customer. I have had about three hours of sleep in the last 24hrs, which means I will start passing out every time I sit down for the next day or two. This probably won't be a problem, as long as Jeroen doesn't get insulted if I fall asleep in mid-sentence while he is driving. What is important is that I don't do it in the waiting room or in front of the customer. I just got an email from Ben in China. I had checked with him about some late money there; businessmen always have to be vigilant to collect funds that are due, and it might help if I got involved there. Late money is a real pain, but you have to watch everything. You can't run a business without enough capital, so you have to make sure people stay current with their accounts. I will wait for more information from him.

3/6/06

Monday, 3:18PM Birmingham, England time (10:18AM EST)

I am on a flight from Amsterdam to Birmingham. This morning went well although our flight was delayed. Jeroen was waiting for me right on time, and we drove to Aimsys Corp., where we introduced our new metal-plastic material. The head of mechanical design was interested. After I said we would do all the necessary tests for EMI high shielding, conductivity, flame ratings, etc., he said he would be happy to evaluate the material. We will then make a prototype at no charge, and this he really liked. He also mentioned he had been in favor of replacing metal parts with plastic for years, but could not get his customer to listen. This was indeed welcome news, as per most of the other people we had spoken to. He was enthralled with the idea of using injection molding and not paying for the mold, as long as the material performed as needed.

We then went to lunch where we met Jan Willem, owner of Lencon. We began talking about the possibilities of some joint activities between his company and IJX. As with many companies, he was hesitant about promoting our new material until he heard we weren't charging for molds. The molds usually cost a great deal of money and most companies are not willing to shoulder the upfront costs, and instead try to make the customer do it. Usually, since there are changes in any new products, it often means that more than one mold is needed and the tooling charges can become prohibitive. But we have an ace in the hole, which is China. We can have good molds made there for less than 25% of what it costs in the United States and Europe. This will give us the edge needed to take away the business from those companies using metal. We can make a seamless transition without making them pay tooling costs, which should greatly ease the way for new business.

I am okay with waiting up to a year to earn back the cost. We can still save the customers money, so everyone wins.

Jan Willem has been looking for some new profit centers; his company designs products and many people are no longer willing to pay top dollar for good design work. As the area of design is downgraded to “commodity” status by many companies, he needs some niche areas to get sales and increase his chances for profits. I had previously offered to joint venture with them in the past, in China, but they had some things already going there and he wanted to pursue that avenue first. After having some experience now, he mentioned they would be interested in potentially aligning with us.

In addition to everything else we do, having the ability to offer design was intriguing to him, and something I had wanted to do for a long time. Again, since design was becoming something many did not want to pay for, I wanted to offer it for free in exchange for a chance at getting business for various parts, making assemblies and whole products. Eventually, we would design our telecom product lines.

This lunch went well and ended with me offering to put together a proposal for joint action. Below are my thoughts:

Option One:

- For our two companies to formally align in a relatively non-permanent way, we will set up a joint venture in China with IJX and Lencon. This company will sell products, but will do no production on its own. This new company will buy all of its products through IJX, unless they are incapable of making them or can't match the price of another supplier. The company will add a 20% profit or more on all materials it sells, with 50% of the profits going to Lencon and IJX. Lencon will offer its design time for free, and IJX will supply free infrastructure and support in China in the form of office space, telephone, licenses, government relations, etc.
- IJX and IJUS will heavily promote the new joint venture worldwide, and the new availability of design to all of its customers. Lencon will promote the use of all IJX and IJUS products throughout their customer base worldwide, and sell those new products whenever possible through the new joint venture.
- IJUS and IJX will supply the start-up money for this new venture with all loans being paid back first, before any money is distributed as profits.
- Ideal Jacobs will take care of the finances, books, etc., which will be open to all parties at all times. This means Lencon is only involved in design, sales, marketing, distribution, and production where needed.
- The new venture will also have a sign on the door, and be part of our US and Chinese websites with links to the Lencon site. In

essence, Lencon would become a marketing and design arm for IJX in Europe and Asia.

3/7/06

Tuesday, 7:58PM EST (2:58PM England time)

I am at the Abbey Hotel. It is a very nice hotel room; it even has a couch. Since it is on a golf course, I went for a walk before dinner but with no music. I had unknowingly thrown a switch on my iPod, which is why it wasn't functioning. I figured that most teenagers knew about iPods and I questioned the first one I met. Happily, he knew just what to do, showed me the solution and I had music on the second stage of my walk.

There are two restaurants in this facility. One is fancy and expensive and the other is a pub. I only really wanted a large salad and ventured into the pub to see if I could get one. The bartender/waitress was a gorgeous, young woman who listened attentively to my request for a salad, and between us we hammered out what I wanted, plus soup. The food turned out to be great. Feeling satisfied, I was about to go back to my room when I noticed that I was in an English pub, after all. It was smoke-free, and there was an older gentleman at the other end of the short bar who was hanging out and looking for someone to chat with. I had some extra time and said to myself, "when would I ever get a chance like this again?" So I turned around, bellied up to the bar, and ordered a diet soda with ice, of course. I agreed to the bartender's brand selection, even though it was not caffeine-free, and turned to the man and asked if he wanted another beer. He nicely turned me down and we began to chat.

He told me about his life, his imminent retirement, how his company had been decimated by globalization, and about his plans to immigrate to Italy. With my diet soda, I drank in the ambiance of the bar, the country, and the local people. About ten minutes went by and half of my drink was gone, which was enough, so I turned to the man and wished him luck in his new life. I then went back to my room, where I now sit. Sometimes you just have to grab those high, gutsy, roustabout moments where you throw caution to the wind and take the risk of drinking caffeine shortly before going to sleep. However, I have work to do, so I think I can burn off its effects and still get a good night sleep. Since I am not being picked up until nine o'clock tomorrow morning, I can get up early, exercise and eat breakfast in the restaurant, which almost never happens. Normally to save time on breakfast, I bring food with me and eat it in the room and then check-out but today it would be different. I love living on the edge.

3/7/06

Tuesday, 12:48 England time (7:48 EST)

After working out and having breakfast, I went to Comair via an unhappy young cab driver (more about him later). While there, I met everyone I had been emailing. Then I sat with the engineers to go over a label problem we were having with their location in China. Apparently, a group of labels we had sent them were showing cracking problems and we figured out the possible causes. Then we spoke about the new metal plastic material, and they were all excited about the possible uses. One of the engineers was handling one of the samples and it broke. We discussed the brittle problem inherent in the material and that new samples would be sent to them as soon as IJX was done with production. I hope we can resolve this problem quickly.

The head engineer mentioned that if our pricing was not in line for China, they could not deal with us. I countered saying we never expected to hold onto anything indefinitely. If we lost business, it was okay, since we do not sell at extremely low margins. Selling at five percent mark-up is supposedly a standard practice in China. It is a good way to gain wide market share, and an even better way to go bankrupt if something bad happens. It is not a way of doing business that I plan to pursue. If and when they decided to replace us, we will not stand in their way. Then he said he hoped we could keep as much of their business as long as possible, since they liked the way we conducted ourselves.

I know we aren't the cheapest supplier. If a lower level supplier can function in the later life cycle of a part, then the customer should move it from us. Hopefully by then, we will have moved onto other niches. You can't be everything to everyone and I have no ambition to try. We have our areas, and they are where we want to stay. I left with everyone happy, and then I got the same driver to go back to the airport.

When I first met him, a young Pakistani man, he was not friendly. I was not in the mood then to break him down enough to enter into friendly conversation, but he warmed up as time went on. During the return drive to the airport, he actually became friendly; especially when he found out I was from the United States and a business owner. It seemed he wanted to be in his own business, hence one of the reasons he was not happy when I first met him. He did not like being a cab driver, and spent much of his day frustrated. I talked to him about running his own company, and gave him one of my new books. I told him to email me, and that I would send him more help. I also gave him some advise about where and how to operate.

By the time we finished, he was a different young man. I like to think I had affected him in a good way, and helped him along to a better road than the one he was already on. Obviously, he hated being a cab driver. If he moved on to something better, then his whole life

would change, and it would make him even happier. I told him that every person he met was an opportunity for good, on all sides, and he should treat everyone in that way. Give out good vibrations, and they will often return; even if he had to stay a cab driver for a while until he started his new company.

When I got back to the airport, I got my ticket and some food. I decided to send the proposal for Lencon to my people for their review, and not wait for Thursday. I trust their judgment. I am anxious to see if they thought this alliance had the same potential as I did. It's time for a quick nap.

3/8/06

Wednesday, 8:17AM Dublin time (3:17AM EST)

I am ready for my last day on this trip. I got picked up by Robbie, the Limousine driver, on time. He is wonderful and outgoing, and off we went to Lucent Technologies. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending how you look at it, the one and a half hour trip turned into a fifteen minute drive. This meant we were too early to see the customer. I try to view all situations as positive. An unexpected gift of time can truly be an opportunity for adventure, and should not be squandered.

In this case, Robbie took me to a local delicatessen for something to drink. I love going into shopping areas when I travel, to see the different kinds of foods and products. I realized I could get my lunch for later, which would save me a lot of trouble, so this turned out to be a great stop. As fate would have it, Robbie was a printer, a fellow member of the trade who unfortunately ran into partnership/wife problems. It is a very common thing in the printing business, which is why he is now in the limo business.

In his spare time, he has an additional love, which is a local radio station where he helps out in many areas. Since I have been involved in radio through parts of my life, it was another area of brotherhood for the two of us. For one of his programs, I offered to let him interview me about my books and going to China. We actually did the interview in the back seat of his car, and it was a lot of fun. For a longer interview, Robbie said he would like to talk more by phone when I got back to the United States. Then, the next time I was in Dublin, he would invite me live on the air. That all sounded like great fun, and we were ready to go make the sales call by the time it was over.

3/8/06

Wednesday, 2:39PM London time (9:39AM EST)

The first meeting at Lucent was amazing. It turns out that the material for our new injection molding line has already been pre-tested and approved by them, which means we will probably not have to test the material ourselves for anyone else. The fact that Lucent

approved it should carry weight. People will trust the results enough to incorporate it into their products, and go to the next level of testing. Also, the engineer likes the position we have taken regarding no mold charges, and working with the material manufacturer to get the best possible products. The idea is for all of us to work together. The material manufacturer also makes injection molded products, so they would get the long runs. We get the small and medium runs and the labels for all the products.

The engineer and his company get the best of all worlds, so he is happy to help everyone work together. He also has a bunch of other products he wants us to look into, so the possibilities for business have increased greatly from our meeting.

After that, I went to see an engineer I have known for a while at Amphenol, formerly known as Teradyne. They are moving mostly all of their products to China, which is fine since we have a plant there. He was happy to consider us for his future needs. Since the call did not take long, I then jumped into the limo and Robbie had me back at the airport in time to take an earlier flight. I booked two, in case I finished early. This would put me back in London sooner with a better chance of catching my connecting flight home. We ended up in Terminal One, and getting to Terminal Three took a while but I am here. I ate the lunch I got while I was with Robbie. I have already sent out the joint venture proposal to Lencon for their review.

Having Ben take care of everything in China gives us incredible flexibility, and I plan to use it to its maximum benefit. It looks like he can do almost anything regarding joint ventures, wholly owned foreign subsidiaries, licenses, and working with the government. He is truly great to have on our side. We will have to see what Lencon says. I got an email back almost immediately from Jeroen thanking me for the proposal. He will get back to us soon. It turns out my people think the potential was worth the effort, as do I. We can do similar things with other companies if it works.

I am now going to buy a newspaper, and maybe a book, and head towards my gate as soon as they post where it is. I emailed my crew about the Lucent approvals. They are sending back emails saying how great it is. This could speed up the use of material by months, which means actual sales could start within the next two quarters.

3/8/06

Wednesday, 12:24 EST

I am in the air and we have about six hours to go. I got an upgrade to business class on this Virgin Atlantic flight. I could not understand why, and I do not think wearing a tie did it. It turns out this is also a Continental Airlines flight, and I am in their rewards program, which is probably how it happened. It is very nice here and I plan to watch a movie soon.

Ben from China is due here on Friday. Some of the people from the metal/plastic material manufacturer are coming in tomorrow afternoon. We have the chance for something very big and I fear it will mean a lot more capital outlay. However, I do not think I can afford *not* to do everything I believe is needed, which means more debt. My taxes are due in April and it is a lot of money. It is crunch time, and I will be interested to see how far I am willing to go.

3/9/06

Thursday, 9:41PM EST

I got home before eight o'clock last night. It was a very good trip indeed; I was able to get up at my regular time this morning. As usual, I got beaten in tennis. Then I had staff meetings discussing personnel, my trip, our visitors later that day, and the possible Lencon joint venture.

As it turned out, the representatives of the material manufacturer wanted to create a global partnership between our two companies. We would exclusively market and use their material for our metal/plastic materials. It would need further discussion to come up with an actual agreement. Therefore, we agreed to finish the conversation when we go up to Massachusetts to meet with all of their key people. Although nothing concrete has happened, the prospects are still very exciting.

We had shocked them with the speed to which we had launched our new product line. Plus, giving away the tooling was an additional point they could not match. We had our strengths and they had theirs, and it seemed like a good idea to work together. We did not want to fight them for the long, lower profit runs. In turn, they did not want the medium and small orders, so it seemed like a good fit. We would let them know who we were calling on, so we would not go after the same customers. We would also invite them along on calls with big potential. In turn, they would have their sales people watch out for possibilities for us, and would also help us get label business. We could utilize them for technical help, and they would be there as a resource for all products related to them.

If this works, their salesman would be ours and we would be with them, a seemingly wonderful match. Since aluminum is less expensive than the metal/plastic material, we would not be able to go into all telecom areas, but there is plenty of market-share to attack.

Jeroen sent in a drawing for a new military part, where I think this new material will serve well. He is supposed to call tomorrow to discuss the joint venture. In my opinion, they have a lot going for them to move forward. We should hopefully have the mold prices tomorrow.

3/12/06

Sunday Afternoon - In Flight

We are on the road passing through Connecticut. I am with Vinnie and Ben. We have been traveling for more than two hours on our way to Massachusetts. The first meeting tomorrow is with a customer who makes metal telecom parts and also rents space from us in Xiamen. They are a good customer, but things have been strained since we decided to expand into the metal/plastic area. We both want to sell the same types of parts to the same final customers, but out of different materials. I still have hopes we can work out an agreement to act together.

Tomorrow's meeting could have immediate, severe ramifications. I believe they will want us to move all of their label business to our Chinese plant with a 25% reduction in cost. I also believe they will feel us out for just how far our plastic/metal production has come. I think they will try and keep us in our current position of supplier, and not competitor. They also said they wanted to talk about their views on lean manufacturing, and why their way is better than our beloved ISO System.

What they want is everything, a normal position for them.

What I want is more of their business, to make up the 25% discount we are losing in the transfer of work to our plant in Xiamen. I also want more time to try and infiltrate the metal market, to see how well and how far the metal/plastic area can go. I do not think I will get everything I want.

After that stop, we will go see another potential telecom customer. They buy lots of metal front panels there and we will try and convince them to utilize our new metal/plastic injection molded parts. After that, we'll have lunch with another potential customer and then be done. We do not have a lot of time. There is heavy potential, but not a lot of time to exploit the market. We have to move quickly.

The road can be a lonely place. Sunday nights are the worst, even with two other people along. It is late afternoon and raining. I think back to my home in New Jersey, where I would normally be relaxing with my family, watching some TV, and getting ready to start dinner. This Sunday will be much different. I plan to eat dinner with the guys, call home, and maybe exercise some more. I already had a walk and played tennis to make sure I am tired enough to fall asleep. I'll watch some television, take a shower, maybe read, and probably get up very early to work out before our 8:00AM sales call.

As to whether we will eat at the hotel, it depends on what type of breakfast they have. I brought oatmeal with me. I will not eat it only if the hotel has eggs and fruit. The meetings will be long, and the protein will help me last through them. If they don't have eggs, then I will probably save time and eat in my room. We have plenty of food with us. I may bring in a triple-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich to the meeting, to eat during a break. We will have to see how it all works out.

3/13/06
Monday

I got up this morning at 4:30AM, worked out, ate breakfast at the restaurant and was ready to leave when I called the office. For the second time in two business days, I found out our air compressor was out again. It drives our printing and die-cutting presses, but this time our die-maker, Dave, had brought in his portable compressor. They were able to power two printing presses and switch the die-cutting presses to run on their own electric power. We then went to our first stop and started out by introducing Ben to everyone. The chairman of the board was not there, which meant the meeting was run by the company president. This had both good and bad implications. Bad, because I felt slighted that he did not feel it important enough to be there. Good, because people were more free to talk.

As the meeting wore on, the head of sales turned to me and wanted to talk about our injection molding line. I decided to abandon my plan to not discuss the subject, and instead followed my immediate gut instinct. I told them what I thought about their marketing, their plans for the future, how they were not treating us well and how we thought they were missing the potential market.

I believe they were very surprised, but we kept talking. They said they did not see the market we did, but were willing to look at it again. They also did not want us competing with the same customers. I told them that their business with us had been declining, that I did not see anything they were doing to bring in a lot of new business. We shared a lot of customers, and I felt that we could read the market place as well as they could.

To say the meeting did not go well is an understatement. They said they wanted to keep doing business, but they did not want us competing with their customers, which is a little ridiculous. After all, most of their customers were our customers long before we started dealing with them. They also wanted to stay in our space in Xiamen for as long as possible. Basically, nothing got accomplished, except it was obvious that this account would now be in a definite decline. We now know that we must begin to replace the sales right away.

We left and went to the next stop, a new potential customer. This man was on one of the major committees working on the standards for the new advanced Micro TCA telecom area. This meant he was right in the middle of a lot of companies who would need front panels. Hopefully we could make some out of our new material. He seemed positive in the idea of utilizing our materials, and the prototype designs we had come up with, which was a welcome lift from the negativity of the previous meeting.

After that, we went to another potential customer working with the same Advanced Micro TCA area. In this case, we were negotiating

manufacturing and making kits for their new product coming out. We had lunch and everything seemed positive.

The next big telecom conference is in June; Vinnie and our salesman will be going together. They will hit all the potential areas, go after the important people, and hopefully kick butt. So far, it has been an amazing trip. I am glad we brought everyone. Ben leaves tomorrow morning, and I may be going back to Massachusetts on Wednesday to see the plastic/metal material manufacturer.

We are on our way back to New Jersey, passing through Connecticut again. I am looking forward to being home.

3/14/06

Tuesday

I got an email from the President of the first company we saw in Massachusetts. After yesterday's meeting, I did not expect to hear from them. I figured they would go on their way, assuming they would stay in metal, and we would go ours in metal/plastic. I was wrong. The email said he had to talk right away with me and their chairman of the board. Apparently, they only bring him out when something big is happening. I did not want to deal with it, but Al said to get it over with and she was right. I called them both.

From the start, the call went badly. History has a way of changing to the way people want to remember it, and that was no different here. They remembered past events differently than I did. They were not happy I was going after telecom customers that they considered theirs. I was not happy with the way they had been treating us in different areas. They told me I had misread the market, had no expertise in this new area, had nothing to offer the customers, and I should stay where we are.

If I didn't, I would no longer be a strategic partner. In other words, I would eventually be cut out of their business, but they still wanted to stay at our place in China. It is good they still rent from us there. It gives us some leverage at least to keep some of the business, while we are busy replacing it.

I told them I would email them my decision on our course. They will probably still want to do business as a straight supplier, not a partner, which is fine with me, at least until they replace us. It is the beginning of the end. They can stay in Xiamen for a while, but that too will eventually have to end. We are on a new course, and it is not only our best chance for survival but growing greatly. They are in our way and it is time to move on.

We are on a new road. Our accountant was in; we got our tax bills which with the expansion should put us close to \$900,000 in debt, but we shall continue to move forward. I am sufficiently concerned, so motivation should not be a problem.

Next Wednesday, Vinnie and I will go see the metal/plastic material manufacturer in Massachusetts to see if we can align with them, formally or informally. It would give us a really good chance to expand very quickly. We have another supplier who says they have a product that will have the same properties, but I don't think it sounds as good.

3/20/06

Monday, 9:49PM

I am now at home in New Jersey. Tomorrow, Vinnie and I are scheduled to leave for the Berkshires at about 1:00PM. Once there, I plan to bike and he will probably go tour the town. Then we will have dinner. At 10:30AM the next morning, we may or may not have a call near Woburn. If not, I will sleep a little later and we can get to Woburn half past noon. While we are gone, I plan to bring a couple of boxes of books to sign. Then in the afternoon, the meeting starts at the material manufacturer at one o'clock. They are supposed to have six people there.

Our goals are:

1. Set-up some type of alliance.
2. Gain access to their sales people.
3. Make sure the alliance means they get the long runs, and we get the small and medium runs and labels for the long runs.
4. Access for their current and new technology.
5. Possible joint marketing, a website, or whatever else is possible.
6. Make a strong impression and give them a road that will be easy and profitable for them to follow with us.

We got word back from Jeroen today, regarding the possible joint venture, and they want to go ahead. Lots of fun stuff is happening. I look forward to going to Lenox. It is like my second home base. I hope I have enough energy to bike at least once. Friday, it is off to Asia, my first time in Japan.

3/21/06

Tuesday, 10:14PM

I am at the Berkshires and it has been a good day. I played good tennis this morning, despite having two newly re-strung racquets due to breakage last week. Wendy thinks I am letting off steam. I think it is more the worn and defective strings. No matter, I am having fun in any case. It was a hectic morning getting ready to leave for Massachusetts for tomorrow's sales call. The emails have been crazy between all of us, with everything going on, especially with the new joint venture potential. I sent out the formal agreement today. Hopefully Lencon will

approve it, make changes if needed, and we can move ahead quickly. It would be good to get some positive input before tomorrow's meeting, but we will have to wait and see.

When Vinnie was driving the New York Thruway, we got pulled over by a state trooper. He was very nice and only gave us a warning. Through the whole thing I was trying to be invisible, so I would not cause any trouble.

Today, there were traffic police seemingly everywhere, so we better be more careful tomorrow. After we got up here, I went for a bike ride which was beautiful. Then, I stopped to get us some food for tomorrow and came back to the house. After dinner at a great local restaurant, we came back here. I was eating some frozen chocolate bits, when I heard a loud crunch.

Unfortunately, it was my temporary inlay, which cracked, and I swallowed it. I now have a large hole in my tooth, and I am leaving for Asia on Friday. I put in a phone message to my dentist. Hopefully, he can see me tomorrow night after we get back. Happily, it doesn't really hurt at the moment and I have taken some pain medication so that I can fall asleep.

Tomorrow's call is very important. I have to remember they also need us, so we have to make sure we get what we require. It has to be a win-win situation, or it will fall apart.

3/22/06

Wednesday

We're on the Massachusetts Turnpike, heading towards Woburn. I made it through last night, without any problems with my now semi-exposed tooth, thanks to the great prep work of Dr. Browne. He made sure he coated the area underneath the cap, so it is not sensitive, which would have driven me crazy. I spent the latter part of the evening signing more books for customers. Then after some writing, I went to sleep.

I got up at six o'clock this morning and put in my bite retainer, which is designed to help me stop grinding my teeth at night. I am going to use it as a mouth guard to try and protect my tooth while biking. It was about thirty degrees and chilly, but I was dressed for it. I road to the top of the large hill nearby, and herein laid the first big decision of the day. Should I continue through the woods? Or should I take the safe route though the streets, and go by Tanglewood to get back home? I had not been through the woods since last autumn, and I yearned to see the trees. Besides, I did not feel like riding through the streets, so off to the woods I went.

Coincidentally, this occurred after I wiped out on my back shortly before, where the fringe of my sweat pants got caught in my gears. Feeling stupid, both about the accident and the now constant pain in my arm from the fall, I zoomed through the woods and they were

indeed beautiful. Keeping a watchful eye out for bears, turkeys, and the occasional skunk, I had a great time. In less than an hour and a half, I was back at the house. We both got ready and, thanks to my obsessive compulsiveness, it took me three times to actually lock the house and leave.

We spoke to the office, and everything there seems fine. Our salesman is in Arizona on sales calls, and things are going well there. Tonight, he leaves for Chicago. I am starting to work on my calls for Asia. One of them is with Lucent Technologies. We have a contract with them, and hopefully, it will allow us to get there. The man we are going to see, Ray Zhang, has a quick wit, is very fast thinking, and likes my books. He is a good man.

3/23/06

Thursday, 4:32AM

Newark Liberty Airport, New Jersey

I almost always forget something, and this time it was my regular glasses. I still have my sunglasses, but they are a bit of a pain. It is not nearly as bad as it could be, so I am still calm. On the way through the security area, after I had to take off my sneakers to go through the detection line, I stepped on something wet. After I remembered I had no spare socks with me, the full realization and germ phobic attack kicked in. I knew I had no chance trying to tell whether it was only water, and my thoughts raced as to what it could be. But wait, I thought. I had the answer. I whipped out my small bottle of anti-bacterial lotion, which I always try to carry when traveling, and squirted some on my sock.

Whether it did any good or not is not relevant; I dealt with the problem, and now I will probably be able to forget about it. In this waiting area, the television is on, and the news program is talking about how a company in California is using foreign produced steel as opposed to steel made here. It is not amazing to me anymore that our economy is so intertwined with foreign suppliers. My company is doing the same thing. The next stage, I believe, is to have foreign competition coming to our shores and attacking here, as opposed to just having goods produced outside the United States sent for consumption here. That onslaught will be unlike anything ever seen, and the competition level will be amazing. I hope we are ready.

I emailed Ben this morning, trying to prepare him for what will probably happen with our new telecom parts and the ramifications of that act. We will be going directly against one of our biggest customers. They will not be happy about it, even though we are totally within our rights to do it. They have already started saying negative things about us in the marketplace, and I assume it will only get much worse. But as Vinnie mentioned, no one likes to hear people complaining, so their actions may end up backfiring on them. If the timing works out as hoped,

the decrease in business we will probably experience will be made up with the rush for this new product line. Transition is always a stressful thing, but necessary. I wonder what the next two years will bring.

I am really excited about the possibilities of this new joint venture and others. It could give us a very wide base of parts, from which to sell almost anything.

I want to build products. I want our own brand. I want to be able to do anything.

3/23/06

Thursday, 10:50PM

I am ready for my trip tomorrow and I think I have everything together. It is the usual night before my “try not to forget anything” moment. Then again, I should be asleep soon. I will wake up at three o’clock in the morning, get to the airport, go to Dallas Ft. Worth, and then fly to Japan. I am nervous for many reasons; not just going away, leaving my family, and being homesick, but going to another part of the world.

Of course, giant opportunity is all over the globe, and hiding here will do me no good. One of our customers, Ciena, closed their New Jersey facility this week with little warning. It was tough on the people who worked there and also on the suppliers. In our case, we already deal with their headquarters in Maryland and are in contact with their research group in Canada, so we should be fine.

Our tenant/customer in China has now determined they will cut us off from all new business. It is getting nasty very quickly. On the other hand, I owe them a lot. They have given me notice that they are getting rid of us as a supplier, so then it is my own fault if I don’t replace their business.

If the Lencon deal works out well, we will spread it to other companies and maybe build our own building in China to house them. There are so many possibilities, it is mind-numbing. But like in fishing, when you can see lots of fish in the water but rarely catch them, you have to pick your target, focus and execute the attack to get what you want.

3/24/06

Friday, 7:24AM EST

I am flying on route to Dallas Ft. Worth. In airplanes, it is strange how you never know who you will sit next to. Originally, I was sitting next to a man who seemed pleasant enough, but was trying to switch seats so he could sit next to his wife. He asked me if I would switch. I said I would if she had an aisle seat, but the woman had a window seat. He then asked the woman across from me, and she said she would be happy to switch, just as long as I did not try and stop her from going to the restroom.

I am always extremely cognizant of being able to reach a restroom easily. Therefore, I had no problem with her request. Her name was Kathleen or Kat as she likes to be called. It turns out that Kat was a medical doctor, had a PHD, and was also a professor in Texas. She went around talking about diabetes, and how it is quickly becoming one of the great medical problems worldwide. The higher the standard of living a country achieves, the more prone it is to obesity and hence diabetes.

She showed me some charts as to what was happening, and it was scary to see half of the US population will be obese by the year 2010. That is a frightening statistic, one that does not bode well for our country or the world. The health related costs will be staggering. She gave me food for thought: the idea that the better we paid our workers in the US and China, the more I was potentially exposing them to the dangers of being overweight. This is especially true in China, where there was such poverty for a long time. Being overweight is a sign of affluence there, and one that is ascribed to. I realized by paying a good wage to our workers, we are potentially exposing them to great health risks.

Should I pay our people well? If I do then they might become obese and sue me; if I don't pay them well, I am a bad boss. As an employer, what can I do, since I would then seem to be going in all directions? I think the main thing is to lead by example. I consistently work out and watch my diet. The combination of those two things, not to mention being incredibly paranoid about being seen in a bathing suit, helps me to stay in shape. That goes back to when I was a child, and was "hefty" for my age, but that is another story.

It seems that with higher standards of living and more choices, there comes more responsibility. People cannot just do what they feel like, simply because they can economically afford it. All choices have consequences. As we move forward as one world, those choices become more complex and their results become more widespread.

Kat obviously cares a great deal about her job. She can try and help people by giving them her research, but she can't force them to act. I will say that after seeing all these statistics, the health care area will be booming for the long term, regarding all types of products that will be needed.

3/24/06

Friday, 1:35PM EST (4:35AM Japanese time) - In Flight

We are on our way to Osaka. So far, I have only forgotten my regular glasses. I brought the glass case but it was empty. Hopefully I still have my sun glasses in my suitcase. I also forgot to bring money for the different countries I am visiting, but I fixed that by going to the money exchanger for Japan, Singapore, and China. They did not have any for Malaysia, however. When we arrive there I will get some paper money or use credit cards.

I am sitting next to Laura from Kentucky. Her husband works for a liquor company, and she is an attorney. She was born in Costa Rica and is fluent in several languages. Being able to learn languages has always impressed me. The ability to readily master new ones is one I will never have. Of course, my substandard attempts at Spanish do give huge merriment to my Hispanic employees. They do appreciate the attempt, so all is not lost. We have about thirteen hours to go. I may have time for a walk and go swimming at the hotel, if they have an indoor pool.

3/24/06

Friday, 3:38PM EST (6:35AM Japanese time)

Long flights bring out some strange thoughts and emotions. My mom is undergoing an operation on Monday. Although it is not threatening, it is serious. It brings me back to when I thought my dad was going to die. Within a few days I wrote a eulogy for him, and when he did not die, I showed it to him later. He liked it, in the idea that maybe by writing it, it had postponed the event. Here is one for my mother:

When we put a quality control system in our company, we needed interior auditors; people who could come in and check to make sure that we were following the systems in the manner that was required. You had to be certified as an interior auditor, and I asked my mom to go to auditing school, so we could both check on the company. It meant going to Texas, but she was up for the adventure. She did so well in the course that the head of the school talked about offering her a job. As the years went by, she would come in for the audits and my people would be close to cardiac arrest because she missed nothing. She never hesitated to say when things weren't clean enough, good enough, or where they could be better.

There was a lot to my mom, including being an incredible wife, mother, and homemaker. As I have often said to my wonderful wife, she was home-base for my dad and for us kids, as we grew up and beyond. What are the gauges of a successful life? To be loved and be loving, to have trust and be trusting, to give and be giving, to excel in the areas that mattered to her, no matter how diversified. Successful? Yes. I love you mom.

As long as I was doing this, I figured I should also write one for my in-laws. Hopefully, when this book is ready to go to press, I will not have to use them.

For my father-in-law, Jeffrey Aaron:

When you get married, you marry the whole family, which is how I got Jeff as a father-in-law. Our initial meeting was stormy.

We had gone over to Barbara's in-laws, Myrna and Norman, for Sunday brunch. I was introduced to the family less than eight weeks after Wendy and I started dating. We knew we were going to get married, even at that time. Therefore, I was pretty nervous. I met Jeff and the first thing he asked me was how my father was going to make sure he evaded as many death taxes as possible, to insure that most of his money went to his kids. I did not like the question and answered that I had advised my father to spend every cent he had, so the problem would not come up.

Jeff looked at me like I was from Mars and promptly stuck me with the name "flake," again something I did not like. Things were not going well. Later that day I was hopeful when he, Bunny his wife, Wendy, and I went to play tennis. As we started, I was playing with Wendy and Jeff started hitting the ball over her head on purpose. This was again something I did not like. By this time, I was getting really angry and I asked him to stop. He replied that she was his daughter and he could do what he wanted, and asked me what would I do about it? Figuring that there was no way to get along with this man, I was about ready to stop trying. It was my turn to start serving the tennis balls. I told him that if he kept up this behavior, the first serve would be twelve inches from his head and the second would be straight at him. At this point, I figured we were done and I was ready to hurt him for acting the way he did.

I served the first ball, and it missed his head by about twelve inches at a very high speed. I am a good tennis player. I knew by his look that he wasn't going to change, and I figured I was dead anyway, so I was about to rocket the second ball at his face when he started to smile at me. Apparently, I had passed the test and we were suddenly great friends from then on. Life with Jeffrey was never boring or dull; something was always up. As Wendy and I progressed from dating to planning our wedding, I asked permission from both sets of parents before we would go further. My parents, I knew, were not a problem since they loved Wendy from the start. I was not so sure about Jeff. Therefore, after Passover dinner about twenty years ago, she had to eat with my family before I would ask her to marry me. Why, I don't remember, but she did. I then said we had to leave and I asked her to marry me in the car. She said yes. Then we had to go out to Long Island, so we could get permission from her parents. Bunny, as always, was wonderful. I had no doubts she was okay with it, but I was not a hundred percent sure with Jeff. He and I sat down and I asked his permission to marry his daughter. I said he could ask me any question that day and I would answer it. The only thing he asked was how much money I made. He

was satisfied with the answer and proceeded to tell me how to handle his daughter. "Don't spoil her," he said. "I spent a lot of years making her the way she is, don't mess it up." He then asked what I would have done if he had said no. I said he would have delayed the wedding, giving me more chances to work on him.

Jeffrey dealt with power; if you were tough with him and gained his respect, he would do anything for you. If not, he would run right over you. I have seldom had a more loyal, trusting friend who was a little crazy and full of strange behaviors, but that can describe many of us. I do know if I called him, anytime from anyplace, he would come help me as I would for him. It is rare you meet someone like that, and still rarer to have that person be your father-in-law. Although not everyone saw the good side, I am glad I was one of the lucky ones who got to see it most of the time. I will miss you, Jeff. I doubt I will ever pick up a golf club and not think of you. I am glad I got you when I got my wife.

For my mother-in-law, Bunny Aaron:

Bunny was cool. Mention anything in the arts and she had probably done it multiple times, and in various places in the world. She is the only person I ever knew who followed the Ring Cycle. She bicycled through the south of France, went ballooning and walked the Great Wall of China. She was up for anything regarding a new adventure, not your typical mother-in-law and grandmother. When I first met her, I figured she was an extremely strong willed woman who was used to getting things her way, and not having to wait too long to get it. As I grew to know and love her, I also found out that, in addition to being exceptionally strong, she also had a heart of gold, and an extreme sense of right and wrong. She was someone you could trust everywhere. While we always respected and liked each other, I think we truly bonded when she was in France alone on vacation. Her credit cards had gotten messed up, and the hotel would not let her leave. She called us about four o'clock in the morning, and I asked her to put the hotel check-out man on the line. I told him I would give him my credit card, and he started to give me an attitude about needing me to go to my office and fax him a copy. I strongly suggested he take the number and let Bunny move on. I convinced him. From that point on, Bunny and I formed a mutual admiration society that continued to blossom.

Whatever she needed, I did. And whatever I needed, she did for me. She really loved having my company's shipping department at her beck and call. It was a perk I was glad I could supply. When we came to visit or had any contact, she always made sure I was taken care of in every way. I would have done anything for her.

When I think of her, it normally goes right to Tanglewood in the Berkshires. She loved it there, and I think it was the place she was the happiest. I loved her as my mother-in-law, as a person and as my friend. I will miss you Bunny.

3/24/06

Friday, 6:51PM EST (9:51AM Japanese time)

About six and a half hours to go. I have gone into my food supplies, and I am just finishing a triple-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich, to be followed by a banana. I am low on power, and it is time to fish out my other battery. Normally, on a Friday afternoon, I would leave the office about 4:30PM to play tennis with my brother. True, he is my brother, but he is also my good friend.

By this time, I would have already been home, eaten dinner and found out if I needed to drive Kayla anywhere for an evening activity. She would normally repay me for the effort by saying 'thank you' and by telling me that she loves me. I definitely got the better end of those deals.

I just finished a long nap, and will probably not sleep again until I get to the hotel. I hope their pool has warm water. I am feeling homesick, a reaction that will only worsen each night that I am away. I love my life. Being away is a lot of fun, usually filled with high adventure, but I still miss home-base. I have been thinking about the possible Lucent/Alcatel merger. The main question is if it is a merger of equals, or if Lucent is actually being absorbed. If it is of equals, then there will be a large shake-out period of which company dominates in what areas. As the company emerges as a new entity, suppliers such as us will have to find out who will retain the power to buy.

On the other hand, if it is an actual takeover, Alcatel will have the dominance in most areas. They will have the ability to start pushing through their policies, approved suppliers, and ways of doing business. The status quo will be shattered and everything will be up for grabs. Basically, it is the same scenario, only the amount of time it takes for things to change is any different. With our new product line, we would seem to be in a good position to begin to go after more business. In a state of flux, people are usually willing to hear more about change than before. Since their jobs are in jeopardy, those willing to innovate, or seem like they are moving forward, are often perceived as the people to keep rather than let go. Like when the economy is in recession, people who would not normally be interested in change are willing to listen and help put themselves above the norm so they can keep their jobs. We have to be seen as different, unusual and ahead of the market. We have to be able to offer the best price, delivery, service, and be environmentally friendly. It is a tall order for any company.

We are going to be making samples with the new metal/plastic material, and should be ready in about thirty days with new samples.

We also plan to launch our new product line in that time, and are gambling that we will be ready. We shall launch to all of our customers. If we are first, fast, and within the appropriate price range, then we should gain some of the market share.

We are just passing St. Augustine Island, which has a volcano that is smoking. We can see it from the plane and it is very cool. We are over Alaska and the weather is totally clear with blue skies. It is gorgeous. We are closing in on the International Date Line.

3/25/06

Saturday, 3:36PM Japanese time (12:38PM EST)

Two hours and thirteen minutes to reach Osaka. I finally did it. I am a great fan of Garrison Keeler's "Prairie Home Companion Radio Show" on National Public Radio. One of his continuing characters is called "Guy Noir" (GN) - Private Eye. It is the story of a Minnesotan private detective who is drawn into unusual cases, typically in the areas where the shows are being broadcast from that week. Over the last few years, we have gone to see him when he goes to play at the Tanglewood Music Festival in Lenox, Massachusetts. I had been thinking about writing a segment for him for over a year, and finally I did it.

I hope you find the following entertaining. I will submit it to Mr. Keeler and hope he considers its use. It would be a major thrill to be given a writing credit on one of his programs.

"Guy Noir and the Whales of Summer"

Narrator: It was a steamy afternoon in Minneapolis, when I (Guy Noir) got the call from the head of the Tanglewood Music Center Maintenance staff (HOM) in Massachusetts. It seems they were having some trouble with the great lawn. A few days ago, the maintenance staff found a picture of a whale cut into the grass in front of the performing pavilion. There was no damage, but the lawn was cut like a putting green.

HOM: Yes, Mr. Noir. Could you come down here? We have this picture of a whale mowed into our lawn. It is getting a lot of publicity. People think ghosts or aliens might be involved. We don't have any idea where it came from. We have tried telling people it is a new type of lawn art. A celebration of the human spirit, that needs to be at one with the lawn, but I don't think that excuse is going to hold up too long.

GN: What kind of whale is it?

HOM: I'm not an expert of whales, but it looks like one of those really big, long ones.

Narrator: With a description like that, how could I go wrong? So I

hopped a plane and made my way there the next morning. As we took a tour of the front of the pavilion, I could not help but notice that, while the whale drawing in front of the main pavilion was slowly growing back, another freshly made one was cut just a few yards away. The great lawn was starting to look like the Atlantic Ocean, with a pod of great green whales swimming across it.

HOM: Oh my gosh, there is another one.

GN: I thought you had security staff here?

HOM: Well, we do right up until the lawn is cleaned every night. Then we all go home. We don't search people when they come in. People are left up to policing themselves, so we leave them alone. Besides, it would be hard to search everyone for a hidden lawn mower. We never had a call to be here all night before. Maybe we should post someone here tonight.

GN: Who is playing at Tanglewood this weekend?

HOM: Oh, it is going to be great. We are having a rendition of Edith Wharton's "The Age of Innocence." There are three shows and they all sold out. It's great that our leading local author can still pack them in.

GN: Leading local author, hmmm. I have an idea. I'll be back tonight. Don't worry about posting a guard, I'll be here instead.

HOM: That's okay. It's our job, we will do it.

Narrator: Something about the way he said 'Lenox's most famous author' struck a chord in my mind, and I went for a drive. It took a while, but I finally found what I was looking for. It was Herman Melville's house. I remembered that he had written Moby Dick around this area, and thought I should go take a look. When I got to his house, which is now a museum, there was no one around except the caretaker.

GN: Hi there, mind if I come in?

Caretaker: No, not at all. That why it's here. It's a museum. People are supposed to come here and see what Mr. Melville was like and how he lived.

GN: How long have you been working here?

Caretaker: All my life. You see, I am one of Mr. Melville's great grandsons.

GN: Really, how interesting.

Caretaker: Yup, the family is really proud of him. We all vowed to make sure that he was not forgotten. Unfortunately, most people remember the book, but seem to forget the man and where he lived.

GN: You, of course, have heard the stories about the whales on

the great lawn.

Caretaker: I read something about it in the newspaper.

GN: You don't think it has anything to do with your great grandfather, do you?

Caretaker: That old story about him haunting the area around Lenox? No, they are just stories. Still, there have been some strange moments around here.

GN: Strange in what way?

Caretaker: Pictures of whales turning up in strange places, mostly small drawings, but lately they have been getting bigger in size.

GN: What's your opinion?

Caretaker: Maybe my great grandfather is tired of being forgotten, and wants people to remember there were two great authors living in Lenox.

GN: I see, well thanks a lot.

Narrator: I left the museum wondering if I was now dealing with a ghost, or maybe the great grandson of a ghost. I resolved to find out that night. I got to the great lawn about one o'clock in the morning. The sky was filled with too many stars to count. Combined with the moon, it made it easy to see without lights. The dew had already started forming, and my shoes were wet. There was no one else around, so I sat down next to one of the buildings and resolved to wait and see what happened. Waiting can be a strenuous activity, but three pretzels and two candy bars later, I saw some movement in the great lawn. I walked out to see what was happening. It was the caretaker mowing a new whale figure in the lawn.

GN: It's you?

HOM: I thought I told you I would handle this.

GN: But why?

HOM: I am one of Edith Wharton's great grandsons.

GN: But why the whales?

HOM: What better way to get people to come out here than create a mystery. Using whales would throw people off the scent from my great grandmother. Besides, Mr. Melville needed some attention. People have been ignoring him far too long. Sometimes, people need a good mystery to stir them up, get them moving, and forget their flat screened TVs and video games.

GN: But you called me in to solve this.

HOM: I figured you would blame my brother who runs the Melville museum.

GN: You mean you two are related?

- HOM:** It is a small town and we watch out for each other. Next year we will probably mow in characters from the "Age of Innocence." You are not going to tell on me, are you?
- GN:** No, you are right. Sometimes people need a good mystery to get their blood going. Besides, you have done no real harm.
- HOM:** Good then, give me a hand. The tails take a long time to mow them correctly, and you put me behind schedule.

Author's Note: Although submitted, this piece was never used. Radio fame would have to wait.

3/26/06

Sunday, 1:00PM Japan time (10:57PM EST)

I slept well last night, after having a really good dinner and working out for a while.

The only problem is my cell phone has no service. I am hoping it goes back on, once I get to Singapore. The good news is that I did speak to Wendy and Alex. Everything is fine back home. When I see Ben tonight, he will have an international cell phone for me. The only thing I won't be able to get are emails, which I hope I can switch over to my AOL account and get through the hotel.

Osaka is a pretty, clean city with very pleasant, polite people. I would have no problem coming back. I spent some time in the hotel exercise area. While on the treadmill, I tried to plot more strategy as to what to do if certain things happen. I enjoy thinking about what can happen and how to deal with them. That way, it makes me feel more comfortable for the future, and hopefully ready for what can happen. I ate my own food for breakfast. Slowly, my suitcase is starting to decrease in weight. By Friday, I plan to be able to put my coat in there, so I don't have to carry it all the way home. At this point, I plan to be at my hotel about 8:30PM. I am not sure if I will see Ben tonight or first thing in the morning. Either way will be fine. Part of my left arm has been turning some pretty colors, the result of my fall a few days ago while biking in the Berkshires. Hopefully, I have learned my lesson about tying off my pants, so they do not get stuck in the gears again. If not, I deserve what happens to me.

3/25/06

Friday, 3:00PM Japan time (1:00AM EST)

Five hours and thirty-nine minutes left to get to Singapore. Japan Airlines is very nice, and I am currently listening to classical music. It reminds me of the days when I played clarinet. Since my partial inlay in my tooth has now come out a few times, I have decided to mostly try and take it out when I eat, so I do not swallow it. This means the

semi-sharp tooth underneath is exposed. Already, I have clamped down on my inner cheek once. This too reminds me of my music days, as I practiced throughout my whole time with braces. For those who have never had braces, let me liken them to having barbed wire in your mouth, at all times, with various points sticking you in different places, at odd times of the day. Playing clarinet meant I had to curl my lower lip over the barbed wire area, inflicting many cutting wounds that never ceased to bother me. Add this to the usual tongue problems of playing a reed instrument, and I wonder how I not only got through it, but never even seriously considered stopping.

I think I played music for a few reasons: I enjoyed it, I was good at it, it gave me a venue to perform, a chance to express myself, and I enjoyed being part of a creative group. It was also filled with frustration, as anyone who has ever seriously played an instrument would tell you. Frequent bouts of emotion were not unusual, causing me to hit my music stand and send my music flying. Once, I got so frustrated I sliced off part of my plastic mouthpiece with a knife. Sorry, mom and dad (who paid for all of my equipment). But overall, it was a great experience. Unfortunately, I think the constant practicing helped to exacerbate my obsessive, compulsive behavior until I finally gave it up about twenty-five years ago. I could no longer stand the idea of the constant repetition. I did get to do a lot of really fun things through music though. I toured with the University of Delaware Wind Ensemble for a year, played most of my High School musicals, was in the band and orchestra, and even met my first girlfriend in music school.

Her name was Karen. My best friend Steve had been going to a local music school for the summer of our fourth year playing, which would have made it 1970. I wasn't doing anything and he invited me along for a day. I found it fascinating. It was a whole group of really good musicians, who spent part of every day practicing and performing. I had always liked women, even at that young age, and I saw a girl who I thought looked like she was twenty years old. I asked my parents if I could go for the rest of the summer, and they agreed. My parents were always great that way, enabling my siblings and me all the lessons we wanted in the music and arts to advance ourselves.

I spent the rest of the summer there, and thoroughly fell in love with Karen. We ended up dating on and off throughout middle and high school. She taught me many things, including how to be a little more comfortable around women. It was always great to have someone to talk to and go out with, when neither of us was seeing someone else.

I was probably a lot more fortunate than most people; I did not hate my grammar, middle or high school years. Going through puberty was probably no worse for me than anyone else. I was very fortunate to be surrounded by a good group of people, some of whom I still see.

As I was riding in the taxi, going back to the airport at Osaka, I

was still a little drowsy from jet lag. As I kept dosing off, I remember thinking how amazing it was how I got there and the life that I have. It is great to be doing what you want, with the chance to go after your dreams, and having a team back you up, both at work and at home, which is all pointed in the same direction of success for us all. I have no excuses, nor have I wanted any. If what we try for does not work, it is entirely my fault, since we are following my dreams. It is my responsibility and I accept it willingly. Only by taking on the full brunt of my actions can I ever hope to deserve the success I crave.

The music and art genes from my family have passed down to my children. Ben is an excellent musician and is even following that dream in college, where he is studying music technology at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. Alex and Kayla both have art pieces on display at the local high school art exhibition. My wife and I agree with my parents; broadening out to as many creative areas as possible is a wonderful thing. We try to be supportive, although it is easy when your kids are doing things that result in beautiful creations that make us very proud. I hope they all continue to be as creative in everything they do.

Speaking of music, I was talking to Laura yesterday, the person who sat next to me on the plane to Osaka, regarding languages. She knows a lot of them. She is able to learn them, quickly and easily, because she is able to equate them with music. By associating the tonal parts of the languages with music, she is able to internalize the words much more quickly and easily. I have always had trouble learning languages and perhaps I may try this way of learning in the future.

3/26/06

Sunday, 4:52AM Singapore time (3:52AM EST)

Two hours and forty-six minutes to go. I was playing with the selector for the entertainment center. There is a button called "Bird's Eye View." It turns out there is a camera pointing out the bottom of the plane and we are over land, somewhere. I must be getting really bored to have even looked at it. It is time to read for a little while.

Sunday, 12:01PM Singapore time (11:01AM EST)

We landed about thirty minutes late. I quickly made my way through immigration and customs. My ride was ready, and I got to the hotel within a half hour. The good news was my hotel was gorgeous. Unfortunately, though, the pool was about to close. The better news was my Blackberry had reception, so I was immediately able to start working. Ben was supposed to be here earlier. I left him a message and unpacked some of my clothes. The next day the weather is supposed to be in the high 80's F, so I pretty much decided I would not be wearing a suit jacket.

I had taken a nap on the plane. I felt very good and planned to exercise some more. Then there was a knock at my door and it was Ben. He had gone to the airport to meet me, but we had missed each other. We went out for dinner and found a local Thai Restaurant, which was very good. While waiting and eating dinner, we caught up on things, problems with our tenant/customer, and our possible expansion with the joint venture. It was good to see him again. We had fun, and I left him back at the hotel. It was about ten o'clock at night, and it was here that I decided to violate one of my standard rules of traveling, which was never to go out after 9:00PM. It was a very warm, beautiful night. I wasn't tired. Besides, I wanted some fruit for a snack and for my breakfast the next day, so I decided to risk it.

First stop was at the hotel store for some souvenirs for my wife and kids. Then I went outside for a walk. Singapore is filled with a lot of young people in general, and pretty girls in particular. As I walked, I saw a bunch of people congregating in a building. I went inside and there were a few nightclubs in various areas, all filled with young girls. I went up to look at the second floor, realized what I was in, turned around, and decided to get out of there as fast as I could. Feeling like I had better finish my walk, I continued back to the hotel when I found a familiar, lovely site.

There was a Subway sandwich store across from my hotel. Subway is great, a true salesman's friend. I went in and got lunch for Ben and myself for the next day, in case we could not stop. I brought it back to the hotel. Then, trying to get tired, I exercised some more. At this point, if I can't get to sleep after a shower, I will write, read, or start working out again so I won't have to do as much in the morning. In fact, the last part sounds the best, so I will work out a little now and not have to do that again in the morning. Then I can either sleep longer or do something else. I love a plan!

3/27/06

Monday, 1:27AM Singapore time (12:27PM EST)

With such a large amount of sugar and caffeine in me, I think it was a mistake to drink the ice tea at dinner. I am still wide awake.

3/28/06

Tuesday, 8:04AM Penang, Malaysia time

I know I am tired since I got really angry at the hotel staff for being inefficient. Usually, that staff doesn't bother me as much, but it is very hot and humid. The lobby was not air conditioned, and their delay meant I was sweating in my suit, minus the jacket. It was something I had hoped to avoid, until at least later in the day. I have to be careful. Sleep deprivation has slightly altered my perception and personality. I must remember I am in a foreign country, and I can get myself into

trouble if I cause any problems.

Yesterday went very well. We started off at Celestica Corporation, where they gave our new product line a very warm reception. Ben forwarded them more information about it last night. Then, we went to Shinei Corporation and again we got a very good reception. Our new product seems to have very good legs. Things are looking up.

The car air conditioning is working well. It is getting much cooler, as are my nerves.

3/28/06

Tuesday, 3:15PM Penang, Malaysia time

We met with a representative of the metal/plastic material manufacturers, and then we all had lunch. He agreed it would be good if we could work together. In fact, he came with us on our call to Flextronics. Unfortunately, I either had the wrong location or the man I went to see had moved. We did not have time to find the right building, so we left for the airport and flew to Malaysia.

When I book hotels online, I am generally looking for a nice place. Maybe it has a pool, and is safe enough that I am not concerned with walking outside. In this case, the hotel I chose turned out to be a tourist resort and looked like Honolulu, Hawaii. I found it to be a pleasant diversion from the business we had been doing. For dinner, Ben had already spotted a place across the street, so after a quick swim and walk to the oceanfront, which was beautiful, we indulged in some local cuisine.

I got up early to walk along the waterfront, but I did not feel safe. I backtracked to the resort and spent an hour walking along the route by the various swimming pools. It was quite pleasant. I checked in with the office where everything was fine. The joint venture with Lencon was almost ready to go. Then I called my wife, and things seemed fine there as well. I miss my family a lot.

Our calls went well. Our new product line is sparking interest, pending samples that prove their worth. We are back at the airport. Ben is out buying candy for our crew in Xiamen, and I will probably do some emails. I will get very tired soon, but not yet. I plan to pick up some dinner during the layover for Kuala Lumpur. I hope they have a Subway restaurant or something like that there.

3/28/06

Tuesday, 9:11PM China time (8:12AM EST)

We have about two hours to go before we get to Xiamen. We were delayed due to thunderstorms. It was very hot in Malaysia, in the 90s F with high humidity. Xiamen is probably pretty warm, but where we go tomorrow, Qingdao, should be cooler. If all goes well, we will get to our hotel between twelve and twelve thirty tonight. I have to be

downstairs ready to go at 5:30AM, which means I will decide about exercising when I get to my hotel room. It depends how tired I feel, if I do something tonight, early tomorrow, or both, or neither.

My body has been extremely good to me, and I must be careful not to abuse it while trying to help refuel. It is fine to walk, but I need to be watchful since I am not getting enough sleep. I can tell that because the spots in one of my eyes, called floaters, get worse as I get less sleep. Today went well, but sometimes it is difficult to maintain a thoroughly cheerful attitude, especially when you are moving in a direction that few can see and others feel is fraught with extreme danger. I am fortunate to be surrounded by supportive, intelligent people who do not hesitate to question my directions and give their approvals as they see fit. I can trust their advice and know they will be straight with me.

While walking around this airport, I spotted an Italian restaurant. There, I got salad, pastas, sauce, and fresh fruit to take on the plane. It was very good but I got some salad dressing on my pants. These are the same pair that I partially split, sitting in a chair that was too small, at lunch a little while ago. My shirt also lost a button, so I will try and retire these clothes until I get home and move to my other set. I am tired. It's time for a nap. I am listening to Michael Gettel, which is good music for sleeping.

3/28/06

Tuesday, 10:54PM China time (9:54AM EST)

I slept for a while, but the combination of the extremely powerful music and sleep deprivation produced some violent and emotional dreams. In one case, my family had two dogs and they were suddenly both lost. In another, I passed a woman in a hallway. I could not see her, but she was very angry with me. Apparently, she had written to me that she loved me and I did not answer her back. This was very frustrating, because I did not know who she was. Obviously, lots of stress and pressure are coming out. Maybe I should go back and sleep some more, and give my mind some more time to act out what is going on. We should be landing in about a half hour. It will be good to see Xiamen again, even if only for a few hours.

3/29/06

Wednesday, 7:33AM China time (6:33PM EST)

I got to my hotel room about 12:45AM last night. I figured I would be in no shape to exercise before I was due to be picked up at 5:45AM, so I did a little then and got ready to take a shower. I had already telephoned for my wake-up call, but this was a Chinese hotel. The person's English was not too good, so I was only moderately hopeful that the call would be coming. I had my own alarm clock, of course, so I wasn't that worried. To feel safe, I do like at least two sources to

be ready. A few minutes later a man called for what I thought was to reconfirm my wake-up call. He only spoke Chinese, so I said yes, and figured that was the end of it. A short time later my doorbell rang. I thought it might be Mike from our office who was visiting Xiamen. Instead, it was a pretty woman about twenty years old who smiled sheepishly at me, and motioned she was there to give me a massage. Judging from her eyes, she also looked like she might be on drugs.

Now, for all of you men out there who fantasize about a situation like this, when you are far away from home, on the other side of the world, and a beautiful young woman comes to your door at 2:00AM and wants to give you a massage and obviously anything else you want, it's amazing, right? A dream come true, right? What would you do?

You are tired, homesick, lonely, and this person is all too willing to do anything you want, and for probably not too much money. The answer is simple: you push her gently back out into the hallway, lock your door, and go back to what you were doing. Besides, being germ and disease phobic, I am very happily married and would not be able to look my children straight in their eyes if I did something like that. Temptation can be a good thing, and it was nice to know I did not give in. The head of the "massage service" called me back to find out if I still wanted a service and I said no. The rest of the evening, what was left of it, passed without incident. I ended up getting about two hours of sleep.

Ben and James, our driver from our Xiamen facility, picked me up this morning. I looked at Ben and jokingly thanked him for the "hooker" last night. He was in horror when I told him what happened. Apparently, it was common place for this to happen at hotels that were way below the level of the one I was staying in. He thought the massage people had someone watching the hotel entrance, and must have spotted me as I came in. Another adventure for life on the road.

Today, we are going to Qingdao to see three customers. I am hopeful the positive reception for our new product line continues.

3/29/06

Wednesday, 9:26AM China time (8:26AM EST)

The flight into Qingdao is taking longer than I planned, and we will now be late for our first appointment. As soon as we land, I will ask Ben to let the customer know we are on our way. There is only one person that this affects; I had only told the others we would be there in the morning. This was obviously my fault in timing. I do the best I can. When you start on a sales trip, you throw your hands up and hope for the best. If you are fortunate and plan really well, then there are not too many surprises. Otherwise, who knows? Since I am coming from half way around the world, the odds are good the buyer involved will not be too upset. I am looking forward to seeing Qingdao again, and then Shanghai.

Alice sounded like she had a crazy day when I spoke with her. It is frustrating, since we can only talk between plane rides and there is a thirteen hour time difference. I plugged in to power my phone last night. The power cord did not work, so I may have to use Ben's. At the hotel later, I will have Alice call me. I can use the hotel phone, so it should take care of the telephone problem.

The further we go with this whole international adventure, the more I am convinced that the biggest profits lie in the United States and Europe, not in Asia. We have to be in Asia because of the global presence needed. Being able to produce products in China is also very economical, but the sales will be from other places. If I am correct, then we should be well positioned. Eventually, if we get too big for Xiamen, we will move the manufacturing center to a bigger location. We will keep the original space there as a condo unit for the joint ventures. We only have to have success in a few areas to potentially make a lot of money. Ben is also excited about the possible trash-to-power project that I brought to him from the United States. It would involve taking the garbage from a whole city and converting it to power by efficiently burning it. He needs to find a specific town, and then I can start looking for financing.

Projections for the first quarter sales are about ten percent above last year. If this holds, it will be very good news indeed, especially with all of the business we have been diverting to IJX.

3/29/06

Wednesday, 6:39PM China time (5:39AM EST)

We are on our way to Shanghai. The day turned out well; we had calls with Lucent and have the chance to pick up more business. Then we went to Viasystems, where we will hopefully be getting their label business. Then it was on to Pentair, where again our chances for label business seemed bright. We showed the people at Lucent our new metal/plastic material, and they were interested at the prospect of saving money. They spoke about one of our competitors from the United States, but since they had no presence in China, their market share would be decreasing. Lucent also wanted us to put in an art department in Xiamen, which was something we were planning anyway.

3/30/06

Thursday, 5:42AM China time (3:52PM EST)

I am faced with a dilemma: I want to be outside walking, but the pollution level is so bad that I do not want to subject my body to it. On the other hand, I need to be on the phone, and doing so on the treadmill will disturb the people near me. I have decided to go outside. Hopefully, the good effects of the walk will counterbalance the other. Ben is working on finding a test city for the trash-to-power unit. We need to do

something here, as the pollution levels are killing the population.

3/30/06

Thursday, 1:50PM China time (12:50AM EST)

I got up at 5:30AM. It wasn't easy, since I was on the phone with Al until about twelve o'clock last night. I went out for a walk, spoke some more with my wife, and told her about the massage episode. She did not think it was funny. Then she mentioned that Dave Williams had called, and we are biking this Saturday. I went to breakfast and surprised the counter man with my order of six eggs, but I got what I wanted. We then went to Comair to discuss the label problem they were having. In the initial meeting, it seemed like they were being totally unreasonable. I said to Ben if they stayed like this, we would tell them to either pay their bill or we would cut them out. But the head man came in to go over the real problem, which turned out to be a combination of too many screw holes across a long panel. The tolerance level buildup between the label and the panel meant that the holes on the far side would probably not line up. Once the label did not line up with the holes, then nothing was going to work and the label would show evidence of stress marks. This is when the person tries to "make" it fit.

After we actually saw the problem, we worked out some solutions including using pegs in the holes for placement points, changing the screw heads, or even changing the design of the panel. I emailed the main designer in Ireland and their man agreed to try the same solutions. What seemed like a bad situation, heading for disaster, turned out well and everyone was happy.

We then went to Lucent, where they told us we were in line for more business. This was because we were now an in-country local supplier, where our main competitor was not. It is apparent we need the art department set up as quickly as possible in Xiamen, and we will get right to it. They wanted us to quote an injection molded plastic part, but I said 'no' because this was not our strength area. There were many injection molders in the area, all willing to work on razor thin profit margins. I wanted us to stay in our strength area of converting metal panels to plastic. We could use our design expertise, new material, and hopefully show immediate positive results.

Ben and I then had chicken, fried rice and watermelon juice for lunch. It was really good. Afterwards, we went to Motorola. It was there that I felt our luck had changed. We went to the wrong building first, which was my fault. When we got to the right building, the engineer had been taken to the hospital that morning and there was no one for us to see. Salesmen go in streaks and mine has been amazing. Now it has turned and I have no problem with that. We have one more call to make on Shinei, which probably will not amount to much, since my luck has changed. Then we are done for the day and the rest of the trip.

I plan to spend my remaining time here exercising and relaxing. Then I will write a proposal for another printer, which may want to buy a partial interest in IJX. I will also call Al tonight and check in.

3/30/06

Thursday, 3:42PM China time (2:42AM EST)

We just left Shinei. Again the metal/plastic really wooed them. They gave us the contact for their research specialists, so he could review the information, and showed us a cover that was very expensive due to the additional shielding coating it needed. I looked at it, recognized the program involved, and came up with the idea to use a conductive label, which would negate the need for the extra coatings. This would save them a lot of money. I will pursue it as soon as I get back to the States. I guess my luck has not totally left me. We are now on our way to drop Ben at the airport; it was good to see him again.

3/31/06

Friday, 12:16AM China time (11:17PM EST)

I am now at Shanghai-Pudong Airport and am on my way home. I should be back at Newark/Liberty Airport in less than twenty four hours. I actually got my first good night-sleep in a while and woke up about 6:30AM. I went for a walk along the streets of Shanghai. They are mostly lined with what I think are Elm trees, and almost all have lights mounted on them. It is a beautiful sight at night. I spent most of the time walking while on the phone with Al. We had a lot of pricing to do. It is amazing that we almost speak in short-hand now, since we know each other so well. We got a lot done. Then I went back for breakfast, got ready, and now I am here after going through security. The pollution in Shanghai is quite noticeable, judging from the air and not being able to drink the tap water. Each city is a little different, but the air pollution is very evident here.

I am hoping we can work out a deal where we start collecting and delivering garbage to energy plants here. It will mean finding venture capital, probably one hundred million worth, making a deal with a Canadian design firm, getting through all the relevant Chinese regulations, and then putting it all together. It sounds like a perfect project for us. We will go for a small percentage of the company, since getting a fee does not interest me. If it works out, we will help build a chain of these plants across the country.

(3:15AM EST)

It is so easy not to get cocky when traveling. For example, we got into Osaka on time, and there was a sign for all people going on my flight to go directly to the gate. The only problem was I missed the sign, and ended up going through immigration out to the main area, where I got my two

boarding passes. Then I went back through immigration, security, and now I am back to where I should have started about half an hour ago. I am none the worse for wear, save some mental turmoil and somewhat sweaty clothes. It was a little problem, and I have moved onward.

I realized about an hour ago that I am speaking for the NJ Pollution Prevention Group soon, and I have not gone over my speech. Not that I have anything written down, but I need to go over it a few times if I am to be ready. It is for fifteen minutes. I will briefly cover my philosophy on pollution, our family history in the printing business, and then end up with our new plant in China. I will also detail how we are working on integrating not only our two sites, but other companies in joint ventures and adding on more locations in the future. I think it is a fascinating story of a small business, but then I am prejudiced because I am living it.

From what I can see, it looks like a nice day in Osaka, although I am not out in the fresh air. From what I have heard, New Jersey is in springtime now, and I look forward to my ride on Saturday morning. Uncle Dave says he has a prospective joint venture company, and I am excited to hear about it. It is Friday morning in New Jersey, and I would normally be getting up in forty minutes. I hope my interior clock is okay by Monday morning. For now, I feel good and look forward to getting settled on the next part of the trip.

3/31/06

Friday, 8:03AM EST

We are flying towards the International Date Line at a speed of six hundred thirty-eight miles per hour. The estimated time of arrival is less than nine hours to go. I am preparing my log for Monday, including all of the things I need to address from the trip, plus my regular stuff. In retrospect, the trip has been a success. We saw a bunch of people, almost all whom have an interest in our new product line. They seem to have no problem with accepting us as injection molders, and are willing to consider us for the future. I am happy with the way everything has gone. I am definitely ready to be home again.

3/31/06

Friday, 1:53PM EST

It will be two hours and fifty-four minutes more until we land. I must have fallen asleep for more than five hours, which is great. We are nearing the coastline of the United States.

3/31/06

Friday, 7:00PM EST

I am on my way home from Texas. I called in to Al and things are crazy but good. I am going to treat myself to a movie, assuming I can

Chapter Four

4/1/06

Saturday, 11:44PM EST

Today is April Fools Day in the United States, a stupid “holiday” and one I do not participate in. It is also the night we turn the clock ahead, which means we get an extra hour of sunlight for the next few seasons. This is much better in terms of doing things at night. I will play tennis and ride my bike tomorrow. Then, I’ll go see my mom and dad. Everyone in the company did well while I was gone and I should be caught up by Monday.

4/3/06

Monday

The Lencon JV is underway; Ben should get back to me soon, as to what Jeroen and I have to do to get started. The JV with the printer will not happen; like all possibilities only a few that start will ever finish. My daughter Kayla is now fifteen years old. She is amazing.

4/7/06

Friday, 11:14PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I had lunch with my friend John Rudder today. He is a wonderful resource to talk to about what is happening in China and everywhere else for our company. He seems to be positive on virtually everything we are doing. He is a good man and I treasure his opinion. It is hard to find people with a clear sense of what is really happening.

So far we are about ten percent ahead of last year. If my projections are correct, we can triple our size within 24 months. If I am right, it will be hard for us to keep up. I already have drafted an expansion plan, which can be instituted within thirty days, that should be fast enough to get us going. Once the window opens, it will not remain so for long. We have to penetrate the market quickly. We sent Rich’s (one of our graphic designers) version of the new JV logo to Lencon today. Preliminary opinions are positive. We should settle it on Monday.

4/9/06

Sunday, 9:54 PM EST

It is Sunday night again and my thoughts wander about what it could be. I am very worried about a pandemic flu. Reports are coming in about possible outbreaks and it is very scary to think about it. If a pandemic flu does occur, then world chaos will probably follow to some extent. At the very least, it means that businesses will slow down for a while, if not virtually stop. If that happens, we will be reasonably

saddled with a high overhead with all of the recent expansion in China. We would have to downsize quickly, and it would not be pretty, especially with the money we owe and the banks holding my main house as collateral.

If there is no pandemic or other major catastrophe, then the world continues as it is and our expansion should place us in a good position. It will also mean we should be able to reduce our debt more quickly, and potentially move on with our expansion plans to Europe, India, or the Middle East, or to a combination of all three.

There are so many possibilities, many of them good and some of them really bad, that it makes my head spin. I read news about injection molding companies and I see so many of them either merging or going bankrupt. There is a giant consolidation in the industry. So far, there is no mention of anyone else going into our areas, where we are hurtling ourselves. A niche market is a wonderful thing. Hopefully, it gives you time to find the next level, or a new niche before the competitors swarm in and destroy the high-profit potential. The clock is ticking, I can feel it. We are moving as quickly as we can. We next have to get Underwriter's Laboratories approved for injection molding, and get our new product line approved for use by the Telecoms. Then we can be ready to strike.

There is so much business potentially happening, but we have to keep it straight while still conducting everything else we need to do. For tomorrow, I will continue to get ready for our quarterly Quality, Environmental, Health and Safety meeting, which is already late. That's my fault again. We have refocused our efforts on increasing quality and decreasing mistakes. Everyone is now watching more closely than before to how and why they do things. This will help them cut down on problems, and have people be more accountable for their mistakes. I have a feeling that the problems we find will start pointing more and more towards the individuals responsible. They either have to get better, or will have to leave.

Rich is ready for China. His Visa should be here by the end of the week, and will be gone for a few weeks starting the day after Easter. Another new chapter in our company begins when Xiamen's art department is ready to work. We move forward. There is no other way to go.

4/14/06

Friday, 9:58PM

I got word today from Ben that the JV with Lencon is far from being almost free in regards to the Chinese government. Suddenly, the investment level requires a hundred thousand dollars, which we knew nothing about. The Chinese government is notorious for changing or adding regulations. Finding out about this requirement, only after we started the process, is not unusual. This is a big chunk of money I had

not counted on before. We will have to see if we can work it out.

Rich is very excited about his trip. He has never been outside the United States, and he is going half way around the world alone. If he can get through this, then I think his life will be changed for the better.

The number of non-conformance reports have skyrocketed. I now have everyone watching everyone else, to see where the true holes are. All in all, the company is doing well, as is IJX. The new possibilities for the new materials are amazing.

One of the big Telecom shows, Globalcom, comes in June and we have to be ready with our new product launchings. Only then will we have the chance to capture a segment of the market. It is very exciting and daunting. If it works, we could be launched to the stratosphere. If not, we keep plugging as we have done before. We are having problems programming our CNC machine; if the current operator can't do it, then we will have to replace him.

Business has been good, and we are about thirteen percent over last year, even with the work we have moved to Xiamen.

The Jewish Holiday of Passover is in progress. We had the two Cedars this week, the first night at my brother Ira's, and the second night at Wendy's sister Barbara's. Good memories were made at both. I sent in my version of the "Guy Noir" segment to 'The Prairie Home Companion' show on NPR Radio. No word yet, but it would be very cool to hear my story on the radio this summer at Tanglewood.

Vinnie and I will go back to Asia probably in mid-June. We are both excited as we like it there. It will be very hot and humid, but it will give me a chance to see everyone.

4/16/06

Sunday, 3:36PM EST

New Jersey - Home

This morning, I played tennis with my brother. It was our first time outside this season on the Har-Tru (clay based) tennis courts. As is normal with this surface, the tennis balls were taking some strange hops. Neither of us was in a killer mood, and since there were few people on the courts, we were able to talk throughout the match. It was pleasant. We got some exercise, and it was great being outside. My brother is a wonderful human being, full of empathy, compassion and fiercely loyal. We often talk about our relatives, life, and business. He is in a completely different business than me. He is a dentist and he has a great feel for the marketplace. Although he would say he would not take the chances I do, he is a great sounding board.

I am sitting on my porch. It is Easter Sunday and a gorgeous spring day, with the temperature in the 60s F. As I look around, my dog Bailey is sitting at my feet, content to be in the fresh air with me, except he just heard something in the house and left.

I gaze into the woods in my backyard and see the forsythia is blooming, which reminds me that the allergies have been bad for the last few weeks. Spring flowers are wonderful as are budding trees, but the unintended result is a lot of sneezing.

My daughter Kayla got her top-teeth braces off today. She has been very excited at the prospect and she looks really good. She also just turned fifteen years old, which means I may have a lot of trouble with boys soon. Her bottom-teeth braces come off in June. My tentative trip to Utah with my eldest son Ben is not definitely off. He is staying in Cleveland for the summer, and during that time of the trip I should be in Asia with Vinnie. I want to get to Cleveland this summer to spend some time with my son. Our last trip was a lot of fun.

4/18/06

Tuesday, 9:48PM EST

New Jersey - Home

My Mom is still in the hospital. She fainted yesterday and broke her ankle. The good news is she will not be operated on. She should be out of the hospital on Thursday, and they may have to do something to make sure the clot in her leg does not go into other parts of her body. I hope she is okay.

Apparently, our offer of not charging for molds is causing some industry consternation. They are considered such a large expense that no one would ever consider doing this, or offer free artwork, set-ups, tooling, and stocking for that matter. But it has worked really well for labels, so let's see if it does the same for injection-molded parts. We will change the market. Many suppliers will not be happy, but many customers will be ecstatic. It is obvious where my loyalties lie.

Ben has been working with a solar company in China to see if we can become the United States distributor. Solar is exploding in this country and around the world, and there is a shortage of materials to make the panels. We believe that if we have the product, then it will be relatively easy, especially through our EPA contacts, to start supplying companies in the United States. We are just talking with them now, so it is a long way before any agreement can be struck.

Rich, from our office, is now in China. He is not sleeping much his first night, but that should equal out soon. It is his first time out of the country and is doing well.

The joint venture for Lencon is probably dead. At least for now, there are simply too many government requirements covering our potential areas to make it worthwhile. At the last count, we would have had to put in a hundred and eighty thousand US dollars just to get started. However, we can still work together on projects and see how things go for the foreseeable future.

I proposed hiring Jeroen and Jan Willem as vice presidents, on

commission from IJ Xiamen, to give them almost the same thing but with none of the start-up costs. We have to check how we can pay them. Doing the JV's is tough, but once we get it down it should work out well. We have a conference call with Jan Willem and Jeroen tomorrow morning.

4/19/06

Wednesday, 9:44PM EST

I am at home, in New Jersey. Mom will hopefully be coming home by Friday. Happily, she does not have a broken knee. The doctors are putting a piece of metal screen into her leg to stop any more of the blood clot from dissipating into the rest of her body, and causing any more problems. The possible deal with the Chinese solar panel company is now dead too. It is amazing how fast the possibilities come and go.

Jeroen emailed and said they would like a letter of agreement, to have at least some link between our two companies, since the joint venture was not happening. When he volunteered to write the first draft, I said it was okay with me.

Tonight, we went to the Papermill Playhouse, a large local and regional theatre. Alex, my son, had one of his pieces of art accepted into a local student competition and it was being shown. His work is amazing. It's time for sleep. I did not get a nap today, but I am not complaining.

4/21/06

Friday, 10:17PM

New Jersey - Home

We have now done as much as we can with the metal/plastic manufacturer, in terms of trying to create joint cooperation. We have brought them to one of our biggest customers, and included them on a giant possible project. They will have to come up with some selling chances for us, or this will be a very one-sided deal, which cannot last.

We got rid of a piece of film making equipment we put in a few months ago. Not all ideas work, and certainly this machinery did not. I accept the fact that it was not the right decision for us, and will absorb the loss in money. The same may hold true for the CNC machine. I take a lot of chances. Some work, others do not. I have to be prepared for the consequences. Business has been good which makes the ideas that don't work much easier to handle.

Mom is home from the hospital which is great. Kayla is flying to Europe which is also wonderful.

I am spending a lot of time in upper level activities that are having less to do with the day-to-day activities of the company. We put in a new order entry system a year ago, and I still don't know how a lot of it works. In addition, I will slowly start to give up my Quality, Environmental, Health and Safety System related duties. I will start

passing those on so I can concentrate on sales and coordination of all of our activities. I have moved up and everyone else is doing the same. It is a joy to watch our people grow and take on more responsibilities. It is a lot of fun to see them try new things. Sometimes, it is expensive and my frenetic speed to act costs us money, but the benefits far outweigh everything else.

4/22/06

Saturday, 10:47PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Today, I got an email from Ben in China. It seems he and some of the others took Rich, from our office here in New Jersey, to a wedding dinner. In addition, Claire, one of our people there, took him for a visit to one of the nearby islands on Sunday. I emailed Ben back and asked if Rich was ever going to want to come back home again. He seems to be having such a great time. I look forward to going back to Asia in June.

4/25/06

Tuesday, 9:35PM

New Jersey - Home

My daughter Kayla has been on a school trip in Europe for the past few days. Unfortunately, the credit card she brought is not functioning in all areas. Her cash supply has been getting lower. As of yesterday, she asked me to wire her money, as the credit card will work for purchases but not for cash. So I began my morning calling American Express. Through their platinum card and their global assist network, I was able to set up the funds transfer. After a lengthy interview of questions to assure them of my identity, I made calls to my wife and middle son, since I don't know a lot about what kind of car we have and where the card has been used lately. (I try to center on the important stuff.) Finally, they agreed that I was Andrew Jacobs. I am glad they checked so thoroughly, though. As of a few minutes ago, when I called to confirm, everything is set to go and she can pick up the money.

This money issue has been tough on her and has affected her trip, but it has also been a really good lesson on being out in the world. I miss her a lot. Hearing about how some French boy was following her group is not helping me. She is growing up quickly and I am having my problems with that. She cannot come home soon enough.

I spoke to Wendy and Alex a few times today, both to get details for American Express, and to say hello. The college tours they have been doing have gone well. They have seen Tufts and Boston University. Most importantly, they are getting along well and are due back tomorrow. Both my dog and I are very happy about it.

Ben has been contacting more solar companies with the idea of importing them into the United States, but nothing firm yet.

Rich is doing well in Xiamen and seems to like it there. Even with the business we have sent over, we have still been running ahead of last year.

I got my son Ben's CDs in yesterday from his new band. I could not touch any of them because we had not sent out the check to pay for them but that was mailed today. I will start giving them out tomorrow. He has real talent, of course, but I am prejudiced in my viewpoint.

I miss my wife and I miss my kids. I want my family back together, again. The four of us, at least, and hopefully, Ben back once in a while.

A family friend had a stroke this week. He is fifty-two years old. I went to see him today. Thankfully, his mind is fine and his body can be reconditioned with therapy. I hope it all turns out well with him. He seemed very glad to see me and was smiling. It was good to see him.

I have been looking for a new primary care physician, as my current doctor is not in my network as a primary care specialist. I have an appointment with a new doctor on Thursday so I can get a referral for a colonoscopy. I hope I am fine, but it is something I think should get done. I like my old doctor and will keep him even though I have to pay more. He can't refer me, so I will go the route needed for now.

Feedback on my new book has been mostly positive. People seem to like being with me on my adventures. I will keep going.

4/27/06

Thursday, 9:56PM

New Jersey - Home

I started negotiations with my eldest son Ben, in order to use his band's new CD as a mailing, which we hope to send to our customers worldwide. "Give a piece of yourself," I was advised once a long time ago. The advice has stood me well, whether it is through my newsletters, books, or speaking in front of audiences. Becoming personally involved with people in general, and our customers in particular, has proven to be of great worth to all sides. To get to the personal side means to go beyond mere profit and loss, order to order, and business in general.

When you give part of yourself and do something most others would not, people become actual people. Bringing my son's band music to our customers all over the world will not only expose them to something interesting, but also bring them closer to my family as well. And yes, in the package with the CD will be a flyer of our new product, which will be nationally launched in about five weeks. But that part is expected because, no matter what, everyone knows that business is business. The more you are willing to put yourself "out there," including your family, then the more people will trust you with their own lives and be willing to try you for all areas, including business that they might not have before. My son still has to get an okay from the last two band members, but so far it looks like a good deal for all.

They get the exposure and the hundred CDs I will make for them. I get the right to make as many copies as I need to give out to everyone I encounter, and as I see fit. It is a good thing for us all, the perfect deal where everyone gains on all sides, the kind I love to be involved with.

Today, I went to a new doctor who must be in his late seventies, which is just fine with me. He is competent, confident, and knowledgeable. He has obviously been around for a while, which means his experience level is very high. We spoke briefly as I have had a physical only a few months before. He gave me the needed referral so I could get a colonoscopy, since I am now fifty years old.

Things at work are progressing well, except we still need some new managerial candidates. We have no one at the moment, but I will keep looking. The weather for the weekend is supposed to be very nice and in the 60s F.

4/28/06

Friday, 10:26PM

New Jersey - Home

The month ended today in billing. It was not quite as good as last year, but none the less very good. After some brief negotiations with my son Ben, he and his band have agreed to let us make copies of their new CD, and send them out to our customers in conjunction with our new product launch. I handed out copies to the rest of our people today, and the preliminary buzz on the music is good.

There have been some more talks with the sales people from the metal/plastic maker, but still nothing definite. So far, it has been a lot of talk and no action. Let's see what happens.

There is a cricket loose in this room. I will try to save him.

4/30/06

Sunday, 3:24PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I believe the world is in a good place. How can I say that, with all of the trouble we are currently having like three dollars for a gallon of gasoline in the United States and problems with Iran and North Korea becoming nuclear powers? Every time oil jumps another ten dollars per barrel, it seems that the oil producers are getting richer as are the oil companies, while the "normal" people are getting more squeezed. That is why I am feeling so good about things.

Ask yourself, who have made the greatest scientific discoveries in our world? It was those people who had the need for a major change in their lives. They had enough tools at their disposal and raw materials to be able to create a solution. In other words, when something was needed, it was created. With the advance of the internet, computing in general, and the relative free flow of information throughout much

of our world, the playing field for innovation and modification has stretched itself way past the laboratories of major corporations and universities. These days, if you can log onto the internet then you have access. If you can see what is happening in the rest of the world, then you have the ability to see where we have been, where we are, and where we can go.

An example right now is silica. What is silica? That is the main ingredient in solar panels and it is in short supply all over the world. How do I know? I and a bunch of other people have been trying to bring in solar panels, and other solar related products, into the United States in a big way. Unfortunately, we have been stymied because of the lack of silica. There simply isn't enough. Therefore, there will not be enough solar products for the rising demand, as fossil fuel energy continues to become more expensive.

Our energy options are:

1. Drill for more oil.
2. Conservation, which would be good, but doesn't seem to appeal to most of us.
3. Find new alternative sources of energy. You have heard about hydrogen and wind power, but have you heard of nano solar power?

Nano solar is the next great leap in solar technology. If perfected, it will enable a roof made of this material to power a whole house. In essence, every house would be its own power plant. You can power your own laptop with a piece of the stuff on the outside of the case. Why isn't it out in the public use? Some people say they have it already, but no one is producing it yet.

The point is, when you have an environment where there is a gigantic need, with a chance for many billions to be made virtually overnight by a potentially small group of people, you have one of the greatest contests going for all time. You see, anyone can be in this contest, this race, this jump into the future. Find the answer, and you will not only have the riches of the world, you will potentially help save the planet from both nuclear proliferation and the use of oil as a weapon.

Now, instead of wailing about how bad things are, we should be rejoicing at the chance that we have the means and the brilliant minds available to search for the answers that will help set us all free. Think of it, huge sources of cheap power that are not concentrated in a small area, which are not vulnerable to terrorists. It would make developing the deserts of the world not only possible, but a practical idea. Areas like large parts of Africa would suddenly be great places to set up businesses, and bring in the infrastructures necessary to support them. Africa would become a gold mine of energy, production, potential and money.

So what am I doing about it? I am trying to contact as many people and areas as possible, to try and find that small group of people who are likely to find the answer. Whether it is a bunch of college kids in India, Indiana, Shanghai or Prague, somewhere, someone will come upon the solution. With a little bit of support and money, they can change the world, and I hope I can help. Genius comes in many colors, and I have always been a champion for small business and entrepreneurs. Sometimes all it takes is a little faith, and people can achieve more than anyone thought possible.

I am watching, waiting, and hoping for my chance to find someone who might have the answer. My guess is that many people are doing the same thing, which means it is only a matter of time before the ideas start coming and a technological boom happens. This will begin a new industrial revolution based on clean, low cost power. It will not only help our global economy, but help the world's populations to benefit and work together. As I have always said, the best way to avert war is to do business together. No one wants to shoot someone who can get or bring them business, that can help them raise the standard of living for themselves and their families.

Nothing good comes without risk. If we did not have these problems with oil and the environment, we would never be pushed to find a better way. We could not get there until we have been here. Yes, I am an optimist. Yes, I believe things can be better for our world. I know it is harder to do good deeds, rather than bad; to be positive versus negative; to live on a higher moral plane than not; but we have come to a point in time where we need to move forward, and I believe we can do it now.

Chapter Five

5/2/06

Tuesday, 7:28AM EST

Newark Liberty Airport, New Jersey

Today, I am going to Washington to see the Administrator of the EPA. Steve Johnson will be the third Administrator I will have met. This is only due to my participation in the EPA Performance Track Program and being involved with their Participants Association. Meeting cabinet officers is really interesting. You get to see people close up, and you really get a chance to quickly analyze what type they are and how they got there. The previous two administrators, Christine Todd Whitman and Mike Leavitt, who went on to head the Health and Human Services area, were both extremely competent and confident people. They seemed to care about whom we were, and our role in trying to help improve the environment in our country. Today, it will probably be no different, except this time I am bringing copies of my last two books and yo-yo's to leave with EPA officials.

I hope they like them, and really hope they read the book about our new company in China. One of my long range goals is to try and become the environmental liaison between the EPA in the United States and the Chinese EPA. I want to help them not only talk and work with each other, but help both groups do business in other countries as well. A tall order, I will admit, but someone should be doing it. If no one is picked by them, or the need is not recognized, then I will attempt to do it myself. Since I am already traveling back and forth, it would seem natural for me and my company to become the liaison, especially since I do not have to be paid and I am not politically connected.

Granted, if we can pull this off, I stand to gain huge amounts of publicity and business connections. We can also do a lot of good, too, so I only see it as a plus on all sides. One of the great things about being a capitalist, you do not have to apologize for wanting or making money, or striving for and achieving success. The hard part is trying to make sure everyone will benefit in the process, not only in business, but the people and the world around you. This can sometimes make for a very complicated playing field, but never boring.

Speaking of Asia, Vinnie and I are due to go back in the middle of June. This will take place after my trip to Atlanta next week and Canada the week after. At this point, he will spend the week at our plant in Xiamen. I will be going to Taiwan, Thailand, our plant in Xiamen, and possibly Singapore and Shanghai. As usual, it will be a hectic time but these trips are usually a great deal of fun, and always interesting to write about.

Rich Green has been at our plant in Xiamen for about two weeks,

with one more to go. Judging from his emails, our new art department there is doing well. He really sounds like he is having a good time, too. We joked before he left that if he finds a girl, he may get married and want to live there. While I don't think things progressed that far, he appears ready to return again at a later date.

Spring in New Jersey is in full bloom and it is absolutely gorgeous. Unfortunately, the allergies have been really bad this season. In case of sneezing attacks, I am armed with two handkerchiefs and tissues for this trip. I have tried to stay away from medication, as it usually makes me either drowsy or slows me down. Neither is a state I wish to be in. However, since it is so beautiful here, I do not begrudge the allergies.

My body, which was used to indoor tennis hard courts, has to get used to the clay-based courts again. As I get older, the transition seems to involve more aches and pains, but the chance to be playing outdoors more than makes up for any pain that occurs. My apologies go to my wife, for the groaning that emanates from within me when I move. Of course, the alternative to exercising and feeling sore is not exercising. As long as my body allows it, I will keep to what I am doing.

Business has been very good the first four months of this year. Our location in Xiamen, China, is producing more and more of our business. Our customers are really appreciative of having a "local" supplier in Asia. They have rewarded us with the chance to keep the business we have, and take over from other suppliers that have not located there yet. It was a really big chance to take. So far, it has worked out well. Once we are out of debt for that facility, we will look into opening another one in Europe. Our new injection molding line is doing well, and we have learned a great deal about metal/plastic material over the last few months. We have begun launching our new products, with more coming over the next few months.

Response to my new book "My Road to China" has been favorable, which is a very positive thing for me. Whenever I send out a book or newsletter, I am always secretly worried that people will email me back and say how awful it was. Happily, that has rarely happened, so I will keep writing.

About six weeks ago, the piece I wrote for National Public Radio's 'Prairie Home Companion' "Guy Noir" Segment was submitted. I heard nothing, so I followed up. I got a terse email saying they will contact me if they want to use it. Small wonder why I submit so little of my material to other places. People can be very mean to authors. I prefer to publish my own material, so they don't get a shot at me. Life is too short to be attacked by negative people.

Ever since I was a columnist for a local newspaper, I have strived to be on my own. Back then, they not only passed judgment on my writing but also owned it the second it was accepted. At this point in my life, the chances for me successfully working for someone else

could only be done if the circumstances were in such an extreme, as to make me subvert all of the following: the ability to be in command, the insatiable desire to be independent, and the willingness to accept the consequences.

5/2/06

Tuesday, 3:38PM EST

Ronald Reagan National Airport, Washington, D.C.

The meetings today went very well. It started with an executive board meeting of the PTPA. We discussed an upcoming meeting this afternoon, and some basic stuff like our national meeting in Atlanta next week. It was here that I suggested that we reach out to other countries, and start a dialogue between Environmental Protection agencies in other countries. We could invite them to our next National Meeting, start relationships where we could share information, and to help companies work together. The board liked the idea, so I will start to pursue it right away. I am very excited, as this is what I wanted to do.

It was a fine day in Washington, with clear skies and temperature in the mid-seventies. Some of the members chose to walk the seven (big) blocks to the EPA Building. I and a few others went by cab. When in a suit, I do my best not to break a sweat. It is a philosophy I try not to veer from, unless circumstances force rapid movement in warm temperatures. I figure, I work out enough that I don't have to be uncomfortable sweating up a suit. We got to the EPA where we met some of the friendly faces who run the Performance Track group. Then, we were ushered into a big conference room. Two EPA officials entered who both already knew about our program. We then spent the next forty-five minutes discussing how we could all work better together to expand the program, which was our intent for the meeting.

Ten minutes into the meeting, the EPA Administrator came in for a few minutes to voice his support for our program, and for a photo-op, which is always a good thing for our various newsletters. I had given both officials copies of my last two books and yo-yo's, which they both commented on. I then gave my book about China to the Administrator. We spoke for a moment and I mentioned we were trying to get into the Performance Track-like program in China. He asked me to send him information about it. I later relayed the information to one of his people, but we were never able to make any headway in the China group.

I called the office and everything seems fine. I am scheduled to get home about 6:15 P.M. If we are on time, I may take a walk, go for a short bike ride, or do nothing but eat dinner. The airport is warm, but I am sitting near an air conditioning vent. I have had my quota of diet soda, but I still have some pretzels and a small triple-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich. I may eat it if I resolve to exercise when I get home.

Then again, I may eat it now whether I exercise or not.

5/4/06

Thursday, 9:48PM

New Jersey - Home

Doug Winters became our new manager of manufacturing, and will head the die-cutting and press area. Things in that department went well today and I am hopeful for the future.

Our previous sales from New England seem to be okay, but virtually no subsequent sales have been generated yet by our salesman there. If he is going to stay on, we will need some hard results. Our attempts at creating some strategic partnerships with other companies have so far failed. It may be destiny that we are meant to swim this river alone.

5/6/06

Sunday, 4:06PM EST

Newark Liberty International Airport

The pattern seems the same. I am very lonely and homesick right before I leave and on the way to the airport. Once I get through security and find out about my flight, I am usually okay which is how I feel now. My wife had the chance to go to Hoboken, New Jersey with her sister and niece for some type of outdoor bazaar. I urged her to go, so she would not be sitting with me during the afternoon, just waiting for me to leave. As it turned out, I went to go see a friend of mine in the hospital who had already been discharged in the morning. I could have been annoyed about missing him, but instead I felt so good about him moving on that I didn't care about the wasted trip.

Since I had a little time left before my ride to the airport, I went over to see my parents who live in the next town. When I got there, my brother and his wife were also there. We had a short visit, and then we all went to see a rare pair of nesting ravens that had set up housekeeping on the quarry walls nearby.

The housing complex where my parents lived had once been a working quarry, but it had later been transformed into a condominium/hotel complex. Many years ago, a beautiful pond was formed after the company had accidentally struck water while mining. In the rush of water, all of the equipment was lost. The birds were located on one of the cliffs. My brother pointed out the location, but I could not spot the birds. It was a glorious afternoon, about sixty-five degrees, with a beautiful blue sky. It was nice just being around everyone.

My middle son, Alex, and daughter Kayla, were going to the zoo today in conjunction with the youth group at our Temple. I had already said goodbye to them, so there was nothing left to do but head for the airport. Traveling on a Sunday is a mixed bag; you don't miss any

work, but you really feel alone and out of touch with your normal life. No matter, by tonight, I hope to be in my hotel room in Atlanta preparing for tomorrow morning's opening session of The National Environmental Partnership Summit. I plan to be back Wednesday night and in time for my Thursday tennis game.

Next week, I go to Canada on Tuesday and in the meantime, I am planning a trip to Asia. As of yesterday, I am trying to do something I have not attempted before, in terms of trip itinerary. Unfortunately for Vinnie, my Vice President of operations, who is traveling with me, which means he is stuck with my crazy planning. I am attempting to start at Newark Liberty Airport on June 8th, fly to London or Dublin by the 9th and see customers for a few hours. Then, fly into Singapore Sunday morning. If it works out, it will be really cool and we will probably fully circle the globe on this trip. If not, we will just go to Asia, but I always like pushing the buttons of what is possible. Of course, I have had a few occasions where I have tried something like this and said I would not do it again.

This trip should be reasonably easy. The only presentations I have are to lead one of the panel discussions and participate in another. Other than that, I will talk to people and gather information for the PTPA Small Business newsletter. Then, I will see if I can move on trying to be designated as the liaison between PTPA and other environmental groups within other EPAs of the world.

I just spoke to my eldest son, Ben. He is coming home in a few weeks and I am incredibly excited to see him. He is a truly good person, and I am very proud of being his dad. If all works well while he is home, we can have some time together. I have to go find my plane.

5/6/06

Sunday, 5:56PM EST

Newark Liberty International Airport

As you can tell from the entry, we did not take off at 5:45PM as planned. In fact, we have been delayed about an hour. Truthfully, it does not make any difference. I have already exercised today, just ate my dinner, and have already been working. There is no place I have to be. If I am going to get delayed, this is the type of flight for it to happen. I am greatly looking forward to my diet soda that I am planning for the trip down. Since I already ate my dinner, I am already lighter in the plastic bag carrying department. I did not sleep well last night, maybe in anticipation of today's trip. I have about an hour to go. I will probably wander around for a while and then go back to the gate. As I said, this is far from the worst thing that can happen. It beats missing a connecting flight any day.

I got an email yesterday from the metal/plastics manufacturer, telling me they did not want a formal agreement. As I mentioned

before, it looks more and more like we are going to do it alone. They want me to come in to talk. Talk does me no good but I will keep trying for now. I would like to get access to their representatives to sell our labels. I would also like to use their technical back-up, but so far I don't see any real help coming.

5/6/06

Saturday, 8:52PM EST

In Flight to Atlanta

We are on our way to Atlanta, and will be landing there about 9:40PM. I have no idea how far the hotel is from the airport, but I think I will be ready for a hot shower, snack, and some sleep. I did not get the diet soda but the water has been good. We don't have a lot of room in these seats, and it will be good to get off the plane and stretch. By coincidence, our PTPA chairman is sitting two seats away from me. We agreed to share a cab to the hotel. When the person sitting between us asked who we were, I said we were environmentalists. I have never introduced myself that way before. Tish represents one of the biggest companies in our group, and I one of the smallest. However, in this particular area we are equal. We are both striving to make things better, and impacting others to do the same. It is a nice feeling to be one of the good guys and I want it to stay that way.

5/7/06

Sunday, 8:26PM

Atlanta, Georgia.

The National Environmental Partnership Summit began this morning for our group and we spent most of the day in meetings, covering all aspects of our organization and membership. There were a lot of people from the EPA, Non-Government Organizations (NGO'S), small and big businesses and academia. It was a cross section of our society, and the conversations throughout the day, both inside and outside the meetings, were lively, controversial, and highly relevant. When talking about the environment, pollution, and energy, no other topic can be more current. We were right in the middle of what was happening in the world.

In the back of the room, I saw the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the EPA, whom I met in Washington on my last trip, and asked him to come outside. I had sent him an email, regarding information about the Chinese EPA and their similar program to Performance Track. He was nice enough to say he was going to read my book about China, and we spoke for a while about my small company starting a second company in China, the ups and downs, and major risks involved. I told him about waiting to help set up relationships with other EPA groups in other countries, to exchange ideas, best practices, and help

spur trade. He liked my ideas, and it was a thrill to talk to someone at his level in the government. That is one of the great things about this program; a small company owner has access to the leaders who can really make a difference. That alone is worth the membership, let alone the many other advantages.

I have had a headache all day despite taking four pills. Since that did not work all that well I am giving up and going to sleep soon.

5/8/06

Monday, 11:36AM

Atlanta, Georgia

I love environmentalists, I really do. They often have sacrificed higher paying jobs for a life of quiet dedication, moving ever onwards, towards their goals of environmental betterment and making a difference. I must admit, I did not go to any of the sessions they had today for specific information on a variety of topics. Rather, I spent a good part of the time just talking to people about what they were doing, what my company and I were doing, and exchanging ideas about how we could do all kinds of things better, whether as a group or alone. One of the best parts of this Summit in particular, and the organization in general, is the free flow of information. I have always found that if I am willing to share various types of information and experiences, then others feel much more at ease to do the same. We ended with our annual awards dinner, and a lot of good people got recognized. It was a lot of fun and I even got a chance later, to swim in the hotel's heated pool. In the end, I got to sleep relatively early.

5/9/06

Tuesday

Atlanta, Georgia

I got up at 4:30 A.M., almost on my regular schedule, in order to make sure I had time to work out, check out of my room, eat breakfast, and be ready for the two panel discussions I was to be involved with. The first involved talking about how to get a small business to consider putting in an EMS (Environmental Management System). My job, on the panel I was leading, was to talk about our experience, why we put in the EMS, why it was a good idea, how we profited by it, and why I would urge others to do the same. Many in the room were in various government posts, and were trying to get small companies to come above the radar, be recognized, so they could show them where they have problems and help to fix them. We all agreed that fear was a big reason for not asking for help, and not seeing a value in spending the time to put in the systems.

I talked about how much money we had earned and saved from the system, and they were interested in our story, but felt we

were virtually unique in our viewpoint. One woman thought that mentoring was the best way to get others involved, and I tended to agree with her. I will bring up her suggestion with the PTPA. Maybe mentoring is the next necessary step in our quest to spread the values of our program. Understanding the fear and advantages can only be passed onto someone who believes what he is being told. In this case, one small business owner talking to another is probably the best way to disseminate the information.

The summit is over for me now, although it officially doesn't end until tomorrow. It was a thoroughly enjoyable and educational experience. I am once again energized to try and get into the Chinese version of Performance Track. I have redoubled my efforts to get in, and asked my partner, Ben Meng, to set up a meeting with their local liaison in Xiamen, China, to see if we can get our application approved, when I am there next month.

My trip to Asia is taking shape nicely. It looks like Vinnie and I will fly to Singapore, spend the night, and make calls the next morning. We will then go to Thailand, and after I will go to Taiwan. Vinnie and Ben will go to Xiamen. Vinnie will spend the next few days checking our plant, fine tune the machinery, offer additional training for our staff, and check out our new die making and injection molding operations; he will be very busy. I will be back in Xiamen on Wednesday night, see the people in our plant early Thursday morning, probably jump on a plane with Vinnie and go to Shanghai for a meeting with Lucent, then go to Hong Kong for the night. I will try and get us reservations at my favorite hotel there, and then it is back to New Jersey on that Friday. Another whirlwind trip, the way I like it. I should know about going to Europe in a week or two, and whether it is just London, or Germany and The Netherlands. If it is just London, I will probably try and make the trip in one day; if there are more stops, I might not be able to do that.

When I get back tomorrow, I will plunge into our various systems and find out why little mistakes are not being caught. I have to wonder whether it is just carelessness or a systemic problem and I mean to find out. Being in charge, and not being involved in day-to-day operations means I can look in at various points to try and spot trouble. As boss, I can act immediately to make changes and fine tune the system. I know my people are all trying their best, so it is not a case of being lazy. My job is to help them find solutions and not be critical. It is my team, our team; we are all part of it, and I will continue to search for problems. It doesn't matter that we operate. I believe, at a much higher level than most other companies. There are still mistakes, so it is not good enough and it will probably never be, but we can always keep improving.

I miss my wife, and my family. I yearn to wake up tomorrow, go to the office, begin to wade through my email, and go play tennis. I will spend the day catching up, and checking how things can be better.

5/11/06

Thursday, 9:45PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I got an email from Pentair today, asking if we were in the front panel business. It was a very strange request, as I had not mentioned to them that we were moving into the area. Obviously, either our customers are talking amongst themselves, or our competitors are talking about it to try and put us in an unkind light. No matter, we are moving ahead, and almost everyone is excited about our expanded product line.

We are currently getting labels and panels ready, for joint marketing and our own marketing at the big Telecom trade-show called, Globalcom, and I am excited that the people from the plastic/metal manufacturer are coming in next week to talk. Monday night, I have to go into New York City. Yes, me, into New York. I have been invited to participate in an advisory board for Kean University's Graphic Art's group, and the first meeting is in the city. Although I am going to Canada on Tuesday morning, I agreed to go because I think it is the right thing to do, not only to give something back to help the students, but to give me a chance to meet the other people on the board. I suppose if I can go to China, I can go to Manhattan.

My father-in-law, Jeff has had a bad reaction to his surgery, but the worst should be over soon. I plan to go to see him on Saturday morning and maybe on Sunday, Mother's Day. He has been mostly incoherent, but has still been asking for me. I feel guilty waiting until Saturday morning, but both, Wendy and my mother-in-law, Bunny, have been there supporting him. Sunday's late morning brunch is scheduled with my mother, father, Irene, and David. David found a restaurant with reservations which was not easy.

I made the plane reservations for Asia. Now it is time to fill in the appointments. We finish up at my favorite hotel in Hong Kong.

5/12/06

Friday, 9:58PM EST

New Jersey - Home

We are planning to move up Rich Green to assistant manager of our pre-press department. He has worked very hard and is doing a good job.

I asked my partner, Ben, to hire a die-maker for the new die section there. I mentioned to him that he needed to be ready for immediate expansion of the art department, which he said he will be ready when needed.

5/13/06

Saturday, 11:11PM

I played tennis with my friend, Bruce today. He had a brain infection last November and he almost died. At the time, I said he would play tennis again and planned for this summer. Today, he beat that forecast and we had a great game. I said to him I was playing him at full speed and barely won. It was wonderful to see him playing again. I am sure he will be beating me again soon.

Tomorrow is Mother's Day, and normally flowers are delivered here by my florist via previous agreement but they did not make it. I hope they are here tomorrow morning. If not, I will buy some myself and call the florist on Monday. They will not be happy with what I will say to them. I also forgot to buy a card for Wendy, even though she is not my mother. Kayla and I tried to get one tonight, when I picked her up but the store was closed. I have a stash of cards for an emergency, and I picked one from there. Her gift was already taken care of in that she bought it herself and charged it to me. That way, I knew she would like it. My wife makes things easy on me, but I should have remembered to buy the card earlier.

I went to see Jeff in the hospital today in New York. On the way, I hit a bird with my car and then almost collided with a bicyclist who was crazy. Then I almost got side-swiped by a bus. Jeff however looked pretty good and I was happy to see that. I found out later he was not doing so well that afternoon; I hope he is going to be okay.

5/14/06

Sunday, 9:48PM

New Jersey - Home

It is Sunday night, again. Will I ever get over the anxiety of the coming week except when I am on vacation? How sick is this to have this time slot on most weeks dedicated to worrying? It is a sad commentary on myself that I am not strong enough to break this cycle. I doubt it will ever happen. As I have been taught, if someone is worrying then often the bad things do not happen or happen to a lesser degree of severity. I don't know whether it is cause and effect, superstition or just in my mind, but it seems to work this way.

My daughter Kayla is in the next room watching television, and punching out the waste area in our printed labels for the office. I bring work home for her brother and her, and they get paid as regular employees. It is a good source of income for them. It gets them interested in the business, which is potentially good for me for the future, and helps reduce the unfinished inventory that needs to be processed. In fact, they are both excellent workers. They have great eyes to see defects and good hands, so it is all a plus.

Tuesday morning I go to the airport early for the flight to and from

Canada. I will drive down and back from the airport, so I don't have to worry about finding a cab. I just have to hope that my car will be okay.

I would like to get some time over the next few months to go to Cleveland and the Berkshires. I really want to see the fireflies, and they are only out for a short time every summer. Jeff seemed a little better today when we spoke to him on the phone. Today, it is Mother's Day and I had brunch with my mother, father, sister and brother-in-law. It went okay. The florist did not send the flowers, so I went out and bought some plants. Then I planted flowers in our backyard and Wendy loved them. She also liked my card; it was a good day for her. She is a really good person and I love her a lot.

Crunch time is fast approaching with Globalcom and our product launch. We have to attack everywhere at once, a true challenge.

5/16/06

Tuesday, 5:58AM

Liberty Airport, Newark, New Jersey

I am on my way to Canada. Yesterday I went into Manhattan and it was quite an experience. I was to go to a meeting for a new advisory board for the printing department at Kean University. I told the head of the printing area at Kean that I was leaving if I got lost. I have never felt comfortable in the city, since I did not get a job there in broadcasting after college. I arrived at the appointed spot and there was no restaurant, so I started wandering around and finally found the right place. There were three men waiting for me, all interesting. Two of them had been former partners in a financial printing conglomerate and they still got along which is rare in the printing business. They had done well, and one had moved onto another company while another became a professor.

All three had gone through the Kean printing program and wanted to see it expand, which was the reason for the board. Cyril Nwako, Director of Kean University's Graphic Communication, department eventually joined us, and we spoke about the possibilities and agreed we would meet again soon, to start setting up the structure of what the board would do. They were pleasant, energetic, and seemed aligned in their quest to make things better, something that I too could agree with. Shortly after Cyril arrived, I had to leave. If I was going to see Ben at home and get some sleep before leaving for Canada, I could not wait. I wanted to work with the group and their new Chinese facility, when it was built. I find Asia fascinating and a place ripe with potential in all areas. But first it has to be built, so the ball is in their court. In the meantime, I will write a proposal as to where I think this group can and should be going, and they all agreed this was a good idea.

It is a rainy, foggy day in New Jersey but not too cold. I checked and Toronto has about the same weather. I am not driving though, which is a very good thing. I will go to the gate and see if I can get a

seat with no one next to me so I can spread out. Either way, it will be okay though. I have my breakfast with me, and I even remembered my electric toothbrush.

Ben from China emailed me with some questions on what to charge our customers. Pricing for our business is “market will bear,” which means it relies less on the actual costs of the raw materials and production, and more on what the people in the market will pay. Pricing this is way more of an art form, and means sometimes you get less than other people and other times much more. You have to be able to read the landscape and the marketplace, and try to figure out when you have to settle for less or go for more. Nothing is written in stone. It can lead to some very difficult struggles within you, but it is the best way to make more money quickly. You have to be willing to go for it sometimes and risk losing the business.

Still, I still need to know what the costs are. Raw material prices can fluctuate, so I need to keep track of everything to make sure he and I are looking at things in the same way.

My son, Ben, is home for a few days and he looks great. He is a man now. I am very proud of him. He will be home a few times over the next month, so I should be able to at least spend a little time with him. What a wonderful human being he is.

5/16/06

Tuesday, 7:38AM

In flight to Canada

The pilot warned it could be bumpy and I think he was correct. I was sitting by myself in this row of three seats across. I was told I would be alone when this man came to sit. He had a British accent. Having an extra seat between me and some one else is a great luxury, and this man and I immediately shared the seat and began talking.

His name was Ben. There seems to be a lot of Bens in my life. He was somewhat inebriated and his niece’s name was Rocky. No last names were given and I soon found out why. It turns out that he is a photographer, a member of the celebrated Paparazzi who travel the world looking for the stars, “participating” in their glamorous lives. In truth, he goes to various locations, after he has been tipped of a possible sighting, and attempts to encounter someone famous, often to their high level of annoyance.

Ben is not like the people you hear about in the press. He does not sneak over walls, get in fights with security guards, or drive up next to people with flash bulbs and force them off the road. He is a very nice, self-effaced guy, the kind you would not normally get mad at. He is very low-key. You can find out a lot about a person when he is drunk. Their true feelings come out. Ben is simply a nice guy who has probably seen more celebrities than the rest of us combined. He

regaled me with stories about being next to beautiful women and some of their more unsettled boyfriends and husbands. He won't tell me any of his adventures because I convinced him to write his own book, but suffice it to say he got to within ten feet of, in my opinion, one of the world's most beautiful women.

Trust me, the stories were great and I will tell my family. He must have an unbelievable eye because he takes so few shots, but scores with great results so many times. It is the feel, and he is in the zone for now. But he is starting to burn out; you can see that the "chase" is starting to wear on him, and I think his days on the hunt are numbered. Perhaps he can move onto other types of photographic venues like magazines, or better yet write a book about his exploits. I even suggested he write a fictionalized version of himself as a secret agent posing as a photographer. Maybe I should do that instead. Of course, my last foray into fiction was not a total success, and my wife did tell me to keep to writing about my own life, so I will leave it to him.

It is amazing when you see someone in "the zone", no one stays there forever and you have to capitalize while you are in it. It is a feel for whatever you are doing; you can sense where the markets are going, what is happening to the people within them, and what goes on within yourself. If you are fortunate your instincts will be mostly right and at sudden times you will suddenly feel "lucky." Your senses will heighten and you know instinctively what will happen, what the "rules" of the game are, and how you need to play it. I find it interesting that this man, who intrudes on others for a living, although he says he is discreet and non-offending, does not want to give me his last name.

It would seem that he wants the same things as the people he photographs, which is privacy, but will not give it to them. Perhaps that is why he has that troubled look in his eyes. The incongruity of what he does is wearing on him which means he will soon come to a fork in his road. He can continue as he is with the dichotomy of making money by hurting people, in which case he will have to start to insulate himself from his true feelings, which might be the reason for the alcohol. Or he will see that he cannot go on with a job that he feels is innately, morally wrong and will have to go on to something else.

Having negative reactions to his work from the people he photographs cannot be good for his mental image, or his life as a whole. The women, alcohol, and jet-set lifestyle are all very alluring, and I am sure to an extent addictive, but he seems like too good a person to stay where he is, even if the money is fantastic and he is the envy of most. In a way, it is like selling something that is not good for you, like liquor, cigarettes, sex, or weapons. Although his photos might not be illegal, the effect they have on the person he "shoots" is understood and he knows he is spreading harm.

Meanwhile, I am eating my breakfast of oatmeal, raisins, cinnamon and banana, and trying very hard not to get it on my suit. So far, so good.

5/16/06

Tuesday, 3:58PM

Toronto Airport

I went to Celestica this morning. The buyer was cordial and we spoke for a while about the possibilities of doing more business, and the parameters in which it would be done. Having the plant in China has given us a definite advantage over many of our competitors, and much of the work that would come out of here would go to them. It would go be shipped to either Canada or Mexico. We would send in six months worth of material and they would pay for it as they use it. While this is very efficient in terms of delivery, it does cause some problems for us, as payment can be delayed until the product is actually used. But it would also mean that we would not have to have a depot in Mexico, which would save us a lot of money and hassles. We will continue to explore this option and see what becomes of it.

Then I went to Sanmina-SCI and saw one of the buyers and two engineers. It went very well and our new metal plastic material might have the chance for some real penetration here. Again, having the plant in China with its additional capability of injection molding is making a big difference. This customer wanted some special foam insulation adhered to one of their parts, so we may have to put that capability into China.

I am now waiting for my plane. The weather isn't great and I have no idea if we will be delayed.

5/16/06

Tuesday, 6:27PM

I am on my way to Newark Airport, New Jersey. It was a weird occurrence when we were told we would be delayed for two hours. A collective groan went up from everyone, and the people spread out to go do various things. I eventually walked down to the main terminal to get some food, and when I returned to the gate area, it was almost empty. The plane had started boarding ninety minutes early. One of the people told me that another passenger, a pretty girl, had called her boyfriend in Newark who was an air traffic controller. He said there was no weather problem in Newark, the reason we had been given for our delay, and he apparently pulled some strings to get us released early. Jubilant, I bounded onto the plane and as I passed the young woman, who had been pointed out to me, I gave her a copy of one of my books with my warm thanks. I just finished my food and we should be landing soon, so instead of getting home about eight thirty, I may be home more than an hour earlier. It is still later than originally

planned, but definitely not a problem. It has been a good day and it will be interesting to see what happens. At the moment, my trip to Asia is next month, but there may be a short one to Europe first.

5/17/06

Wednesday, 9:45PM

New Jersey - Home

It was tough getting up this morning after New York City and Toronto, but I did it and it was a good day. One really big, potential problem for IJX did not happen; the typhoon that hit their island did not cause as much damage as it could have, so we were very fortunate. I had lunch with my son Ben this afternoon and it was fantastic talking to him about school, women and life. I had dinner with Wendy at the local diner and it was again very pleasant, especially after I took a nap on my couch. We are preparing now for our ISO:9001/2000 audit on Monday, which mostly involves paperwork, cleaning up, and checking our various quality systems. These audits are good because they force us to stay ready, continually checking to see how we can improve.

Business for the month has been good, and we ahead of than last year. We are still struggling to give IJX more business, but if things go as I hope that will not be a problem in the future. I sent sample kits to three of the people from Monday night's Kean University meeting. It's time for sleep.

5/18/06

Thursday, 9:50PM

New Jersey - Home

It was my son Ben's Birthday. We had dinner and it was great. Today was also good because my bankers came in to sign some papers regarding our loans and brought their representative in for my personal banking. I wanted out of the lien they had on my house. I offered, after discussion, to put up the accounts receivable of the company as collateral and move some more of my personal business to the bank as incentive. They said they would try, and would get back to me. I have thought about that lien at least a few times every day since it was put on and have not been happy about it.

5/21/06

Sunday Night

New Jersey - Home

We are trying to find ways to keep our team in Xiamen working full time. They are becoming ever more efficient and need more work, more than we can send from here. One of the problems with increasing capacity is you have to increase sales to go with it. Both IJUS and IJX are like ever increasingly eating machines that need more and more

sales to keep them going full time. Ben has started English lessons for our IJX staff to help employees become more valuable.

Through emailing, we both have come up with a similar idea to go into some new areas to make more sales and help engage our people more fully. The Olympics are coming to Beijing in the year 2008, and it is natural to try and capitalize on it. I have suggested we start a line of bumper stickers with slogans that our people can sell through various contacts, events, and any other place they frequent. This will get exposure for our company, help keep them positively occupied, and give them a taste of selling by giving small commissions for what is sold. Next was the question of what we should print, and set up a contest for slogans for our bumper stickers. I checked to see what the Chinese symbol was for 2008. It turned out to be the year of the Rat, which was not a great start but I gave it a try and came up with the following:

- 2008 China Rocks.
- 2008 The year of the Golden Rat.
- 2008 China: The Gold Standard.
- 2008 The Rat Means Business.

Okay, I am not from Madison Avenue, but at least it will give our people a starting point and let them know what I am thinking. I will award a prize or two and let's see what we get. We will set up artwork, and will either email it over to Ben or take them with me. If this works, we can then make T-shirts and all kinds of other things.

5/22/06

Monday, 9:51PM

New Jersey - Home

I am feeling older, and measuring myself against others who have achieved more. While it is true they have probably only achieved it in business, and I have no idea what else is in their lives I still look at them and wonder if I will have the chance at striking it big, and if I will go for it. As a whole my life is fantastic, and I count my blessings all the time. My family, health, friends, work, and workouts are all incredibly important to me and make me who I am. I am not willing to radically change to try and become a billionaire. I will go as I am, taking the large risks that I do, but not willing to risk everything strictly for a dollar amount in my checkbook. We have gone too far and had way too much fun to risk it on something stupid.

It's time for sleep. Tomorrow, I will play with the new guy in tennis and if I am not ready it could be a long hour, but fun either way. Jeff Aaron is supposed to get out of the hospital tomorrow, and I will go see him before he gets out. My friend Bruce was back in the hospital for an unrelated occurrence, and I will also check on him.

The ISO 9001-2000 audit went well today, no problems.

We move forward. The chance to do that is all one can ask.

5/23/06

Tuesday, 1:42PM

Millburn, New Jersey

I am at the office of the doctor who will probably perform my Colonoscopy. I am fifty years old, and the time has come to check if I have colon cancer. I do not know a great deal about how it works, except that I will need to drink some bad tasting liquid. Then I will be put to sleep. When I wake up afterwards, I will hopefully be told that I am fine and that I don't have to worry about this for another few years. We have been trained by our media, in a good way, that when you reach my age you should get this test done. Unfortunately for me, just as I was turning fifty, I changed insurance carriers which meant I had to find a new primary care physician for my health plan. Then I had to get a referral from him for another doctor who would then set up the rest of the procedure. My top-grade general doctor, who unfortunately is no longer my primary care physician, and who I trust implicitly, gave me the name of his doctor. But I had to go to another doctor in between to get the needed referral. I got that from another nice doctor. I found him because he was in my insurance network, and now I am here today for the man who is supposed to perform the procedure. I know it sounds very convoluted, and it is, but that is the American health care system. You have to take the good with the bad.

The first thing I had to do was go through the written application form. After that was completed, I was shown to a check-up room. The nice nurse took my blood pressure, and said it was a little high. This sent me into hysteria as my blood pressure and pulse rate are supposed to be great, especially since I work out constantly. I asked her to take it again and it showed the same thing. "What is going on here?" I wondered. Being an obsessive compulsive already, not only am I now worried about the colonoscopy, but this bit of alarming news about my blood pressure, too. She asked if I had just eaten lunch and I had, but the new surroundings of the doctor's office could be the cause of the higher readings. I have to calm down. I can see the blood pump in my head moving ever higher. "Help!!!" I cried to myself. "It is time to try and relax," I said to myself. I hoped I wasn't saying it out loud. A "little high" means nothing. I work out almost every day. Everything is fine, and now is not the time for a panic attack, especially in a doctor's office where they could sedate me against my will, and who knows what else. Why didn't I bring my wife with me? She would have protected me from all of this. There I go overreacting again.

I had to calm down in case the doctor took my blood pressure

again. Strange surroundings can bring strange emotions. I don't like being in situations where I don't seem to have at least some measure of control. "What if he doesn't like what he sees? He could try and make me stay here." Again, I am talking to myself. The anxiety was building again so I took some deep breaths, and at the same time looked for an escape route out of the room, just in case. Luckily, there was a window and a chair. I could use the chair to throw it through the window and get out that way. A path to freedom, I think to myself. I could leave if needed. I begin to calm down.

I am not great with being told what to do, to be encumbered in any way. Hospitals drive me crazy. The good news is the anxiety is beginning to pass. I am starting to breathe more slowly. Now they should give me that test. Now they should take my pulse. I bet it will be better by the time I leave. I need to get out of here, but I must be patient. This test is important, it is necessary. Colon cancer is a very bad thing, but is usually treatable if caught early. It is very hot in this room. However, I doubt if they would bring in iced tea for the visitors. Anyway, it would make me want to go to the bathroom. Amazing how I can be reduced to a bundle of nerves by one blood pressure test turning out slightly differently than planned. Really, I should have brought my wife with me. If they find something wrong with the colonoscopy they can usually take care of it right away. That is a good thing. Waiting for the results can be a little tougher.

I hope the doctor gets in here soon, so I can focus on something else. I have to remind myself to take my pulse again later. There, I just emailed myself to take my pulse later. I want to see what it is like under calm conditions, especially after I take a nap, which I could really use right now. I can hear people outside the door. When will they come for me?

30 minutes later

The doctor was great and I feel much better. I have to have some blood work done and I am scheduled for the colonoscopy in about four weeks. The day before, I am mostly on clear liquids. They have to start a home procedure to clean myself out. I am sure it will not be fun, but I will probably still play tennis the day before and go into the office very early the day of. Afterwards, I plan to go home and work from there for the rest of the day, besides taking a few naps. It should be an interesting experience; one I hope can quickly convert to an unusual memory and nothing more.

5/25/06

Thursday, 11:40 EST

Maplewood, New Jersey

I am at the blood testing laboratory. The nice doctor yesterday said he wanted some additional blood work, even though I had a full

physical a few months ago. Since he is not my primary care doctor, I have to go to a laboratory. I found this one in the insurance database, which I am very proud that I could access. Being technologically inept meant that utilizing the database was a big deal for me. So here I wait. I have been given an estimate of thirty minutes from start to finish, so I am hopeful I won't be here too long.

Apparently, the procedure here is to have your name called from a list. Then you give them your paperwork, and then you wait again.

I just got my paperwork processed. Now I am waiting for my turn to get the blood drawn. I have recuperated from yesterday's office visit, and I believe my pulse is once again back to normal. Sometimes, I can be very strong and other times not. Apparently going to unknown medical and dental places does not bring out the force in me, so I will endeavor to analyze my feelings and check my fears at the door, especially since nothing has been bothering me. Hopefully nothing is wrong, and I can move forward. In the short term, I am excited for lunch. In the long term, I need to get all my check-ups done and out of the way for a while. I am a high believer in preventative maintenance. Except for a lack of sleep, I believe I take care of myself well. These medical places, although filled with very nice people, still make me nervous. The waiting room is filling up now. I think I got here at a good time. There is a little boy waiting with his parents and baby sister. He is running around with a great big smile, and he is lightening up the atmosphere in the room. Little kids are great, but I think he is starting to get antsy so his parents have their hands full. By 12:20PM I am back in my office. The woman who took the blood was amazing, I barely felt a thing. Overall, it was a very positive experience.

5/27/06

Saturday, 10:58PM

My son Ben got home last night and he looks great. We shared a moment this afternoon and he did not even know it. I had gotten home from biking this morning and he was playing on the piano. He was downstairs and I was upstairs shaving, and the music was flowing up to the second floor and creating an aura of peace. It was an amazing moment, but after a few minutes his ride came by, he yelled he was leaving, said he loved me, and was gone.

On Friday, I got the news that Thailand was shutting down for the two days Vinnie, Ben, and I were supposed to visit. The Royal family had declared it a national holiday. Taking it as a sign, in addition to the floods and the troubles I had with getting appointments in Singapore, I postponed our trip and cancelled all appointments. Almost everyone thought it was a good idea, so I figured it was the best thing to do although I will miss the trip as I like Asia very much.

Biking this morning was beautiful and felt like the first real day

of summer. It is Memorial Day weekend here in the States. It is time for reflection of those who have sacrificed everything for us to be free, and a time for families to be together and have a good time. Normally we would be in the Berkshires, but we decided to stay here since Ben is home to practice with his new band.

This was also the day I had picked for the actual christening of the good ship, *Ideal*. Yes, the famous sailboat that has been in the making for the last five years. As you may or may not remember, we actually got her into the water last year for a successful floating, but had not gotten the sails up. Vinnie and I decided today was the day, so we met today and started to get her ready. The first problem was the trailer was not attached to the car correctly, but we got that solved. Then there was a part broken off the mast, which we fixed temporarily with glue and tape. We loaded the car and off we went. Happily the place we went, called Spruce Run, seemed closer than I thought. We started to set up, which also took much longer than planned as we both forgot how to rig her.

Finally we were able to get her into the water about four thirty in the afternoon. I had started about twelve thirty noontime, and we were way past our timing in terms of getting back, but my wonderful wife was patient, so off Vinnie and I went. We had a few more problems, but once our boat got into the water and the winds took her sail, she shot off into the water. She handled like a dream, and after a few tentative minutes, I started to steer her with confidence and she responded beautifully. We had a wonderful sail and made it back about an hour later. Then we loaded her and got back to the office about three hours later than planned. She had behaved well, but we have to make some adjustments to get her easier to rig and get into the water. I need to find a place where we can keep her partially rigged and nearer to the water so we do not lose so much time in getting her ready. If I can do that, then I think she will be fine to keep. I hope for countless hours of enjoyment with her, and hopefully accompanied by my wife and family, as well as others.

My son, Alex, has been having trouble finding a summer job, so I came up with the idea of creating a product line in China and I want him to design it, from labels, to products, to clothes, I think he could do a great job; and it means he doesn't have to be in the office all the time. It would be great for his resume for college, and to see how much creativity he has for this area. If we like it, we will put it through IJX and can produce everything in China quickly, and at a much lower cost. It could be a win-win for everyone, but he needs to think about it and get back to me.

Tomorrow, I am scheduled to go biking, and maybe go to the movies with Wendy. Then we are having a barbecue. Monday, I am playing tennis. I may go to the office for a while, and who knows,

maybe go sailing again.

Kayla is down at the Jersey shore with her friend from across the street. She is due back on Monday morning and is going to see our niece Jessica who is already down there with her fiancé, Joe.

Things are very stressful, yet incredibly fun right now. Globalcom is less than two weeks away, but our product launch will be ready to go. This new product will definitely be seen as a threat to some of our customers who fabricate and extrude metal, though I hope we can all coexist.

5/31/06

Wednesday, 9:44PM EST

New Jersey - Home

It is the last day of the month, but the sales totals won't be in until tomorrow. Overall, business has been good. We are working as though our backs are against the wall. I know our time is limited, our market window is small. We have to keep pushing to get ready in case there is a backlash from our customers for moving into their areas, and when more business is moved to IJX. I have no excuses. We have been given the time and resources necessary to do what is needed. If we fail, it is my fault.

I played tennis with Paul today. My right foot really hurts and I have inserts for my shoes and sneakers, but it only partially helps. If I stop exercising I will gain weight. It is better to be hurt than risk that.

My son Ben drives home tomorrow for the weekend, and it will be good to see him again. On Friday night we are going to see his band play. Alex got 2100 score on his SAT exam, which is really good. He wants to take them again to try and do better. He wants more help from a tutor. Wendy and I agreed.

Chapter Six

6/2/06

Friday, 10:45PM EST

New Jersey - Home

We went to hear Ben's band tonight and it was fine; not my type of music and way too loud, but they love what they are doing, so that is great. While I was in the outer room waiting for everyone (the music was too loud for me to be in the actual performance area) I saw one of Ben's friends and his girlfriend. They are the same age as my son, about twenty years old, and they had a baby. It was a little hard to believe they are all the same age, and to think that under other circumstances, that could have been my grandchild. Their parents were handling the situation as best as possible. After they decided they were going to have the baby the parents rallied around the kids, gave them a place to stay, and enabled the young man to stay in school. The girl stays home with their daughter.

The parents felt that to punish them, by making the boy work and quit school, would have doomed their chances for any future together, so they pitched in now to try and give them a chance of a future. In retrospect, seeing how everything has turned out, I think their strategy was courageous and brilliant and the whole family seems fine. I hope only the best for them to continue to function, grow and stay together as a family. The situation is not what I wish for my kids, but sometimes you have to deal with the hand dealt and it is a good lesson for us all.

It has been raining a lot, which is good for my flowers and plants. It is fun growing things, especially when it rains frequently and you don't have to water them. May was an excellent month. We are more than ten percent ahead of last year, not counting the business from IJX.

Vinnie goes to Globalcom on Sunday. The time has finally arrived and others will probably launch their Advanced TCA products. It is liable to be a difficult road.

The heavy rain is pretty. I rarely stop to watch it, but since there is a big window in front of me, it is an easy, peaceful view. There is a young woman on my right, writing on her laptop and drinking what looks like a mango smoothie. They are very good, I had one myself. To my left is a group of high school students. Three are dressed very differently from me, but follow some well defined dress code to which I do not hold the translation. I definitely feel like a parent in here, and am reminded of my days as a band roadie when Ben was part of a heavy metal group. Back then, I could be in the parking lot and still hear the music.

Alice's eldest son, Gregory and his new wife are celebrating their

wedding in Switzerland in August. Unfortunately, Wendy and I can't go. We are picking up Kayla from camp that day and she takes priority.

6/4/06

Sunday, 10:08PM

To my senior staff:

Hi everyone,

In order to achieve our expansion goals, I believe we have to expand into some other business sectors and now is a good time.

I think I have been limiting us with some of my thinking. Therefore, I want to give you some ideas to get your opinions:

1. As per my previous emails, I think we should try and get into the Chinese consumer market. While I have no urge to simply supply the same things as everyone else, we do have some unique areas we can attempt to exploit.

For instance, the Chinese people will want to start their own small companies. Who better than an American entrepreneur/salesman like me to show them the way through my books, CD'S, college course, etc? They will of course need to be translated. We can also market back in Europe and the United States about how to get into the Asian market. I believe people will want to hear from someone who has done it, as opposed to a leader of a huge corporation who was not personally involved in the nuts and bolts of the adventure.

2. With this in mind, and helping all these people to start their own businesses, for very little money and direct help from us, we can go on a joint venture with those whose products we can also help market. Some examples include an offset printer, a production house (to create/produce videos, CD's, books, and promotional material etc.), an advertising agency, a real estate, or anything else we might find interesting.

3. We could also bring all this in-house to IJX and do it all ourselves. This idea provides the maximum control, but could reduce valuable input from outside the company.

4. Regarding telecom, the direction we are taking I believe is a good one, so I would say we should stay on this course.

Therefore, I think we should consider the following:

1. Vinnie will help with marketing for North America for Telecom. Vinnie is also in charge of global manufacturing for all Ideal locations, and as an advisor to all new joint venture partners.

2. Ben will be in charge of IJX, all business in Asia, our new push into consumer products, and joint ventures with small Chinese companies.

3. I will be in charge of overall new customer contact, helping to set up all JV's, other marketing agreements, head of overall expansion into new areas, and overseeing the content for the new consumer products area.

4. Mike will be in charge of setting up the overall computer and software systems for IJUS, IJX and of bringing the new company's partners on board regarding their computer, accounting, and ordering systems. I also want him to promote our product design capability.

5. Alice will be in charge of overall operations to make sure everything, everywhere, is getting done, and will also help Lencon and me to market/sell in Europe. She will be also in charge of all in-house sales for North America.

Looking back on this, it seems pretty obvious that if the plans work, we will need to expand pretty quickly in all areas. That means everyone has to stay flexible and be willing to pass off work to others as needed.

I have always tried to hire and partner with people who are better than I am in specified areas, which is evident with all of you. Sometimes it is not easy to give tasks to other people, but it is essential in order for us to grow. We have people to assist us. I will let them help all of us so we have time to do what we do best.

The markets are waiting for us. We need to move now.

Your opinions, especially on the task designations would be appreciated by Monday night.

6/5/06

Monday, 9:43PM EST

New Jersey - Home

A panic attack is in progress. Our people are at Globalcom, and the response to our labels has been strong, but the response to our metal/plastic has been weak. We got some feedback on from one customer who said the new material costs more than metal. This is not a good thing. I am wondering if we are in the right market at the right time. We are on a new road, and if it means finding more new customers for our labels, which was part of the plan anyway, then so be it. Spreading out is a good thing. We will find our way with the injection molding machine. It will take some time. I can't panic. I have to let things work and stay focused and somewhat calm. It's

time to try to sleep. Let's see how well that goes.

6/6/06

Tuesday, 6:57PM EST

New Jersey - Home

It was the best of days, and one of the more difficult. First, the hard part; it looks like our product roll-out has failed. The companies at the trade show had virtually no interest in our metal/plastic parts, and the market is not here, at least with this group. I am highly disappointed. It may be the right time to pull back, reassess the market, and come back at another time in the future in a different direction. The good news is that our labels were very well received, and we have the chance for more business from existing and new customers. The metal/plastic material appears to be too expensive. We will have to find another solution, if injection molding is going to take the place of fabricated and extruded metals.

The good side is that business is very good, which gives me the time to figure out where we failed here and what, if anything, we can do to find a better direction. Maybe I was wrong, and there is no future for this system. On the other hand maybe it is just a false start.

It looks like my book on how to start your own company can be translated and printed in China for not much money. Ben has a man who can get it into the book stores nation wide and create a promotional tour. It has already been approved by Xiamen University, a prerequisite with the government to get into press. Ben has come through once again, and I might realize one of my dreams of having my book available throughout China. It is extremely exciting, and I already have other products to follow if the book gets launched.

6/7/06

Wednesday, 9:50PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I have started work on the audio book. Strange, with all of the pressure I am under, I was rereading "How To Start and Run Your Own Company or Sex, Money and Power ...It's All The Same Thing" and found consolation in my own words. They include the following, "If you can't stand the strain and actually enjoy the stress then get out. Working for someone else in that case would be better for everyone." I love my job, and have no intentions of stopping anytime soon.

Jeff Aaron may need to have bypass surgery. Wendy is going up to Massachusetts again tomorrow. It is unfortunate timing. She is already very tired and will be out driving once again. I hope she and everyone else are okay.

I started a new sales drive today for conductive labels. I think it will be a good hook to bring in new companies. We need them to make

up for the ones we are not getting from the metal/plastic product line. We will probably feel the fallout from our customers who did not join our foray into that area.

6/9/06

Friday, 10:21PM EST

Wendy came back home today, a very good thing, as Jeff is having a heart bypass operation on Monday. His recovery will be slow. Wendy may be spending a lot of the summer in the Berkshires. It is going to be an interesting adventure.

The sales push continues and I feel good about our prospects. Vinnie is moving more into sales and I will do more myself. I am also working on the new audio book and reviewing the workout CD, which is on its way to China. Who knows where all of this can go? I am also still interested in injection molding and quoting non-telecom panel jobs.

6/10/06

Saturday, 10:53PM

New Jersey - Home

I was at Barbara and Cliff's 30th Anniversary party this afternoon, and I sprang my idea for a cookbook on their son (my nephew) since he is a personal chef. It would include getting the fifteen most popular ingredients in a typical Chinese kitchen, and utilizing them to create popular Western dishes. He loved the idea, so I hired him for the summer as soon as we can get more information. His finish date is September the first; he needs to be done with the research and writing by then.

Then I called my son Ben and asked him to help with the recording and music for my new CD, based on my book about starting and running a company, and he happily agreed.

Alex also liked the idea of doing the background for the cookbook, so he will be doing that for part of the summer. With Kay working part time, all of my kids are working in the family business in some capacity.

I wonder if the push I am making into publishing and marketing is because the metal/plastic product line failed. It probably helped, as the best way to battle failure is to attack a new area. As I have said before, the road to failure must be traveled in order to reach the next level.

6/11/06

Sunday, 9:49PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I am very glad I did not go to Asia as scheduled last week; it would have been extremely difficult with everything that is happening. Wendy and Barbara left for the Berkshires today and will be back

probably sometime on Wednesday. They or all of us will go back next weekend depending on how Jeff is. They wanted to make sure they were there in the morning to see him, just in case.

I will follow up as things warrant. I am working feverishly on the new CD, and I reviewed the workout CD which I think is pretty good. We still need a screen saver for it, so I asked Don Argitar, our incredible computer specialist, for a price. I will put the cookbook more in motion tomorrow,

6/12/06

Monday, 9:21PM

Jeff's surgery got postponed. He has a blockage in an artery, and needs a vascular surgeon on hand when they operate.

6/13/06

Tuesday, 9:10PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Jeff had his surgery and seems okay. Wendy and Barbara might be home tomorrow night. I spoke to Cliff today, and we made some arrangements in case anything happens. This weekend we will all go up to the Berkshires for a night, if Jeff is okay. If not, maybe just Wendy or I will go.

I am almost finished with the CD. It still needs to be edited, and then it is off with Ben to record and put in the music. I will send the script to Ben first for review. After that, I am hoping for a few days of relative peace.

6/14/06

Wednesday, 7:19PM EST

Jeff is out of intensive care and Wendy is home. We will see him for a few minutes this Saturday and then go back to our house for a party with all the relatives. Then I get to sleep on my porch and hopefully mountain bike. Maybe the fireflies will be out.

I hope the Chinese government agrees my book is suitable for publication. It is up to them now. It will be a lot of fun if we can do it.

6/16/06

Friday, 10:15PM

New Jersey - Home

Our plans got changed for the weekend. The family was going to go up to the Berkshires, but Jeff is not well enough. Only Wendy and Barb are going up again. It is now a familiar pattern. Wendy leaves, and the kids and I go about our normal routines. We tell each other our needs and work out a plan so everyone is happy. So far, it has worked out well. We are now functioning as a team, and no one tries to take

advantage or be a pain to the others. This is a very good result from a bad situation. It is not always smooth but at least we are all trying. Alex is working for me three days a week in the summer, and I plan to have him work on the cookbook, the board game, consumer products for Xiamen, and maybe the new CD.

So far, Bunny seems okay but the strain on her is starting to show. She has been Jeff's main care giver for a while, and it is a giant amount of work that never stops. My mom's foot, which she broke a few weeks ago, is better.

Marketing our new conductive material for labels has been fun and looks like it has some interesting applications in the Telecom market. Structure is good; there are rules to the game of selling. Put enough intelligent effort into a good product, and there will be good results. It is much easier on my mind working on something I know will produce good things. It will also give me a reason to contact a lot of people, and that will always yield good results. After that, I will move to new prospects. It is all positive, and will continually toughen me up, and make me better prepared for what is coming.

6/18/06

Sunday, 9:58PM

New Jersey - Home

Today is Father's Day. Jeff Aaron is better, which is very good news. Wendy is home for now. She will probably go back up in another week. She is a good person.

I spent my Father's Day the same way as I do almost every other Sunday. I played tennis, rode my bike, and went to the office to check my email and get ready for the week. We went to my sister's house to celebrate her daughter Rebecca's twentieth birthday and also for Father's Day. It has been a good time and I have an incredible life.

6/18/06

Sunday

Livingston, New Jersey

I am sitting in my daughter's orthodontist's office, waiting to get her bottom braces off. It is a momentous day. The tops were taken off last month and this will conclude twenty months of mouth pain. The good news is they are off; the great news is she will look amazing and feels much better. I remember when mine came off about thirty-five years ago and how great it was not to feel the metal in my mouth anymore. She will be incredibly happy in a very short time.

I had a disappointing time at the urologist last Friday. I was going in for a "flow" test, and, for the life of me, I could not get my body to cooperate. I felt extreme disappointment, but the doctor and his receptionist were lighthearted about it, and I will attempt again this

week. A lot of strange things start happening when you reach fifty, with all kinds of new tests to go through and medical things to watch out for.

This Friday is my colonoscopy, which means on Thursday I will leave work early, go home, and prepare. I finally got my DVDs of the TV show, *The Wonder Years*, and plan on starting to watch them then. I am scheduled for early Friday morning. If I feel okay I may go back to work later in the day, or go play tennis. I am taking Kayla to camp next Saturday morning. It will be a mixed bag of emotions, as I know she loves it there, but I will miss her terribly. Because of Jeff's illness and surgery. I will mostly be here, so this summer is not looking like a great time. But such is life, and we will deal with it as it comes.

Business seems to be settling down, after that new business area did not work out, and I am trying to utilize the extreme emotions that were created by my failure to read the market correctly. Those intense levels of energy can be channeled positively. I am determined to take the lesson learned, and not beat myself up for making a mistake. I am hurtling myself and our company forward, in the quest for more and new business. Since there are no boundaries in any areas, there is no reason why those new areas have to be limited to just printing. For instance, the new CD, and now I am working on a related business-based board game. It has been an exciting challenge, and I have put a lot of effort into it. My staff is equally excited. It is wonderful to be able to stimulate and utilize their creative energies, as well as mine, in all kinds of new endeavors. They are up for anything but they never hesitate to voice their opinion, when they think I am going too far off the deep end.

I want this new consumer products division to be a success, and for that to happen my book will have to become at least a partial success, which means a possible media tour to promote it in China. The idea sounds like fun to me, even though I don't speak Chinese and will need an interpreter. The exposure for IJX should be great. Happily, a lot of Chinese want to learn English, and my efforts can also be of help there.

6/19/06

Monday, 9:43PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I went to the urologist. You know you are getting older when you have one. I have had some minor problems. With my family history, now that I am fifty years old, that is not that unexpected. Not a pleasant thing to think or talk about, but one of the facts of life.

The rest of my day went well. Business has been good, and I am selling and working on the game. Jeff is now in a rehabilitation facility for probably a week or two. We should be able to see him in the

Berkshires over the Fourth of July weekend. It will be good to visit and get away for a few days. The lightening bugs in the Berkshires at night are calling my name, and I want to go watch them from the porch.

6/20/06

Tuesday, 9:46 EST

New Jersey - Home

I have to try and keep everyone centered on what is important, especially for me. It is time for sleep. I am overtired. Since seeing the urologist, I seem to be worrying a lot about things I was never concerned with before. I will give it some time. I think I am okay there, but as I said, I badly need some sleep.

6/21/06

Wednesday, 9:50PM EST

I am starting to yearn for the road again. Asia is calling me. Alex starts work Monday. Kayla leaves on Saturday. On Sunday, Vinnie and I go sailing after tennis with my brother. Tomorrow is the prep day for the colonoscopy. I spoke about it too much at tennis, and Ira and Mark were razzing me about it. I hope it goes well.

6/22/06

Thursday, 9:44PM EST

The longest day of the year was yesterday. Winter is once again coming. I watered my plants outside last night. I am finding it fun, and watching the beautiful results is really rewarding. I may extend it further next year.

I played tennis and I then came home and took two sets of medications to cleanse my body. I was allowed certain liquids and gelatin and that is it. Towards the end, I was getting sick to my stomach from the medicine, so I have not had much of an urge to eat anything lately. I look forward to having this done tomorrow morning. I am supposed to be there at 7:00AM. Wendy is driving me and then will be picking me up again. Depending how I feel, we will either go out to breakfast or I will come home and take it easy for a little while. If I feel okay, I will go to work. If I am feeling really good, I will go play tennis. I am sleeping late tomorrow and will get up at 5:45AM to get ready. I figure it is best to give myself as much rest as possible; that is, if I can go to sleep tonight. Things are good at work. Our new sales effort has a good "feel" to it. I got an email from Ben this morning. He found two possible publishers for my book, and he is going ahead with the translation into Chinese.

For now I will try to drink some water and then sleep.

6/23/06

Friday

This is written later from memory, since I have no idea what happened to the entry for the day of the procedure. Maybe I blocked it out? Anyway, I got up and Wendy drove me to the outpatient facility. She left as soon as they took me in. Everyone was extremely nice. They put me in the bed and hooked up the intravenous fluid, I was getting pretty nervous. They wheeled me into another room that had two people, one of whom was the anesthesiologist. I remember she was very pretty and nice, and as I was talking to her I saw her push down on a plunger into my medicine line and that was it. I woke up about an hour later and got dressed. The doctor was there. He was very pleasant and discussed with me that I had a polyp removed and even showed me the picture. He thought everything was good, but they would check it for cancer and call me in about a week. He said I was fine and should go home. Thrilled, I went outside to the waiting room and into the arms of my beloved wife. I then went home and ate breakfast. They had been right, I was definitely not in any shape to play tennis, but I did go back to work later in the day. It was nice to have it over with, and even nicer to get the good preliminary results.

6/25/06

Sunday, 9:38PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Today, Wendy went back to the Berkshires to stay until Thursday. Her Dad is still in the rehab facility, and is doing okay but not great. She took Bailey with her and Alex has been out a lot, so the house is empty except for me. It is a bit lonely, so I have been working to both help pass the time, relax my worried mind, and try and use my energy for a good purpose. The new game is coming along really well, and we will work on it more this week. I went over the script for the book on tape, and I am happy with it. I spoke to my son Ben today. He is a little homesick, but luckily I am going out there, probably with Barry, in a few weeks. Then a few weeks later, he is coming home for a short visit. I miss him, but he sounds great.

I spoke to my dad tonight. He sounds good, and my mom is well on her to being in good shape, so things are fine there. I played tennis with Ira this morning, and left one of my shirts at the tennis club. We started playing outside but got rained on, so we moved to an indoor court and I had to shed one of my shirts. It was protection against the mosquitoes.

I am ready to be back at work. I can get things done there and it is much easier on my psyche. I went online today, and might have found a storage spot for my boat near the lake where we want to sail. It would be great if it works out, and is not too expensive. Then we can keep

everything with the boat there, and it will be much easier all the way around.

6/29/06

Thursday, 9:49PM

The doctor called today. I am okay. My polyp was not cancerous. Great news!! I will call his office to make sure there is nothing more that needs to be done. It has been a heck of a day. Alex had his 2nd day at work here and has done well; we seem to be getting along okay. Wendy is home, back from the Berkshires. Jeff went home today from the hospital. I will now go up with Bailey and Cliff on Saturday to meet Wendy and Barbara in the Berkshires, and then Bailey and I will leave on Tuesday. I am looking forward to a few days of rest, writing, mountain biking, and good food. My wonderful wife just told me the fireflies are out, so I should be able to see them when I sleep on the porch. I plan to work on my game, my CD script, and new stuff. All of it will be lots of fun. I just got word tonight from Ben in China that Xiamen University may indeed be interested in publishing my book, so we may end up going with them. It is very good news.

I spoke to one of our equipment manufacturers, and after talking for a while we spoke about him opening a manufacturing center in our space in China. I offered the idea of a joint venture, and creating a show room for him since we already use his equipment. He liked the idea and said he would get back to us. This would involve some negotiations, as I think he is a very careful man. I am both terrified and exhilarated, which is a good state of mind to be in. Now all I have to do is try and sleep.

Chapter Seven

7/1/06

Sunday

I am at the Tanglewood Music Center in Lenox, Massachusetts and extremely excited. Garrison Keeler is speaking, and the Prairie Home Companion Show will be beginning soon. I have gotten no word yet if they will use my submitted piece for the "Guy Noir" segment. Of course, they would have told me beforehand and I know that, but I am just dreaming of the possibility. It is fun to think about. There was no program for tonight's performance, so one of my dreams has not been shot down yet. Of course, it would have been nice if he asked me up on stage to take a bow or even be one of the characters in my script. There I go dreaming again, but why not? What is so bad about that? I love to think about "what if" and to ponder if there is a higher path that I was destined to travel.

No matter, I will do my best and try to have a great time along the way. It was a long trip up here today, with lots of traffic, but my brother-in-law, Cliff, Bailey, and I eventually made it through. We went directly to my in laws' house. Jeff did not look great, but I will spend more time with him tomorrow. An acquaintance from home called me up here before; his family just bought a place up here and wanted to know if I wanted to play tennis. I hope it can be arranged.

It is both strange and wonderful to be alone here at Tanglewood. It is like I am invisible. I can watch the amazing differences in the crowd, who all seem to mold into a wonderful group of happy, relaxed people, joined together for a brief time. I love looking at people. Tanglewood is one of the few places where you can still bring in your own food and drink. Some people go all out and bring tables, tablecloths, candles. It is a very civilized, refined place that is very calm.

I dropped off Kayla at camp last Saturday and I miss her. I know she is having a great time, but I still want her with us.

There is a great lawn here, interestingly called "the great lawn," surrounding the large center and performance area. People are resting on blankets and sitting on chairs. There is a family in front of me with a small girl, and she reminds me of Kayla. I miss her all over again. Come this September, Alex will be a senior in High School and the year after he leaves for college. Kayla will be a sophomore and leaves three years later. Time is moving quickly.

The "Guy Noir" piece is now on and they are not using my submission. Oh well, maybe next year.

The sun is starting to go lower in the sky. It is about 7:00PM and has been a perfect day of weather. I went biking this morning in New Jersey and got stung, probably by a bee, on my lip. It started to swell,

so I headed to my office nearby to get some ice. Fortunately, I am apparently not allergic to bee stings or I could have been in big trouble. As it was, it was just an annoyance. Vinnie was at the plant and nicely offered me a ride home, but I declined and went on my way. I am very excited about my book being published in China, and maybe Malaysia. Some amazing things have been happening.

People here seem so happy when they are eating.

7/2/06

Sunday, 12:12AM

I'm at the Berkshires, at my in-laws' house. I am sitting up with my father-in-law, Jeff. He is having a lot of trouble from his various medical conditions, medication and complications from his surgeries. We are afraid to leave him alone or at least be too far away. He is in extreme distress. He went to the hospital last night for chest pains, and I am prepared with more sleeping and nitroglycerine pills if he has another attack. He is not happy and I feel very badly for him, but the best I can do is stay nearby to help him turn over in his bed, as needed. He can't get comfortable, which must be very difficult. But again, all I can do is be near him. I am not sure what will happen when we leave in a few days, as he is not easy to move and there is no way my mother-in-law will be able to do it alone. She will have to bring in some help. It is very difficult to see him like this. I like him, and I do not like to see him sick and unhappy.

I leave this Friday with my nephew, Barry, to go see my son Ben in Cleveland. Barry's manuscript is ready for his cookbook, and I am putting the finishing touches on my CD script. It is all very exciting.

I feel really positive about the chances we took in getting China started. I don't feel as good about the metal/plastic area we moved into, but in retrospect that may have been a mistake to rush in so quickly. I tend to move with my gut feelings, which usually have good results. I can't be afraid to take more risks. I will make mistakes. If I can't take the results of the bad decisions, which are moving me forward anyway, then it is time to consider my retirement and stop growing. The answer is obvious, and one I knew anyway. We move forward and I will take the chance of messing up again, because it will happen.

It would be great if Jeff felt better soon.

7/3/06

Monday, 10:00PM

Berkshires

I biked yesterday and today, and it was marvelous. We spent part of the day with Bunny, helping to keep an eye on Jeff. He appears to be improving slowly. It is good to see some progress. Today I also took Alex and his friend sailing in a rented sailboat. It was fun, but there

was a shortage of wind. It was a good reminder to have oars, a paddle, and a motor with my boat. I am anxious to sail the good ship "Ideal" again, and find a permanent mooring for her. I will try and make a deal with a storage facility in a few weeks.

Sales for the first 6 months were about 10 per cent above last year, not including IJX's sales. I am very pleased. My worry and concern are combining like jet fuel to supercharge my ambition and creativity. The game is coming along well. No risk, no gain, no fun.

7/4/06

Tuesday, 9:41PM

New Jersey

It is good to be home, although only Bailey and I made the trip. Alex, Wendy and Alex's friend Campbell are due home tomorrow. It is very quiet around here without them, but Bailey is good company. I worked on the script for the recording coming up this weekend, and I think it will be okay. Alex is not due back to work until Thursday, and I hope to have a lot of the game stuff ready for him to continue. His presence this summer has been going well and at a good pace. My goal is to be done with the game by the end of the summer. I find Alex easier to deal with here at home and at work, rather than on vacation, so I am glad I am back here. We are both trying hard to get along.

I had a great bike ride this morning in the Berks. Last night the fireflies were out and the light show was amazing. I love being outside on the porch in the summer. I was supposed to stop off and say goodbye to everyone while they were having breakfast this morning, but Jeff looked a little wobbly. My wife was tired, so I quickly biked back to the house, changed, and drove back and had breakfast with them. This was Jeff's first meal out in a long time, and although he looked really tired he was very happy he could do it. No luck on buying a shed this time, but hopefully soon. Our washing machine had a back-up. Ritchie, our caretaker, was in this morning. He is a nice man and wants me to consider his daughter for a job. I don't relish the idea of having her and her husband quit their jobs and move to New Jersey to work for me, but she is sending me her resume anyway. I always worry when people leave their jobs to come work for me. The pressure then turns onto me to keep them. Time for sleep.

7/5/06

Wednesday, 9:49PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I played tennis this morning, and was so tired I almost could not finish. But I did, and got back to the office. It is time to start switching over more of our sales to IJX. They have proven they can handle it. There is so much to keep track of, dealing with two companies, especially in

two different countries but we are learning quickly.

Happily everyone is looking towards the future and working as a team, so we will get it worked out. I emailed Ben and Claire after getting some advertising rates for China. I have come up with a marketing plan for the book, CD, and game. I want to speak at China universities, advertise on college radio stations, maybe on billboards, and offer seminars where the admission is ownership of my book. From there we can spread to the other forms of advertising. My son Ben's music will be on the CD, so maybe we can get him some airplay in China. Who knows? Maybe we will go on tour together; that would be fun.

Wendy asked me what I wanted tonight for the future, and I told her I wanted to be famous enough so people can sometimes recognize me. I also want to be able to help others to start their own companies, have better lives, and maybe partner with them. I wanted confirmation that I knew what I was doing, make a lot of money, have a great family, and enjoy my life as it moves on. It is always fun to dream about what is possible.

It is great having her back home. Depending on how Jeff is feeling, she may or may not go back to the Berks next week.

I am looking forward to getting my sailboat back on the water, but it will have to wait two weeks since I go to Cleveland this weekend. I have to keep centering on the positive and what can happen.

7/7/06

Friday, 11:09AM

I am in flight, on my way to Cleveland.

We are also starting a new month, which is always the toughest time, because it always seems like we will never hit our sales targets. I was a bit glum, but there were also good things happening so it is already looking good and I am now happy.

We are planning to tape the CD tonight and tomorrow. If it goes well, I will send it over to China and ask Ben to have it translated and recorded in Chinese so we can offer a bilingual version. The game, too, will be bilingual so that we can appeal to everyone who wants to learn both languages. I cannot remember a period of a few months where so many changes have occurred. We have had to alter our plans quickly and keep thinking of new ways of doing things. I love all parts of this business, and I know I am being prepared for a higher level, but I am getting a little battered. I am wondering if the level jump will happen, when, and how will I know it when I get there? I guess I know that answer. When I start getting bored, it will be time to find something new and the next level will be judged by the success rate in all areas. Being pragmatic is my best indicator of where I am.

As soon as we land and meet my son, Ben, we will go to lunch

and then go see the customer we have nearby. It will be the first time we will have a third and fourth generation going on a sales call. Ben is there to interview for a possible summer job, but it still counts. It will remind me of all the years I spent going on calls with my dad. I can remember it vividly, being too scared to say anything, so as not to appear dumb, and trying not to fall asleep, because I wasn't taking part in the conversations. Eventually, I learned what was needed and I participate. I incredibly enjoyed it, as I earned the right to participate. Today will mark a milestone, and I wonder if it will ever be repeated. Ben, as continually said, is not interested in being in the business, but is thankful to have it as a backup as I did with my dad. I will not push him, but it could be very nice if he joined us. I told him to wear a tie, and he was a bit surprised, but I anticipate he will have one on.

Few people understand the importance or power of a tie and jacket. It separates you from everyone else, shows respect to the person you are seeing, commitment on your part that you are willing to come professionally dressed, and will act in that way across the board. Commitment starts with the little things, and that is where many people fall down.

First, we will go to lunch, see the customer, and my nephew Barry will stay with the car. Then, they will drop me off at my hotel so I can take a nap. They will pick me up about 4:00PM, and we will record until 7:00PM, and go out for dinner. Then they will drop me off again so I can go to sleep. I have been up since 3:30AM and need rest. They can go out and party until the wee hours. Barry is here to tape the first part of his cookbook. I am interested to see how it turns out.

7/8/06

Saturday, 10:27AM

Cleveland, My Hotel

Yesterday went well. We had lunch then visited my customer. It was ironic that this customer was highly involved with fiber optic technology that, while I knew very little, Ben knew a great deal about. The customer was very pleasant and was also interested in our ISO system, so I had copies of our manual emailed over later in the afternoon. It was a calm, easy going meeting, and I am glad that was the first taste Ben got of that part of the business.

We then went over to the recording area where I met Nathan, our sound engineer. He is engaged, and will be graduating and married within the next year. He was quiet though I could tell he was competent, and I felt encouraged to have him as part of our recording team. As it worked out, he ran the equipment and Ben and Barry watched the script, making sure I stayed on track. We edited as we went along, to make things move more smoothly and run in a less complicated manner. When you are writing, it often comes out differently than

when it is actually spoken. I had to be patient as they stopped me to rework the material, or just do it again until it sounded right. I think all three of them got a kick out of directing a fifty year old man who, up until that moment, had been in charge and directing them. But as a former boss's son in the business, I knew how to take orders and was very used to being directed, so it rarely bothered me. After all, I was paying them to make me look my best. If I could not take their direction, then I was not going to get anywhere.

We got through the whole script the first day, which took a great deal of pressure off of us. We then left Nathan and went back to see Ben's apartment. We picked up his roommate and we all went to dinner. Then I went back to my hotel. I have no idea what they did last night, but I got up, worked out, and had breakfast. I have been working on what to do at our taping today. Since we got the script down last night, I wanted to try some other things that we could add, including some conversations with the boys and me, an area of bloopers, to show that I am human, and an introduction and conclusion. I know I came off somewhat cold, direct, and almost confrontational in the taping last night, but that is what I wanted. Now it is time to show the other side, and I think the multiple viewpoints and deliveries will help people get a much better feel of what I am talking about and who I am. After we tape, I may or may not work out again. Barry offered to cook dinner tonight, which should be a lot of fun. Maybe I can make the fruit salad.

7/8/06

**Saturday, 5:05PM EST
Cleveland, Hotel**

I had been afraid that the taping today would not go well. My idea was to have Barry and me, and maybe Ben, sit around and talk before and after the taped segment I did yesterday. This would soften the rigidity of yesterday's message. I did not want to change what I did, but I felt people needed a little humaneness before I scared them away with my sternness.

As Barry and I got set up for the introduction, he asked me what to do and I just said to follow my lead. We began and it was like magic, as if we had been working together for years. Unfortunately, five minutes into the taping, Nathan interrupted us to say there was an equipment malfunction and we had to start over. Quelling my urge to get upset, I remembered that, when things like this happened, it often meant that the next attempt would be even better. We began again and sure enough it was even better the second time. We breezed through the opening, took a break, listened to it, and then we did the closing. We decided to structure the CD with the opening, the taping segment we did yesterday, the closing, some bloopers from yesterday and then finish the English portion with all of Ben's music with words. We

would also put some of Ben's music without words throughout the CD as background. We would add the Chinese translated version of what I did yesterday as soon as it was done.

Then we taped the first part of Barry's cookbook. It became evident after a few minutes that having him read a prepared script was not going to bring out his best. Therefore, I took a chair and we went back into the room together, this time with him in the lead chair. Again, it seemed to work extremely well with us together, and we finished his part within the hour. It was only 2:00PM when I asked Nathan, how soon he could finish the product if we stopped. He said this Monday, as opposed to the middle of August, since he was going away soon. I agreed, and we stopped and left. I am really excited. I can't wait to hear the final version, after Barry gets in early next week and adds some of the music.

After lunch, we picked up Ben and went back to his apartment where he and I picked up some bicycles and went riding. It was very pleasant. He is such a wonderful person that any time with him is a treat, and I think so much of him as a man that it is always a great time.

He and Barry dropped me off at the hotel, when I worked on the game until they picked me up for dinner. Barry cooked great food, and then it was back to the hotel for the night.

7/9/06

Sunday, 7:27AM

In flight to Newark, New Jersey

I have finished my ISO documents review, and ate my oatmeal, so things are in good shape. Before we took off, I was emailing Ben in China. He has given up a lot to become my partner, so I want to try to make sure he is happy, contented, and taken care of. If he comes to me with new ideas, I always listen and try to implement them when possible. The trip with Barry has gone well and has potential. We need to see how the CDs turn out before I commit more resources. People gravitate towards him, and it is a quality that can be used to great advantage if developed and handled well. The future, as always, holds great possibilities. I look forward to it.

7/9/06

Sunday, 9:35PM EST Home

New Jersey

I got home from the airport in time to make a 10:00AM tennis match with my brother. The weather was amazing, hot and sunny. We had a mostly shaded court, it was paradise. Then I went biking where I tried to help a wounded bird. I am not sure how much good I did, but at least I got him off the road. Then I gave a man some bad directions, by mistake, so I tried to catch him on my bike but never reached him.

When I got near my house, I found a snake, which looked to be the non-poisonous kind. With the help of some neighbors, we persuaded him off the hot asphalt and onto the grass, where he would have a chance to survive. I went to the office to catch up on what I had missed. I got a message from Nathan that he was making good progress, and should be able to ship the CD masters to me by Tuesday. The CD for my book goes to Barry for some additional music. Barry's cooking show and his cookbook idea will get reviewed by people in the office. I am very excited about this whole thing, but I am trying to keep myself contained until I hear the finished product. I think I am getting a much better handle on the game. If it turns out to be a success, I already have the advanced version in my head.

7/11/06

Tuesday, 10:01PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Things are wonderful. I just have to keep reminding myself of that, and I know there will be bounces in the road. Jeff is better and things seem stabilized. Wendy comes home tomorrow. Alex is doing well in the office. Barry will begin editing tomorrow. He can edit them down on both programs to make them flow better. I still think he and I have great possibilities as a team. I am feeling a little battered but maybe that is a good thing. It is making me stronger, more tournament-tough, and it is obviously not stopping me from moving ahead. I think I will just try and go to sleep now.

7/12/06

Wednesday

Wendy is home, yes!!! We sent a large amount of orders to IJX and they are happy. I have given us a deadline to have a prototype version for the game ready to go to IJX in about two weeks. It is not much time, and the pressure is on all of us but I think we can do it. Barry missed the delivery man, so he won't get the CDs until tomorrow to start editing, which is frustrating, since I am anxious to get back the finished product. I will force myself to be patient.

7/14/06

Friday

We spoke to Kayla from camp tonight. She sounds wonderful and I miss her. Alex and I continue to get along well, as we are both trying hard. Barry is now editing. Lots of good potential stuff is happening. It is amazing to see how far we have come since we began this venture in China. It is very exciting and daunting at the same time, not to mention extremely expensive. But I do not want to stop. I want to keep trying new things and this seems like a good place to try. The game is coming

along well. I finished the first draft of the board layout. The rules are done, and now I have to go back and write more questions. We are on schedule for Mike to take a prototype with him to China by the end of next week. I hope they like it out there. I have become very attached to the project.

7/17/06

Monday, 9:52PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I am worried about the war that is about to start in Israel. I am also worried about the war in Iraq. I am worried about global warming, and I am worried in general. It is not a common thing for me to have this level of heightened concern. Usually, it is the personal stuff that holds my attention, but there is a lot happening worldwide and it is not a calming thing. I hope we are not on a road to destruction. I somehow hope my worry will help to avoid it.

I am however comforted regarding the world situation by the following. I grew up under the threat of nuclear annihilation, which makes global warming pale in comparison. I also grew up realizing that the worst fears most people had did not usually happen. These are some comforting thoughts before I try and go to sleep.

Today, Vinnie and I took out my sailboat and she was magnificent. The winds were strong and she flew merrily along. There is still a lot of work to get her ready for the water and then pack her back down again, but we are cutting down the time. Hopefully, next time we can utilize the second sail and get the motor working. Speaking of the motor, an antique, it is a present from my father from one of his boats we used to use to fish on the Delaware River. It was built to move very heavy objects slowly, perfect for my sailboat.

7/17/06

Monday, 10:03PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I just finished an email to Ben in China talking about pricing, and helping him to learn how to do it. In a market-will-bear-business, the prices fluctuate as per the cost of the parts, overhead, general marketplace, and what the customers need and when. It is a jumble of different variables, often distilled virtually instantaneously in my head which makes it very difficult to teach. Alice is getting good at it but it took a lot of time. It is more of a feel than a formula. I am emailing Ben a price list to help give him some parameters. It is very hard, because you don't want to lose business, but at the same time, you want to get as much as possible and still keep everyone happy. It is a fine line, indeed.

We have an appointment scheduled with the President of Kean

University in Union, New Jersey. I occasionally teach my course on starting and running companies there, and they are trying to set up a campus in China. I thought our company might be of assistance, so we are meeting to offer our services and to see if we can be of help to each other.

7/19/06

Wednesday, 9:58PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Our appointment with the president of Kean got pushed back. It seems more people want to be involved there. Vinnie and I go to China next month and I will attempt to see the people involved in the Kean project there, if there is a desire from their people on this side.

We played the first version of my game today, and it seemed to go well. I am very excited. Sales are good, which is also very exciting.

One of my tennis partners, Bruce, the man who had the brain infection and almost died, beat me handily in tennis today. He has come back as an even tougher opponent, good for him.

7/21/06

Friday

I contacted my nephew Barry to let him know that the CD for my book turned out well. There were a few modifications needed, but overall I was very happy.

He has been working on his cookbook, and I wanted him to bring in some food so our people could do some taste-testing and critiquing. I am hoping he will be over here within a week. He only has until September 1st to have all the recipes done, and that deadline is swiftly approaching. So far, he says he is on schedule. The format and style of the book are still in a very flexible mode, so we will have to see how things move along.

I got an email from Ben in China talking about one of our graphic design people there. She is very enthusiastic about working for IJX, has plenty of energy, and wants more work. Ben and I have been talking about ways we can better utilize our staff there, and one of the things we can do is launch our new consumer products division. This will rely heavily on the IJX Graphics department for translations, design and layout.

Some projects already slated for graphic work include the new CD, which will need a cover designed, the new game, which can be at least partially manufactured by IJX, and Barry's cookbook. I like employees who push to do more, and it is up to me primarily to make sure they get their wish. One of the minor problems about being an entrepreneur, when you're busy writing about it and obviously loving what you do, is that it becomes a very attractive idea to those around you. In other words, my employees may have the urge to go try it and start their

own companies. I think that is a great thing for them to do. I would probably even help them, if they are going in with their eyes open and with the commitment it will take to make a successful venture.

7/22/06

Saturday, 11:07PM EST

The CD and game are all done for the moment. We wait and see what Ben and the crew in Xiamen says. I will go back to just writing for a little while. It will be a nice, small rest. We went to a friend's house tonight for a celebration. Their eldest daughter earned a PHD in Psychology. It was a wonderful party. Both of their two eldest daughters had babysat for our kids, and we had fun reminiscing about old times.

I also spoke with my brother-in-law, David. He is starting a new business. I hope it goes well. His business premise sounds solid. He and some partners will take over the accounting duties for various organizations, and do it in a more efficient and less expensive fashion.

I rode with Uncle Dave. We got caught in the rain, which made my clothes heavier, which lead to more exertion and a better workout. He is fine and continues to diverge into other business ventures. His energy and optimism seem to have few boundaries.

Tomorrow we go see Kayla. I am greatly looking forward to that.

I am finding myself having less patience for politics and politicians in general. My feeling is they should let us business people do what we do best, which is doing business. That will not only make the overall standard of living higher in the world, but reduce the threat of wars. After all, people who are profitably trading with each other are far less likely to want to go to war.

7/22/06

Sunday, 7:01PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I sometimes get lost in the aura of moving towards my goals in intense concentration, following my structure, and chiding anyone who doesn't keep up with me. I can become inflexible, daunting, difficult, and autocratic. In addition, with extreme sleep deprivation, by my own choice, I can become downright unreasonable. I have to be careful and watch myself.

We have chance at a giant new customer and we are going to be one day late in delivery. I know the customer does not need it for tomorrow, but I panicked. I looked for an excuse so my company would not look bad, especially in our first encounter. It is ironic, since I am the one who is always preaching that telling the truth, especially about making mistakes, is the best policy. But in a moment of panic and severe emotional stress things do happen. I had an email sent where

we looked like we needed additional time for testing, and that would be the reason we would be one day late. As soon as I said to do it, I felt badly and my negative feelings just got worse. I knew this excuse would not matter in the short run, but I also knew in the longer run it would eat at my insides and poison any chances for a good relationship. Tomorrow, as soon as the job is off press, I will send another email taking blame for being late and clear my conscience.

It is moments of remorse like this that make me remember how many times I had made mistakes, had not done things entirely by the rules of my moral code, and had wished I had a second chance. In other words, I was being human then, I am now, and will continue to be in the future. I have to remember to do the best I can, to fix as much as possible, and try to forgive myself quickly. It is also a constant reminder to try and give the other guy a break, because they aren't perfect either.

Wendy, Alex, Jessica and I went to see Kayla today at her camp. She looked wonderful, and it was very hard to leave her. In less than three weeks I can bring her home. She will be sorry to leave camp.

Mike and his wife are in China. The government of China demands a certain amount of investment capital for any foreign joint venture. We have already invested a lot of money, but more probably needs to go in. When Mike returns, we will see what needs to be done for the near future.

Tomorrow is tennis. Tuesday is an ISO 14001 audit and tennis. Wednesday is Kean University and tennis and hopefully dinner with Wendy. Tennis keeps me in good shape, level headed, my weight down and my ego in check since I usually lose.

7/26/06

Wednesday, 9:44PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Our meeting with the President of Kean University accomplished nothing. They apparently do not want or need our help. However, they do want us to invest in their new facility in China, which has not been built yet. I think their plan for China is a little too optimistic. They may end up needing us yet.

7/27/06

Thursday, 9:54PM EST

I suddenly got bored and I cannot believe myself. All of the projects on hand are either in work or have died. My energy is definitely one of my greatest strength, and my need for constant stimulation is usually a very good thing. True, it sometimes gets me into areas that do not work, but based on the percentages, the more I do then the more that will be successful. I will find something to keep myself occupied.

7/28/06

Friday

Next week I will go to Wichita and Omaha, come back on Friday morning, and take Ben and Barry up to the Berkshires for the night. Jeff's car was wrecked when a bee flew in his window. He lost control of it and sideswiped a pole. The good news is he is okay. The bad news is that his favorite car is ruined. I am trying to work out the details of Vinnie going with Claire or Rina to different spots in China, while Ben and I go to Malaysia and Thailand for our next trip to Asia. It is tough logistically but I enjoy doing it. Wendy's birthday is Sunday; we are having people over for a barbecue.

7/28/06

Friday, 10:37PM EST

I started sending emails to set up sales calls for Vinnie and probably Rina. I hope they go well. IJX needs to produce sales on its own. I believe they can do it. They have only been trying for a short time, and I will help as much as possible. At this point, I may go to Hungary and Europe in late September. I would like to try and get to Alcatel if I can find the right people. I will probably go back to Asia in November to start promoting the book and CD, and hopefully get the game moving.

7/30/06

Sunday, 10:17PM EST

It is Wendy's birthday and I think she had a great day. We had her sister's family over for a barbecue, and it was a lot of fun. It has been very hot here, in the 90Fs, and I went biking yesterday. I like to bike in very hot weather. Today, I played tennis and went biking again. As a surprise, our son Ben came home early for her birthday and she really loved it. We got a call from Kayla's camp that she hurt her finger. We won't know if it is broken or fractured until tomorrow.

Keeping both companies busy is becoming more difficult as IJX's capacity keeps increasing. It is my problem. The simple answer is more sales, and I will redouble my efforts and work harder to do so. We have more than doubled our capacity in the last 18 months, and that is a lot to fill. Time for some sleep. It is Sunday night and that can always be a problem.

7/31/06

Monday, 10:11PM EST

New Jersey - Home

July was the second best month in the history of the company. Amazing, I wonder how we did it. I also wonder how we will do it again. As it turns out, I will be doing a lot of traveling in the next two

Chapter Eight

8/2/06

Wednesday, 4:48AM EST

Newark/Liberty Airport, New Jersey

The day started out normally for a trip. I got up at 3:15AM. As I was getting ready, I noticed that my ride to the airport was early, so I moved faster and we were riding to the airport about 15 minutes ahead of schedule. As we drove, I answered email from Ben in China. Things are going well there. Suddenly, as we had hit a massive traffic jam, our progress was stopped. I knew it was bad because I saw people walking around their vehicles, which meant they had been waiting for a while. My driver was able to get to the side of the highway. Through his great skill, he was able to go back up through a ramp and we were once again moving swiftly on an alternate route. We made it to the airport soon after, and I bade him goodbye with a healthy tip. I would have probably missed my plane, had we been waiting in the traffic. It is onward to Kansas, now.

It promises to be a most interesting and long day. If I am fortunate, I will be in my hotel about midnight tonight, Central Standard Time. My goal for this summer is to become an approved supplier for Ericsson and Alcatel. The potential for business from both are astronomical, and within possibility. For Ericsson, we are waiting for some updated copy and will be able to offer prototypes within another two weeks. If approved, we should have our start.

As for Alcatel, one of our other customers does business for them and is trying to get us approved. Alcatel has its US headquarters in Texas, where I am going in a few weeks. I hope to be able to visit someone there.

8/2/06

Wednesday, 6:23AM

In Flight

I took a look at my next flight and I do not have a lot of time to get there. I hope we are on time, and I also hope I do not have to change terminals. However, I can do nothing about it now. It is time for some breakfast. I brought my oatmeal, cinnamon and banana, and I have a book. Things are good. I am sitting next to a nice woman named Angela who lives in New York, but was born in London. She has a wonderful accent and is on her way to Trinidad. Unfortunately, it is for the funeral of her grandmother. The good news is that her grandmother had a wonderful life and it will give Angela a chance to see her relatives.

Israel and the Hezbollah are continuing to fight, and the Israelis say it might go on for another month. They do not seem to care about

world opinion, and decided the threat has to be extinguished as much as possible. Between Mel Gibson saying he hates the Jews and world opinion, I agree it doesn't matter to Israel what anyone thinks and they should do what they need to secure their safety. It is an incredibly difficult situation. I understand their fear and frustration as the world is seemingly willing to let the terrorists do whatever they like, including bombing Israel at will. They can say they will talk, but nothing much gets done.

8/2/06

Wednesday, 9:19AM

Central Standard Time, on route to Wichita Kansas

The first flight was great, and we got in early. I made it to my connection and things are well. Between flights, I contacted the office and check my emails. We are trying to get business from some of our Asian customers switched to IJX, and it sometimes involves a lot of paperwork. But it is both necessary and important to get the orders flowing directly to them, instead of through IJUS. They need to be able to stand alone, and this is one of the fastest ways to get that to happen. It has taken some time but we are now having success. Eventually, IJX will have all the business in Asia, parts of Europe and North America. It is up to me to insure there is enough business for both companies.

When I was getting dressed this morning, I heard some weird noises coming from the kitchen. Upon inspection, I found out it was in the pantry next to the stove. Either a bag of cereal had broken apart and was dropping in pieces to the ground, or we have a mouse. In either case, I spoke to my wife who, while not happy to hear about the options, none the less said she would deal with it immediately. It was nice saying hello to her, anyway; I plan to call her later in the day.

Yesterday, I had lunch with my eldest son, Ben. He will be here through the weekend, and it was great being able to spend some time together. I am happy I can still give him some useful advice, usually centering on his future and women. We men never seem to stop talking about either, so I suppose that will never change between us. He has two more years left of college, and then it is onto work. I will do my best to leave him alone regarding his career. I support him in whatever he does, and will be contented to have Ideal Jacobs act as his back up if the music doesn't work out. It is a little frustrating, because I can see his potential and he would be a great asset for our business. But that has to be his decision to want to come in, and then under terms we can both happily live with.

Mike emailed from China yesterday. They have been playing my game, and there seems to be real interest in it. It will have to be revised, but my partner Ben thinks there is a market which is fantastic news. Apparently, there are only a few board games being sold in China now,

so the market is wide open.

Final editing of the Chinese version of my book should be done in the next two weeks. It will take about three months to get it through the production stage, and it will be ready for distribution. That puts us into late November. I will go to China to launch the book, plus hopefully the CD to go with it. We will do a media blitz of college and commercial radio stations, advertise on radio, maybe a few billboards and then we will sponsor a seminar or two in Xiamen, and maybe one in another town. Once the game is ready, we will launch it the same way. In this case, we will set up local, regional and national tournaments, playing the game for various types of prizes with the ultimate being a cash prize, a job, or helping to partner in starting a new business. This should give us an amazing amount of exposure, which should help launch IJX into the stratosphere. Then we can expand into the rest of Asia and move outward from there.

8/2/06

Wednesday, 5:09PM Central Standard Time

In flight from Wichita to Houston

I arrived on schedule at Wichita Airport. After getting my rental car, I made my way towards my lunch date with an old customer. The two people I was meeting I had known for years via telephone and email, and I had never met either in person. Before I got there, I checked with Alice and one of our hand-work contractors had put in a bill for a lot more hours than I thought reasonable, so I was having it checked. It bothered me anyway that we might be taken advantage of, so my mood was not good.

Since it was so hot; I figured I would be too sweaty wearing a suit from the airport, so I got dressed in the car and proceeded inside. Both men were ready. They picked a local café that had excellent food. Although it was me who had called to have lunch, they had a purpose. They wanted to go over either how they could give us more business, or cut us out completely. The obvious conditions came down to the usual price, delivery, and service. Since I believe our service and deliveries were very good, that left price. I asked them point blank what they wanted. Since they are in Wichita, and my companies are in New Jersey and China, I was obviously not a local supplier.

But that was not the biggest concern, since only one out of four of their suppliers were local. As with many companies, the head people had started with the biggest vendors, trying to bring down costs and increase efficiency. They had gone through everyone else and were now going to printing. Unfortunately, for them, they did not have a gigantic volume from which to bargain, and the amount of sales we had were not giving them much leverage to pressure us to change. But we had a long history together. They paid their bills, were pleasant people and

their company was growing; I felt it had potential. While I would not open a plant in Kansas to service them, I was willing to work with them to insure their source of supply. For example, we would make sure we had product on hand for rush deliveries, which we were already doing. I was also happy to deal with their contract manufacturers in Mexico, one of whom was already a customer of ours, and in general make things more efficient so we could save them some money.

Of course, I said that if I was able to do this, I expected a chance at the other suppliers' business. They agreed, but also mentioned they were talking to the other three suppliers. Playing one supplier off another is an old part of business, but it can sometimes be turned to our advantage. I will structure our proposal to benefit everyone. If we can do this perhaps we can do more than our competitors. If not, there are not big enough customers to cause a lot of worry about losing business, and my time can then be better spent working on those with bigger potential. All in all, it's not a bad position for either of us to be in. We should be in Houston within an hour. I then have almost three hours before my next flight out. If I am lucky, there will be a Continental Airlines President's Club where I can relax and eat dinner.

I will call Wendy while I am waiting and maybe watch a movie or some television. I called ahead to my hotel to hold my room, since I may not get there until after 12:00AM tonight (local time). It will mean, with the time change, that I will almost be up for a whole day. I have had some naps, though, and feel pretty good. Besides, I can sleep late tomorrow and workout before I go see my customer for lunch.

8/2/06

Wednesday, 7:55 PM Central Time

Houston Airport

I just had the best piece of catfish I have ever eaten. I was a little worried when Louis, the bartender/waiter, said he would take care of me, since this restaurant specialized in Cajun (very spicy), fish and I wanted it plain. But he came through with flying colors, and I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I even had some ice tea, which will probably keep me sufficiently wired to be able to get to my hotel room and then collapse for the night. I hope the car rental place is still open. Whatever happens, there is nothing else I can do about it now. I will do a little more editing. The next book is due to be on press in about six months. So far, the day has gone very well and except for the bee sting I got yesterday, which created a rash and is quite itchy, everything is good.

I emailed Ben in China. We have another company potentially interested in a joint venture, but the owner is very cautious, I told Ben we were just going to wait for him to make a move and not count on him for anything. I can understand his hesitation, but my company has already gone through it, knows many of the ropes, and has the needed

connections. All he has to worry about is the financial outlay. From my position, it is easy to look at it that way, since we have experience, but I will leave it up to him to move or not.

The Mel Gibson controversy continues. I don't know why people are questioning his motives. People speak the truth when they are drunk, or when they say they did not mean something. He obviously has a lot of problems in general, and especially with Jewish people. I hope he gets help, because hate in any form will eat you alive and he is obviously a very unhappy man. I do not plan on seeing any of his future work.

8/2/06

Wednesday, 11:07PM Central Standard Time

We are in flight after a delay. They originally told us there was a problem with the video system, so I suggested we take a poll of the plane to see if anyone cared so we could go right away, but it turned out to be something else. No matter, we are on our way. I hope the rental car place is still open. The bed should feel very good tonight. One advantage of being up this late is I get to communicate more with Ben in China, via email. He offered to have hats made with our logo. I think it is a great idea, excellent for team spirit and advertising. It is now time to watch some old TV shows on my computer, unless the on-flight variety is better.

8/3/06

Thursday, 3:04 AM EST (1:04AM CT)

I am in my hotel in Omaha, and I am going to sleep.

8/3/06

Thursday, 12:59AM EST (11:59PM CST)

I am in my hotel room in Omaha. I got up this morning at 8:00AM, local time, and it was not easy. After exercising, the heat wave had subsided, and I went for a walk through downtown Omaha. Then I got ready and went to see my customer, Commscope. I had been doing business there since they had been Lucent. I have watched the plant population grow and then decline as the move toward globalization has them outsourcing to various areas around the world. Fortunately for us, since we are now considered global with our plant in China, we rarely have to deal with the question of how we are going to supply parts around the world. The plant has been a goldmine in that area. I believe it will continue to function as a great marketing boost, as well as be a profitable manufacturing location on its own.

After I had lunch with one of the buyers, I went to see another customer called Tri V. I had a heck of time finding them, even though they were only a few miles away. Eventually I did, and the call was

pleasant. We spoke about how business everywhere was not done with the rest of the world in mind. But we also agreed that the standard of living in the large part of the rest of the world was rapidly catching up with that in the US, and time will soon come where it won't matter so much where in the world you make something, as opposed to how close you are to the actual customer.

Then, I went back to my hotel. On the way, I called my friend Jim Jensen who has been working here for a few weeks. We met for dinner, talked about my new game, and then went to see the local AAA baseball team, the Royals. We had a fantastic evening being in the setting summer sun, on a warm night under a clear sky, and trading quotes from the movie "Field of Dreams," a favorite of both of ours.

I got gas for tomorrow on the way back and exercised a small amount again. I will try and go to sleep soon. I get up early tomorrow to go to the airport. I will first go downstairs and try to get online to print my boarding pass. I spoke to Wendy and the heat wave also broke in New Jersey. We lost power for an hour there, but happily it did come back on.

8/4/06

Friday, 6:58AM EST (5:58AM CST)

Omaha Airport

I got about four hours of sleep last night, which means I have not gotten much in the last few days. I am not at the hallucinatory stage yet, like I get on the longer Asian trips. I had purchased some souvenirs for my family and something is making a beeping noise and is starting to drive me crazy. That's another indicator I am tired, to let those types of things bother me. So far, we are on time. I hope to get a proposal ready in flight for the customer in Wichita, but if that noise doesn't stop in another few seconds I will change seats.

8/4/06

Friday, 8:04AM EST

In Flight to New Jersey

What a nice thing to have happened; we are in the air and there is no one sitting next to me.

It turns out the noise driving me crazy was a guy on a small game player, but he must have finished because the noise stopped. I can't wait to get home, see everyone, get to the Berkshires and go mountain biking. I called the office right before we took off, and I am glad I did because they are having a problem with incoming email. After a few returned calls, I made a few suggestions but technical problems in any area are not my biggest strength. Mike, our head IT man, is still on his way back from China, but I am hoping that Marc can get it going himself. If not, he can call Mike for help. If it's real trouble,

he can contact our IT consultant, Don Argintar, who is probably the best computer man I have ever met. He is a genius and I don't use that term easily. I have total confidence in him. By the time I return, I am counting on my team to have everything working again. If not, I will help when I get back.

8/5/06

Saturday, 1:02PM EST

We are on route to our house in the Berkshires, Massachusetts. I think my interior body clock is a little messed up. I looked at the clock on my laptop and it read 1:02PM, and I thought that was impossible.

Regardless, we landed early this morning and my ride was there right on schedule to pick me up. It was great being home. I picked up Ben, my nephew Barry, and my dog Bailey and left shortly for the Berkshires. Our goals for the next twenty-four hours are:

- For my son, Ben, and me to go mountain biking
- For all of us to see Jeff and Bunnie for Dinner
- To play tennis with Bunnie and her friends in the morning
- For all of us to have lunch together
- For Ben, Barry, and myself, to leave and have a pleasant journey home

We have been traveling for about ninety minutes, and I have been able to get a lot of work done in the back seat. Ben is at the wheel. He is not thrilled with my comments about his driving, or his cousin's comments on my comments, but such is life. It is a beautiful day and mountain biking should be magnificent. On a clear day like this one there is a view of the Berkshire Mountains that is amazing.

I am bringing my father-in-law a book by one of the US generals of the war in Iraq. Maybe he will enjoy reading about the thoughts of someone who was there. He is a veteran, and has his own ideas about what should have been done. It is good to have different perspectives. To sleep on the porch tonight, will also be good. I fear the lightening bugs or fireflies are gone, but it is still a very pleasant experience.

I still do not know if I am going to Canada next week. My Wednesday tennis game was cancelled, so it would be a good day to go. Traffic has been pretty heavy, but it is Friday afternoon in the summer, so it is expected. It should be light as we come back tomorrow. The choice of music by the boys is not really my taste. It is too loud, but they are trying to play music they think I would like. It would normally be at twice the volume, if I was not in the car, so I will be patient for a little while longer, until I ask them to turn it down again.

Wait a minute! Their CD just ended and I was able to get one of mine into the flow. Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young are now playing. It's their classic album *Déjà Vu* from the 1960s. Alright, now we are rocking!

8/6/06

Sunday

En route to New Jersey from Massachusetts

Yesterday turned out to be amazing. We got up to the Berkshires in good time, dropped Barry off at my mother-in-law's place, and we all agreed to meet back at her house about 6:30 tonight for dinner. Ben and I went back to the house, grabbed our gear, and set out on the mountain bikes, with the anticipation of a two hour ride in the glorious New England sunshine. The weather was a perfect 82F degrees and sunny, and the clouds around were large, fluffy and fall-like.

The first part of the ride is almost all uphill. It quickly became evident that my twenty year old son had passed me in terms of physical endurance, despite my heavy exercise program. I spent the next two hours trying to keep up with him, with Ben having to stop periodically and wait for me. Despite that, we had a really good time. This is only one indicator of his becoming a man. I must be sure to treat him as such. There is something about being out in the woods on a bicycle in great weather with your son. Try not have to worry about anything, and just have a good time. It is hard to describe.

About three quarters of a way through the ride, I got a call from my office and then from Uncle Dave. I took care of Uncle Dave while Ben was taking a break. Then, when Alice's call was taking a few minutes, Ben understandably got impatient, and took a stick and started poking me. It was a little annoying, but Ben was right. I could work later. How often do I get the chance to go biking with him?

Therefore, I cut the call short and we finished the ride. Priorities are important, and I am glad he reminded me of what was most important at that moment, which was to be with him. We finished the ride and then went to dinner. My nephew Barry was busy cooking when we got there. He is a professional chef, and dinner was very good.

We went back to our house, and the boys rented some videos which I watched for a little bit. I then went to sleep outside on the porch. I love sleeping there. It is like camping without the bugs, and I slept peacefully. I got up early this morning, so I could do the short ride on my bike and still get back in time to go play tennis with several people. At tennis, I teamed up with Bunnie and we won handily. She is a very good tennis player. Then, we switched teams and I was playing against her, which is tough. She knew I was not trying hard enough, and she is very competitive. We ended up tying five games to five in that set and stopped. Then the family met for breakfast.

We are now on our way home. Barry is driving and Ben is the co-pilot. I am in the backseat of my own car, which is a little strange, but it is also a great place to take a nap, which is what I did. I would like to say that one of the greatest devices ever created, to help the cause of peace, are the noise depletion earphones. My set has enabled me over

the past two hours to sleep peacefully, listening to Jean Shepherd while my son and nephew have been listening to who knows what. They have been contented and so have I. How many times in life can you have peace with two parties, doing such completely different things, so close at hand? We should be home within an hour. If my wife doesn't have something for me to do, I will probably go to work and begin catching up from the three days I was out of the office. I think I am in pretty good shape with all the emails, telephone calls, and the work Alex brought home for me, already.

8/7/06

Monday, 9:49 EST

New Jersey - Home

Mike and his wife came home today from their trip to China, and things went well. My partner, Ben liked the CD we created, they all liked the game, but it needs revisions, and no one liked the cookbook idea.

I thought I was going to play tennis with Bruce, but it turned out I told him the wrong day. Happily, I was able to play some with Paul and take a short walk afterwards. I weighed myself last night. It was an enormous 188 pounds, more than ever before, and I freaked out. I thought it was mostly water, but then I checked myself again this morning and it was high, so it put a damper on part of my day. It's amazing how something as seemingly small as a few pounds can have that affect. By tonight, though, my weight was near normal again, so I was happier. I used to be overweight as a child, and its affect has never left me. I always look at myself with a very stern eye, when it comes to weight.

Ben leaves tomorrow for Cleveland. We had fun while he was here. Like always, we will miss him, but he does come back this Sunday to play a few gigs, so it won't be too long. Wendy leaves tomorrow for a few days in the Berks with her sister. I hope they have a great time. Alex and I should be fine here. Our accountant comes in tomorrow for the quarterly roundup, and hopefully things are as good as I anticipate they are.

I did not hear from my customer, so I am not going to Canada on Wednesday. Alice leaves on Thursday for Europe, for the wedding reception of her eldest son which means I need to be around for the next ten days. Then, I am on the road again to Texas and then Asia. There is a lot to do. My goal is still to try and break into Alcatel. I will soon see if my efforts are working. We are prototyping for Ericsson, so we have our chance there. I am having a lot of fun.

8/7/06

Monday, 9:35PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Gary was in today and things are good. At lunch, we discussed the

consumer products division in Xiamen. Then, I shared my dream of gathering entrepreneurs from China together into our own building, with us supplying the capital and all the infrastructure services like accounting, phone answering, telecom, etc. We started talking about an IPO coming out of China, and the idea seemed to have merit. He was interested in participating, which was a very good sign, and will get back to me with some specific information. Exciting stuff, but we also need the other products to gain popularity with the general public so that our company can gain some name recognition. We would get a percentage of every company we sponsor, an idea that has always appealed to me. It needs fleshing out, but it has promise.

8/9/06

Wednesday, 9:48PM EST

New Jersey - Home

It is amazing how much work business trips take regarding planning, trying to setup appointments, hotels, drivers and flights, knowing that anything can happen up until the moment they begin. Even with a good state of mind, you have to be extremely flexible in order to get through it.

I played tennis with Bruce today. I would say we are now even. He tries very hard and wants to win, usually more than I do. I try to save my highest energy for business. Sports can be a release and a way to burn calories; sometimes I care about the score, but most of the time it is for fun.

Barry called and doesn't want to pursue the cookbook idea for now, which is okay with me. The idea is officially dead.

8/12/06

Saturday, 11:08PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Thursday morning, I got into the office and got a call from Alice. She was due to leave for Europe, for her eldest son's wedding, and she told me about a thwarted terrorist attack in England. It seemed that a group of would-be terrorists had planned to use liquid explosives to destroy ten British planes on their way from England to the US. The timing was unclear, but apparently the attacks were due to happen soon. She was going to be delayed, but went to the airport early hoping to get through. The airlines had put in a ban on all liquids and pastes for all passengers. Electronic gear for certain flights was also banned. The flights to Europe were in chaos, but she hoped to get through.

Her other son, David, was trying to get to France via England, where he lived, and was also having a tough time. As the news started coming out, it occurred to me that the potential death flights, they were talking about, were the ones I could have easily been on, since I

was and am still planning to go through England, on my way to and from Hungary and Romania next month. A chill descended on me, as I realized I could have been one of the ones to die, and my mind began going over possible scenarios in the plane. I was wondering if I could have spotted the perpetrators, and if I could have been able to stop them. Not a comforting thought, but one I will carry with me to help keep up my vigilance. In the meantime, I am going to Texas on the 22nd of this month and am wondering what I can take on the plane. I will check the airline the day before, and do what is necessary. Texas could be incredibly hot, and I would like to carry an extra set of clothes and change right before I go to see my customer. This would be after I rent a car to get there, but that may not be possible. Also, if I can't carry a laptop or my Blackberry into the main cabin, then I will be forced, like all other travelers, to put my stuff under the plane, which will delay me at both ends. It is a security concern, so of course I would not complain, but it will cost me time and I have to take it into account.

As for my trips to Asia and Europe, I planned to take a suitcase and put in under the plane. It will not affect me as much, except for the possible delays due to the increased baggage that otherwise would have been carry-on. No matter, I will deal with it. The harder it is the better for me, since I will go anyway and my competition may not. I picked up Kayla from camp today. She was not happy to see me, and cried a lot when saying goodbye to her friends. We did not speak for the first forty-five minutes. After I got her coffee and she had a nap, she returned to her normal, cheerful self and things were fine. She had a great time at camp, and I am very happy she is home. Actually, she is spending her first night home at her friend's house. Things are definitely back to normal.

I have been working on my game. I think it has a lot of potential, besides being a lot of fun, therefore I will continue. I plan to have the revised version ready for our trip to Asia, so our people there can play it once again. I will bring it with me, and show it to customers who, I think, would like to see it. Maybe Vinnie, Ben, and I can play it on our journey.

Israel and Hezbollah have been fighting for the last few weeks. Israel invaded Lebanon to go after them, and a lot of people have been killed. Hopefully, a cease-fire will go into effect early next week. I wonder what type of peace is possible.

My son, Ben comes home tomorrow; it will be wonderful to have everyone home at one time, at least for a little while. I called Uncle Dave to come bike with Ben and I, but he had already left on his ride. It was too bad, as it would have been nice to have him along. Jeff Aaron had a mini-stroke and is in the hospital. I hope he heals well and quickly.

8/13/06

Sunday, 9:56PM EST

I spoke with Wendy today and she mentioned the potential problem of bringing my laptop onboard a British Air flight. I checked their website and she was right. They are banned. I plan to switch my flights tomorrow, to go through another country. I am going in and out of Vienna, as it seems a central place, especially if I do not have to stop in Germany or Poland, which looks the case right now. My wife is concerned, but I can't stop traveling; it would look bad to my people and my customers. Running in fear is not the way I want to live my life.

If business travelers are going to be stopped from taking their carry-on items, then I believe it will radically change the flight patterns of the flying public, and cause a great deal of stress for the airlines. Business travelers cannot afford the extra half hour before and after the trip to take care of their baggage. It means that the radius for driving has increased with every delay at the airports, meaning more people will be driving further as opposed to flying. Plus, they will have more video and conference calls.

It will mean less business flyers, and who knows what else, so it could be rough again in the air for a while. Obviously, I will not force my people to fly. It will be their decision, but there is no way I will let them go if I am not willing to go myself. I have four trips scheduled within the next six weeks, and I plan to go on all of them. It is one of those moments when you have to make a decision, and mine is already made.

8/14/06

Monday, 10:01PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I tried to change my plane reservations to Europe, to not go through England, but it would have cost a fortune. That, added in with the decrease in threat level, means I can carry my laptop in the main cabin on the flight to England. Therefore, I will keep things the way they are. In the meantime, I may swing through Denmark on the way back.

We are trying to turn over as much direct business to IJX as possible, but our customers are understandably slow to move it over. Sometimes, a discount will help. Growing pains will stay a minor problem as long as we all remain on the same team with lots of goodwill. I will strive to keep it so on all sides.

8/15/06

Tuesday, 9:23PM EST

New Jersey - Home

My wife was right. I do not think I can come home from Asia late on a Friday night and drive three hours to the Berkshires the next

morning. Then I plan to go bicycling, spend the evening with my family, and get up the next morning to drive home. Is too much for me to attempt, therefore, I am staying home during the balance of the Labor Day weekend. I will pick up Bailey on Saturday afternoon, and spend Saturday and Sunday relaxing. Unfortunately, I will not be with my family, but I think it prudent not to attempt the drive. My traveling schedule will be heavy for the next six weeks, so I have to be concerned with the wear on my body, and take my mental state into account.

Dell Computer had a massive recall of batteries that had the capability of exploding into flames. It affects some of our laptops, so we are trying to figure out which ones were affected and what needs to be done. I do not want to go to Asia with only one battery, so I will probably bring the two I have. Dell says it will take 20 days to get a replacement, and I don't want to spend \$200.00 to get another back-up. Alice is still away. Her email comes to me and I disperse it from there. Eileen and Anna are doing a wonderful job. Alex has been working on my game with Anna's guidance, and Kayla is in shipping. It is fun having them both in the office. On Thursday and Friday, they will probably spend some time playing my game. I look forward to seeing how it holds up. I am writing early tonight because my wife is playing Mahjong with her friends, and Alex is in our bedroom watching a TV show that I do not care to view. No matter, I like it down in the basement in my private room, I call "the cave." It is usually very cool all year round, and I like it that way.

There is now a cease-fire between the Israel and Hezbollah. I hope it holds forever.

There are lots of business expenses, but I think we are okay. I look forward to being back on the road; the shortest path to business and fun is actually being with people. Tomorrow's trip to Texas will be long and somewhat mentally strenuous. Making the trip gives us a lot of the benefits, even if I don't see everyone. I need to have the game ready for IJX for testing. They will also start the massive amounts of translations to Chinese and artwork needed. It is a big job. IJX, while experiencing some growing pains, has been doing a very good job. I have great confidence in them.

8/17/06

Thursday, 9:52PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Last week, we got word that a job IJX manufactured and sent to Malaysia was incorrect. They worked over the weekend and resent the job on Monday. Through the whole thing, I thought the color problem was their fault, and I was blaming them accordingly. Today, I found out that IJUS had given them the wrong production information, and I emailed Ben and his crew that it was our fault. It brought up

a much larger question of how information is shared between our two companies. It will mean that some changes will be necessary to make it better. In the meantime, I felt terrible about blaming them for something that was not their fault. To their credit, Ben and his group handled the whole problem with speed, good humor, and class.

I was trying to sleep last night when a strange odor came into my bedroom. It smelled like screen printing solvent. When I traced it up to the kitchen, I found out that Alex and Wendy had sprayed sealant on one of Alex's pastel sketches. The smell had permeated most of the house. I am very sensitive to that type of fume, and it kept me up for a while, and did not improve my humor or state of mind. I finally got to sleep, but I went to tennis this morning not feeling great and got absolutely slaughtered.

Alice called from France and is having a wonderful time. I do hope she comes back. I am only kidding; I know she will return. We have been fine, but I miss her and I want her back so I can return to my normal job. I did get to finish the question and rule section of the game, and Alex and Kayla will play it tomorrow.

Alex will finish at the office by Tuesday and then is on vacation, until he starts school. Kayla will probably work one more week. I will miss them both.

Tuesday I go to Texas. The weather calls for almost 100-degree temperatures, so I will not bring a suit jacket. I will probably bring at least one change of clothes, and try to limit it to two laptop bags, which I hope to get on the plane through security. If I have to go through baggage, it will delay me almost an hour on both sides, and it will hurt my schedule.

Business has been good, and we are slowly paying off our debt for building IJX. Taxes for me are due again in a few weeks, plus bonuses and raises for IJUS. We seem to spend a lot of money, but it is okay as long as we are making it. I worry that the cooling of the housing boom will affect everything else.

My son, Ben comes home tomorrow afternoon with his girlfriend to play dates with his band. I plan to catch part of one on Sunday night. He has an outdoor set tomorrow, but it will probably be very loud.

I am not sure Alcatel will buy Lucent. Either way, it will mean changes. Whatever happens, we will try and deal with it the best way possible. I am enjoying selling.

8/20/06

Sunday, 9:39PM EST

As usually, it is Sunday night and I am not tired yet. In fact, I am excited. I just emailed Ben in China regarding membrane switch panels, or labels that contain switches and conductive inks which are part of the electronic workings of the product. I plan to move into the

market as soon as we have perfected and tested the new technology, which was just released. In addition, I want to start on setting up for our big push in China regarding marketing my game, the CD, and my book in Chinese.

Ben and his girlfriend were here over the weekend. I asked them to play my new game. Ben did not want to. It seems he is not pleased with the idea that I do not like the music from his band, and has decided to pay me back by not playing my game. While it was a simple annoyance, the good news is that he is not afraid of me, and he is not scared to make a stand (in a very non-threatening way). This is good, and speaks well of the future. I do not want a wimp for a son, and I do not mind being paid back for such actions. It is a trait of mine I see in him; pay back for actions he doesn't like. He shows great promise for business in whatever field he chooses.

Alex's last day is this Tuesday, when I will be in Texas. It has been a good summer for us both. I hope he does it again in the summers to come. Kayla is home from camp and back at work in the office. As always, she is a joy and I am most happy to have her around.

Alice comes back tomorrow from her vacation. I want her to expand more into sales. She can take over some of the sales for Europe, if she likes, so she can see her children more frequently. Besides, she loves it there.

8/22/06

Tuesday, 5:15AM EST

Newark Airport, NJ

It was a sleepless night because I am traveling today and also because it has become evident that we must continue to spread out our customer base. Nothing is permanent. At least one of our larger customers is at potential risk, so it is good I am traveling over the next few weeks. In fact, the trips are a little closer together than normal, but that is the way it turned out, so that is fine. I was a little concerned this morning, coming to the airport, as this is the first time since the last terror plot was foiled in England.

Happily, I was prepared. I had taken out all of the various liquids from my baggage. I have two carry-on bags today, so I am traveling light. The destinations are Plano and Allen, Texas. If all works out, I will be back about 11:00 tonight. Business has been good, and Vinnie and I leave for Asia this weekend. I am excited about our potential new membrane switch line. Also, we have been doing well bringing in new customers. If we can move Alice and Vinnie over to selling more, then I feel very good about our chances to increase business. I know Wendy is worried about me flying, but I have to go where I feel needed. The harder it is to get someone, the better it is for me to go except to places that are normally dangerous like parts of South America or Russia which I plan to avoid. I will work on more questions for the game, and

rewrite my biography for the book.

8/22/06

Tuesday, 9:19AM EST

I am in flight to Dallas and it has been fantastic. I have three seats to myself, and I am totally spread out. I have decided that although it takes longer to get out of the plane when it lands, it is generally best to be towards the back of the plane. After all, you get to go on early, it is usually less crowded, and you have a place for your bag. You are also reasonably close to the rest rooms, which can be very important in a bumpy flight, and you never know when the seat belt sign could go on.

Not having my toothpaste and hand cream is a minor annoyance. If that is the worst that happens, I can definitely deal with it easily. I am listening to Clanad, an Irish group that sings both English and Gaelic music, though it's not liked by my family. I don't know why I love Irish music and dancing. Perhaps I have a long lost relative involved somehow. Regardless, I listen to them often.

I have been working on the third group of questions for the game, and it is becoming much harder to try and come up with new variations. After all, there are only a certain amount of things that can usually happen in business. It is the shades of the various encounters that spell the difference between partial success, true success, and failure. Here are some of the points I am trying to put across, though it is not rocket science:

- You don't have to be a genius.
- You do need to have a good feel of the marketplace.
- You need enough capital to get through the expansions and rough spots.
- You need enough drive to keep getting new customers.
- You need enough courage to go after new markets, and take incredible chances that can result in realizing your dreams, or worst, disasters, or a combination of both.

It does take a unique set of skills and desires to try it, and most people should not, which is another point I am trying to get across. As with last night's panic attack and yes most business people get them, it is usually the same problems that cause the same reactions. In many cases, having too much business concentrated into too small a group of customers can make you vulnerable for trouble, especially if you lose one. We all know this potential problem. We also all know how much more efficient and profitable it is to have a small group of giant customers, versus hundreds or thousands of tiny ones.

We pay for our decisions in numerous ways, and one of them is worrying about whatever ones we choose, and the predicated results. I can't tell you how many hours of sleep I have lost, because of either good or troubling news coming from emails, just before I am ready to go to sleep. Why check them, you ask? Because, I am the boss and if I

can save our people in Asia some grief or allow them to act that night (their morning), then it is my obligation to give them the feedback they need. Nobody said it would be easy. And, working around the world, it is harder in some respects but much easier in others.

What our plant in the US can't do sometimes, our Asian plant can, and vice-versa. Having both has been a windfall in potential new business, because people have much more trust when you are global. I am still working on how to leverage that advantage more. In fact, I am working on it all the time. More of my time is spent moving to sales and marketing, and it will only continue to do so. We have been fortunate that I have been able to sell and market through strength, where sales have been good, as opposed to fear and desperation, as when sales are down. I am very much a positive horizon seller. I do much better when my mind is at ease. However, I also believe that my best ideas, the ones that can change the course of the business and my life, can come out of extreme stress. While incredibly unpleasant, it seems to unleash a level of creativity and clear thinking that I cannot often achieve otherwise. It takes a big toll on me, but the results can be amazing.

We will be landing in about an hour. I will track down my rental car and head out to Flextronics. I am excited since I have never met the people I am scheduled to see. I am supposed to supply descriptions of some of them for my office people. They email and speak to them on the phone, and develop images of what they think they look like. It is up to me to supply the reality, but sometimes they would rather keep to their mental pictures instead. In many cases, what you think is often better than what is real for all sides involved.

8/22/06

Tuesday, 4:48PM EST

It has been a very good day. The plane arrived on time and I got to the rental car area with no trouble. It was still only in the low 80s, so the temperature was not too bad. I got to Flextronics in Plano about 11:00AM, and went to see a few customers. They were happy with our service, our people, and continued business seems to be coming our way. I left after about an hour. As I was driving out of the parking lot, I got a phone call from one of the people I had missed, so I turned around and went back to see him. He had a difficult outdoor labeling application, so it was good I saw him and the part in person. I also met a few of his co-workers. All in all, it was a great meeting. They are in a rush for some labels, quite normal in our industry, so we will overnight some test samples to him for tomorrow morning. I then went to Sanmina-SCI in Allen, Texas. Happily, everyone seemed pleased with us there as well.

Our injection molding line in China seems to be garnering some strong interest. Almost no one is looking for short-run injection molding

orders, so we may have some action in that area. I also brought up our new potential line of membrane switch labels, and there was interest there as well. It is great to finally meet a lot of people I had only met via email and telephone. I am sure we all look a little different than we imagined, but it is fun finally seeing the real thing. Two of my customers, who enjoyed reading my books, even bought me a jar of peanut butter and jelly as a traveling present. That was so nice of them. It really touched me that they would go to that trouble.

My snack of crackers, an apple, and water is now almost done, and I feel much better. I had bought veggie burgers at a nearby restaurant, but the President's Club of Continental would not let me bring in the food, so I am storing it at the restaurant for a while. It was very nice of them to watch it for me. I called home, and everyone seems fine. My wife is playing mahjong with her friends, tonight, so she might be up when I get home. Hopefully that will be by 11:30PM. In the meantime, I will work on my log, my game questions, and who knows what else. I look forward to my tennis game tomorrow; I hope I have enough energy to give Bruce a good match.

8/22/06

Tuesday, 9:01PM EST

I am in flight from Dallas to Newark, with approximately two hours to go. We got delayed for about an hour for weather, but it could have been much worse. I was upgraded to first class. How great is that? The only problem is I have an aisle seat. This means I have to keep climbing over poor Tim, the nice man sitting next to me, for the men's room, to get my laptop case or whatever. But he seems to like my book, and he shows excellent taste in sound. He too likes Celtic music, so we are having a fine time. We then spent the next hour discussing life, China, and capitalism. He is an optimist, with a cynical bent. He believes in what can be, but isn't sure how long it will take, so I am not sure how much he will try. He heard my story of China, and hopefully I have given him some food for thought for himself. He travels the world, and sees opportunities in many areas; perhaps he will partake on one. It is fun traveling the world, meeting people like Tim, and talking about where they are and how they view life. I find my optimism increasing. Despite the depths of a lot of tough world events, I still find my faith in the vast majority of people increasing.

8/23/06

Wednesday, 9:47PM

New Jersey - Home

The day went well today. It wasn't too tough getting up and playing with Bruce, but afterwards I needed caffeine and a good nap. We leave on Saturday, which means I have another two days to get everything

as ready as possible. I don't mind deadlines. I like what I am doing.

8/25/06

Friday, 10:59PM

Tomorrow morning we go to Asia. I will get up early, ride, have breakfast with Wendy, and get picked up about 10:30AM, and the new adventure begins. The rest of the week has gone well, and I am ready to leave in good shape. I played tennis with Ira this evening, our usual Friday game. He is a wonderful man. He wants me to check on dental products in China. He may want to market an emergency kit for their consumer market. The game is ready to go into production. I already emailed files for the questions and the rules. I am not getting enough sleep; I hope I can catch a little on the plane.

We have a very heavy schedule starting Monday morning, just the way I like it. I am looking forward to seeing Hong Kong Harbor, and walking along the promenade. It has been a while and I miss it. I hope Vinnie has a good trip, too. He is seeing customers with Rina.

8/26/06

Saturday, 2:03PM EST

When I got up this morning and prepared to go biking, I heard a noise and thought it might be thunder. As I started to look outside I was greeted by a flash of lightening. As a believer in fate and signs, I took this to mean I was not supposed to go biking this morning, so I left a voice message for Uncle Dave and went to my office. As I left my house, I was greeted with a torrent of rain, which meant it was just as well I had not biked. At the office, I checked my email and then exercised. Uncle Dave had called again by then, and we agreed to go for a walk, which did happen. I went home, made breakfast for my wife, and then got ready to go. Traveling from New Jersey to Kennedy Airport can take anywhere from one to three hours, and since we were supposed to be there at least two hours early, I left my house at 10:30AM. With the driver, I picked up Vinnie at our office. He was leaving his car there, and we made it to the airport in about an hour. Security went smoothly; I was a little concerned since I was carrying chopsticks, a very small pair of scissors, a nail clipper and fake paper money for my new game.

But we had no problems. I went into the lounge where Vinnie and I played my game, "The Ideal Adventure." I am very pleased to report it was a lot of fun, and we think the game has "legs" and are pursuing it full steam. As soon as we get to China, they will review the questions to make sure we are not violating any cultural traditions or rules. Then we will start the long process of translating everything into Chinese. I am very excited as this will be the cornerstone of a whole new area for us, and I want it to succeed, badly.

We are due to board our plane in about an hour, and then it should be about five hours to Vancouver. So far, we are on time. It is always hard leaving my family, dog, office and my life, but there is no choice. It is unfortunate that I did not get the chance to bike this morning, as I would have been a little more relaxed for the trip. But I did not overeat at breakfast or lunch, which means I am probably hundreds of calories ahead. I get angry at myself for being so obsessive about my weight, but childhood memories die very hard. Being called fat or hefty is something I will never forget. I just have to keep it to the side, and use it for positive things.

I have an idea of how to find potential entrepreneurs in China and partner with them. We can use the game to create contests to attract them, and move on from there. What does a Chinese person in his/her early 20's need in order to go into business? How can we find those people who will have the best chance? Here is an idea for a profitable contest that we could film as a reality television show. It will be called, "The Ideal Challenge." Here is what the participants will need to do:

- Get enough money
- Build an infrastructure
- Have a strong business plans
- Defining their idea/product
- Build their product
- Define their market
- Sell their product
- Find suppliers.
- Manage any problems that may arise
- Modify the marketing plan
- Plan for expansion
- Find employees
- Work with employees

Here is how the contest would run:

Task #1

Contestants entering the contest for the Ideal Challenge are required to write a business plan. There are no rules here. We will just see what people think is important, and view it from there. We get the entries, and for those with possibilities we send them back, if needed, for revisions. Once we get them, then our board will make a decision as to their fate. People can enter as pairs, but at least one has to speak English. There are no prerequisites regarding education, background, or ethnic origin, except that you must be in the country legally, on a long term basis.

There will be no plans that are considered biased by political or

religious ideology. The only system that is considered judged upon, or permitted is capitalism.

Pick fifteen of the best possible candidates, and bring them all in for a meeting. Go over the ground rules: what is expected and what happens in all cases.

Ground rules:

They are invited to try out for The Ideal Challenge. That invitation implies no offer of money, support, or a position in any of our companies. All decisions are final by the judges.

If they have problems then they tell us.

Part of this process is to see how well they get along in groups, how well they take orders, and can lead.

They should leave their egos at the door.

It is in their best interest to get along with people. If they are voted off the program, they can still have the possibility of being hired by one of the winners or one of the companies involved.

They should never get personal in either a positive or negative way with anyone they are working with.

They will be asked to sign a non-disclosure form. If they do not, then they are out of the program. They will also sign an agreement that, if they make it to the team and decide to leave for any reason, they cannot go into the same type of business for a period of not less than two years.

If they are one of the winners, the following is what they will be entitled to: If they don't like the awards, then they should leave now and give someone else their spot. These results cannot be negotiated at anytime.

A new corporation will be established with you owning 40% of the stock, and the parent company owning the other 60%.

All costs will be borne by the parent company. We will pay for and are in control of all space requirements, purchases, marketing, employees, infrastructure, professional fees, salaries, benefits, government relations, and everything else.

The parent company will be in charge of guiding, building, producing, marketing, selling, modifying and making sure your vision becomes a reality. You have the dream of what can be, and our job is to help you get there. The parent company will be the nuts and bolts of getting the job done.

If at any time the winner does not like the way things are going, they can stop as can the parent company.

As you go through this process, you will find that your abilities and flaws will surface. Sometimes a partnership is better than going alone.

Individuals may want to consider partnering with one of their

teammates, if they have compatible skills.

Each member will define their product, their vision of how they will market it, what it will take to get there, an approximate idea of how many people should be involved, how many man hours are involved, and the cost of getting a prototype made.

From the 15 people selected for review, one will be eliminated.

Task #2

Take the marketing plan and create one product or service for each. Make a prototype sample on test advice and set up a marketing and sales plan.

Review Task #2 and eliminate one contestant.

Task #3

Take the prototypes and attempt to sell them to a potential customer.

Review Task #3 and eliminate one contestant.

Task #4

Set up your product or service for production. How it will be set up for short and longer runs? How will it be produced and how much will it cost to get started, in the short and long run?

Review Task #4 and eliminate one contestant.

Task #5

Set up for hiring people. Define the first 3 people you will need. Define their skill sets. Set up an interview from each one. Then interview one other team member for one position. Sell your vision to this potential employee.

Review Task #5 and eliminate one contestant.

Task #6

You all get "X" amount of dollars to go make an actual (or close to actual) prototype of your product or service made as close to that price as possible.

Review Task #6 and eliminate one contestant.

Task #7

Infrastructure Needs: Make a detailed list as to what your new company will need to make your product in terms of equipment (or you can sub-contract), the number of employees needed, how they will be utilized, and how much they will cost. How soon can you break even?

Review Task #7 and eliminate one contestant.

Task #8

Your final marketing and selling section: Define what you need to sell and market your product, how much, how long, what resources. Run the gamut, from having virtually nothing, but yourself to make sales calls, to a big budget.

Review Task #8 and eliminate one contestant.

Task #9

How will you price your product or service? What research can you do? How do you know what people will pay? Figure it out and then back it up.

Review Task #9 and eliminate one contestant.

Final Exam

You or your team will put forward a final “pitch” for your company, covering all aspects of your potential operations including costs, personnel, potential market-share, selling process, marketing areas, potential market share, how much money you can make, and when you can expect to break even. Be sure to cover everything.

Three winners will be chosen, and arrangements will be made for them to get started.

8/26/06

Saturday, 6:13PM EST

I am in flight over Canada heading towards the North Pole. There are 6932 miles to go, at an altitude of 33,000 feet, and we’re going at 536 miles per hour.

Here is a surprise: we are not stopping in Vancouver. I have to get a new travel agent. Actually, I would except that I book all my flights myself. As usually, the buck stops with me, which is fine. It simply means we go direct to Hong Kong, which also means the flight is only about fifteen hours, which is fantastic! In fact, we have 13:16 to go and I am feeling quite good about it. Dinner has been served, and very soon the cabin lights will go off and almost everyone, except me, will go to sleep. I don’t know if it is the drugs they take, being able to immediately shift to a new time zone, or if they are all self-hypnotists. But they almost all seem to sleep except me. I will probably nod off in another few hours, but while I have the time, I will start editing this book. With luck, the basic writing will be done by April, and we can be off press by the summer.

Here is a fantasy time line of what if...

My book “How To Start and Run Your Own Company or Sex, Money and Power ...It’s All The Same Thing” will be released to Chinese book stores in November. One month later, we release the CD to go with it and my new game. We do a media blitz through the big

college campuses in Southern China in early December, and start a national game competition with regional competitions ending with a final playoff in Xiamen, with the winner either getting a cash prize or a job with our company.

While that is happening, we also launch a Xiamen based competition to find three entrepreneurs to start businesses. We take the 20 finalists, and film them going through a competition and pick the winners on the eve of the Chinese New Year. By March 1st, we launch their companies. We then run their companies until the end of the summer, with filming updates for media release every month, and run the same program again in December. We also release my new book on China next summer, with the book I am writing now to be released in English worldwide at the same time. Every time I am in China, I will do media briefings with the press and speak at various universities. We would also hope that at least one of the new companies will survive, and that the personnel of the ones that don't are absorbed by the successful venture.

I have been going through the newspapers from the plane, looking for more questions for the game. Here is what I came up with so far: One story spoke of a man from a Chinese province that met a woman and immediately asked her to marry him. She was from a different, poorer province and wanted to move to a better place, so she agreed. She apparently drugged him on their wedding night, and took all of his cash and ran away.

I don't think I can get a question for the game out of that story, but I found it interesting that anyone would propose marriage after a few hours of an encounter. Although I was talking about marriage within six weeks of meeting my wife, I did meet her family and asked her father's permission to marry her, so I guess that made it okay. Or maybe not, since I tell everyone they should get to know people for a while before contemplating a permanent attachment. Our 22nd wedding anniversary is this December, so we must have done something right.

Back to the newspaper; the government of China has agreed to support Venezuela obtain a seat on the UN Security Council. They will also grant aid to Venezuela to help build a railway, and have agreed to jointly develop their oil resources.

People are still being killed in Iraq and Afghanistan with no end in sight. What solution would work?

Indonesia has diverted part of their resources to dealing with natural disasters, and away from fighting the Bird Flu.

The cabin just went dark. I bet almost everyone will be asleep within the next ten minutes. How do they do that?

Anyway, with the current need for more power, there is a big push to mine China's vast coal reserves and use it as a fuel. Unfortunately, that will probably mean an increase in pollution, which is already a

major problem in China, and spreading to other parts of the world.

Speaking of energy, there will be more drilling in the North Sea. As the price of oil goes up, it makes it worthwhile now to go after smaller pockets of petroleum.

China is apparently going to miss its energy-saving targets. In other words, they are using more fuel than they had hoped, and will put in measures, i.e. raise the prices, so companies will use less.

Facing a tougher job market, Chinese youth, in amazingly large numbers, are turning to plastic surgery to enhance their appearances and hence their chance for employment. There is an estimate that good looking people earn, on average, 10% more than their less good looking counterparts.

By the year 2010, experts are warning that in England, one third of all English men will be obese.

I just put on some music by the Carpenters. I really liked them, and much of their music was popular, when I was a teenager in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Their song reminds me of my old girlfriend, Karen; practicing my clarinet for my weekly music lessons, with my very tough music teacher, and making sure I did my school-work. I still have momentary shots of terror that I forgot to do my homework. I even still have occasional dreams about it. This was way before the days of emails, faxes and computers. For years, I used to write letters to Karen. She was the one I could talk to most intimately over a long period of time. She taught me how to kiss well, or so I was told by others after her, and also broke my heart numerous times. It eventually ended but a lot of good things happened when I knew her. Junior high school and high school were the best and worst of times. Learning to get along with others, trying to figure out who I was, how I wanted to be, how to act and be treated. And then there was the whole other world of the opposite sex, which of course occupied a good chunk of my attention. In retrospect, it was a positive time and I do not look back on it badly. As I see my three kids growing up, so much that's happening to them also happened to me. It is fascinating watching how they handle it differently, or the same, with no direction from me. I would not want to do it over again. I am very happy where I am now.

I used to do my homework in my room. My parents had another room built onto the house when my brother and I were young. We used to room together, but did not get along. I guess I was a pain in the neck, but so was he. I had a set schedule then, as I do now. Sports after school and on the weekends, then dinner, study for school, watch some TV, and then get ready for bed. My Mom was great. She used to buy me cookies, which I had stashed up in my room, along with jellybeans. I had a small black and white television so I could be by myself. That meant I did not have to be the last one downstairs, and have to close everything up for the night. I was obsessive-compulsive

even then, and I would try not to have to check out because it took so long and caused too much strain. I was the youngest in my family and I learned early if I caused no trouble then no one usually bothered me. I gave my parents no reason not to trust me. Therefore, I never had a curfew. I got the older family car when I turned eighteen, which meant I did not have to rely on my parents for most of my last two years of high school. We got along fine.

Alex has been looking at colleges. He will apply, get accepted somewhere, and go away next year, which should be a great thing for all of us. First, he has to get through the stressful process of getting in. It is fascinating watching him search what he wants, and define the possibilities of where he wants to go. The level of schools he is looking at is much higher than the ones I chose, or could have gotten into. Like his older brother and younger sister, they are all very smart. They learned early that if they did their jobs, tried their hardest and did their best then they would not get bothered about schoolwork by their mother and me. It is good to see our children doing better than both of us. My hopes are that it carries them on throughout their lives, and they are successful, happy and utilize their talents to the fullest. It is always good when your children can do better than you. I am very proud of all of them.

Sometimes I wonder what happened to Karen. I even tried to look her up on the Internet a few times. I heard she got married again and is living in southern New Jersey. It is just as well I don't know. We ended things badly but it would be good to be able to clear the air for a few minutes for some closure, but I guess that will never happen.

8/27/06

Sunday, 2:38PM Hong Kong time (1:38 AM EST)

I am in flight. Since the monitor is not working, I can only approximate, but we have about five hours to go. I had a bit of a mishap a few hours ago. I was getting ready to get some sleep when I knocked over a glass of water, spraying and waking up Vinnie. I also got water on my seat and blanket. I gave Vinnie my blanket and pillow, and got a covering for my seat. Unfortunately, my seat was a little wet and the moisture transferred to me. I was cold with no blanket but such is life. Luckily, Vinnie had a snack and went back to sleep, so I have answered the age-old question that has baffled travelers for decades: How can you get wet in a plane without actually taking a shower? Well maybe nobody wondered about that before, but the question is now answered, regardless. Speaking of Vinnie, he has been sleeping most of the flight and I don't know how he does it. I hope he can sleep tonight when we get to Hong Kong. I have not gotten much but I may try again in a few minutes. I find myself thinking about my dog Hershey, who has been gone for years. She was my first dog when I was on my own, and I miss

her a lot even now. I still think about her when I let Bailey outside, and always give a silent invitation to all of my dogs to come in whenever they want. I choose to believe that when I pass, I will be able to see her again. It makes death a little less frightening.

I am trying to build up lots of good potential stuff so that when I'm about to die I will not be too afraid. I would like to meet a bunch of people who have already died. Some I miss, others would like to apologize to, others make peace with and still others I would find interesting. I would really like a chance to speak to Benjamin Franklin; after all, he was a fellow printer. I would also like to meet Wendy's grandfather and, of course, see Granny, Wendy's grandmother again. She was an incredible woman and she always treated me like her grandson. Thinking of which, I wonder, how my Grandfather Morris is doing. I'm sure he and my grandmother are together again. He really missed her when she passed. I wonder if we would get along now. Meaning that if all of the Jacobs men got into one room at the same time and actually tried to talk and understand one another I wonder what it would be like. We are all such competitive breeds. I wonder if that would be possible; I hope that I will have the opportunity to experience this.

Strange what you think about when you have been flying for a long time and sleep deprivation has started to kick in. Long-term rest has been eluding me for days. I wonder when I will catch up, perhaps when I get back home on Friday night. Wendy and the kids will be in the Berkshires, and my normal thing to do on Saturday morning is go to Temple, so I may just wake up fifteen minutes early for that.

It is fun to think about the people I would like to meet after I have died. I am assuming, and it is a big assumption, that we will have access to each other. Since I believe in reincarnation, I will be able to remember all of my past lives and what I was trying to accomplish while in this one. I hope I am on the course I was supposed to be on. I would like to know how the world got started, how it was built, just the structure of the whole thing. I am happy to wait to find out. As I said, it is good to have a plan set up so that the fear is reduced. I think it is time to try for another nap. I had a snack earlier which included duck soup with noodles, pretzels, an apple and some green tea. It was excellent, and I wanted to make sure I ate the fruit before we landed, so I would not forget and bring it through customs.

I am looking forward to tomorrow's call to Celestica. I will try and parley my trip to Celestica in Canada in a few weeks, and see what we can offer to get more of their business. They have a lot of contact with customers we have not penetrated. If we can become approved through them, we can go after more of the businesses in different areas.

8/27/06

Sunday, 6:59PM Hong Kong time (6:59AM EST)

In flight

We will be landing within an hour and I am feeling good. The weather in Hong Kong is supposed to be beautiful, so a walk along the harbor is in order. I wonder how late the pool is open until. I have been thinking about the proposed "Reality" program. We do not have the financing to do this as a full television production, but we definitely can do it on the web. We can have people log onto the IJX website. It will be great advertising, and we can put all the information up on that. We could also run audio streams, and possibly involve local college stations. We can use the web to power our position, which is to set up the best entrepreneurs in China, and eventually go public. I like it!

8/27/06

Sunday, 8:40PM Hong Kong time (8:40AM EST)

We are in Hong Kong. We are actually on the train, going from the airport to our hotel. Since I normally take this train at night and it is very fast, it often reminds me of being on the train to the afterlife with weary travelers, all on their way to a new destination and new life. No worries, I am not centering on death. On the contrary, the flight was excellent, very low impact, and a joy to be on. We will be in our hotel before 10:00PM, and then we will go for a walk along the harbor. I know a coffee shop that might still be open. If not, we can always eat in the hotel. I will be hungry by then, but my body needs some exercise and a walk should be perfect. Vinnie must have slept at least 10 hours, which makes me wonder if he will sleep tonight. I am hoping I will, since I did not get that much rest. I am excited; there is a lot of great potential in a bunch of areas.

8/28/06

Monday

We got to our hotel. As always, Hong Kong Harbor was incredibly gorgeous, and seemingly lit up with a million lights. We put our bags into our room, and went off after provisions and a walk. The weather was very warm and humid, but it was good to stretch our legs. We stopped at an American Coffee Shop near the train station that I had previously visited. We got some salads and sandwiches, and then did some other shopping. Then it was back to the harbor for a walk along the promenade. It was beautiful but getting late. We parted company and I went back and eventually slept. I got up at 6:00AM this morning, worked out in my room and went for another walk. As always, people were practicing Tai Chi, exercising, and some were swimming in the harbor itself. I wasn't sure how clean the water was, but they seemed to be fine after doing it for a long time.

I ate breakfast in my room and went downstairs. I had arranged a driver earlier and we were all set to get going, when I realized I did not have the address for Celestica. After going into mild hysteria when I could not get it from my laptop, I called Alice at home. She was giving it to us when Vinnie found a business card from one of the men we were going to see, which he had gotten on a previous meeting. All was then well. I stopped sweating, eventually, and off we went on the call. Seeing the guys from Celestica was good. We were trying to get more business and they were trying to get lower prices. In other words, things were normal. I am not sure what affect we had, but I do not think anything negative happened. I am glad we went and will have to wait for the future to see if anything else will come of it.

Back with the driver, we zoomed to the airport where Vinnie and I will sit for a little while, before I leave him to board for Xiamen. It has been a good stop, and I look forward to Penang.

8/28/06

Monday, 3:43PM Hong Kong time (3:43AM EST)

Last night, in the middle of sleeping I got a nerve cramp of some kind in my back. I have been having some trouble there since my flight to Texas, where I kept turning my head to talk to the man next to me. It had been getting better, but carrying the luggage around obviously made it worst. It was a nasty way to wake up, but I was able to go back to sleep. Every once in a while, it feels like someone is sticking an ice pick into my left shoulder area and it is not pleasant. I am even considering getting a massage, but that presents a whole new group of problems. I do not like being touched by most people, especially men, which means I would have to get a woman. That brings up the issues of having a woman touch me, without a shirt on. Being modest and worried they will go further than they are supposed to, this will give me more stress than I would have had before the massage in the first place. Therefore, I will probably try swimming in the hotel pool, which I hope is available.

By the total hours I have had lately, I can tell sleep deprivation is closing in quickly. The fact is, upon sitting down, I can almost fall asleep immediately. I am also starting to get more paranoid than usual. I know things are very good, but the lack of sleep promotes anxiety and worry. I am fighting the idea that I have to accomplish more than I planned for this trip, which I really do not. Today's call went well. There was no closing for anything specific that could have been done, nor should I have tried to corner the buyers into forcing them to give us more business. They knew what they wanted, and I am pretty sure I knew what they wanted. I tried to give them everything, while still getting what we wanted in return. There is no way I can know, if our efforts worked, today. It was good having Vinnie there with his support

for the short and long term, until the results present themselves.

Pressing harder and being more aggressive is not always a sign of good selling. I know this, so I have to rely on my instincts and flatten out my emotions, so I don't overdo my approaches. In the meantime, Vinnie should be on his way to Xiamen soon. He has almost all the game materials with him, but I kept one game piece to go over with Ben. It will be injection molded by our people. It should work beautifully for the game we are designing, and it can double as an advertising piece for our customers for the holidays. I think it could be a smash. If nothing else, our clients should have a great time taking them apart, as they are plastic pieces that easily fit together. People have really liked our yo-yos. They're fun things to play at their desks. Anything to keep our name in front of them, in a positive way, is good advertising. The best part is we can make these ourselves, and also promote our injection molding line. I am convinced that this area can be a solid, long term, repetitive money-maker for us, and I am pursuing it on multiple fronts.

I like this airline, Cathy Pacific. The people are nice, and there is no one around me so I can spread out. I should be in Penang in another 2.5 hours, and my ride should be standing by. I will probably have dinner with Ben and then we will split up; I will probably exercise again and go to sleep after checking with the office. Tomorrow is going to be one heck of a day. We have to be at four different places, and then hopefully, make our flight to Bangkok. We have a two-hour drive after that to get to our hotel, which will probably be on the later side of tomorrow night.

As I feared, Vinnie did not sleep at all last night. I did not think he would, after sleeping about ten hours of the flight, but he said he was fine. He would rather have slept on the flight, anyway, than be up as much as I was. I would rather have it where I got some sleep last night, which I did, so that everyone is happy.

8/29/06

Tuesday, 10:42AM Malaysia time (10:42 PM EST)

I got up at 4:15 this morning to exercise and call the office. Being on these trips is a lot of fun, but it also means that, between the working hours and the time change back home, I end up working a large part of the day. After checking in with Alice and doing some work, I went up to the forth floor for the gymnasium. The management kindly offered to open the gym for me an hour early. I was in there at 5:00AM and still on my mobile for a while, but I did get to exercise.

It was wonderful to stretch out. They even had some Martial Arts equipment, so that I could do some kicking and punching, which felt great. Whenever I work out on a heavy bag or a speed bag, it always brings me back to the days when I was able to kick-box or do some form of Judo or Karate. Those days and memories were wonderful,

but I am too old to continue fighting without the possibility of getting seriously injured. Therefore, I have to make do with working out on the equipment and trying to stay as ready as possible, if the unfortunate day comes when I have to fight for real.

While in there, another man came in and we started to talk. It turned out he was also from the same state as me, New Jersey. In fact, he was living within half an hour of my house. It is such a small world. I kept going until about 7:00AM and then went up to my room and got ready to check out. Bringing my own food helps a lot when traveling, not only to save time but also to have control of what I am eating. Once in the lobby, we found our driver and left for Celestica.

8/29/06

Tuesday, 5:33PM Malaysia Time (5:33AM EST)

I am in flight, on my way to Bangkok. Sleep deprivation has definitely set in, which means I pretty much fall asleep whenever I sit down. I don't mind. The dreams are intense and usually very interesting, and it feels so good to just fall asleep.

The call to Celestica went well. We have the chance for more business there, which is really all you can ever ask from a visit, unless it is actual orders. Since we are here to try and move our customers over to IJX, the real goal is to get people comfortable with the idea so they have no problem placing orders. It seems that our goal is slowly being realized, so I am very glad we went there. From there, we moved onto Solectron. Again, everyone seemed pleased with our service, quality, and our organization as a whole. There appears to be multiple chances for more new business, so again it was a good call. We picked up an old friend who works there. We were planning to have lunch with him, and three other guys I knew who used to work at Solectron and had moved on.

When we got to the restaurant it was closed. We chose a nearby alternative, which was okay except it was extremely hot. I don't think I mentioned we left our jackets in the car. Regardless, both the temperature (about 95 degrees F/33 degrees C) and humidity (above 75%) were very high, and we were hot almost the whole time there. Again, being hot, cold or sometimes uncomfortable is part of the life of a salesman. It shouldn't matter, as seeing customers and friends in person is what counts. To be able to look them in the eye and ask how they are doing, so you can see what is bothering them and what they need, is vital. Email is great and it is a necessary part of the selling process, but you can't do that all the time.

At lunch, only two out of our four friends were able to come. That was fine, though, as it went well and was pleasant for everyone. However, it was a pleasure to get back to our air-conditioned car. It was here that our able driver made a mistake, unfortunately, and took us

back to the airport instead of another Solectron location. This put us behind schedule a little, but in the end it did not matter. We did make it to the next Solectron location, and the buyer there was pleased with us, and was looking forward to doing more business. That is music to my ears, and I never get tired of hearing it.

Then we went onto Dell computer. Unfortunately, the timing did not work out between us but we did leave a sample kit. The buyer promised to get together the next time we were in the area. By this time, it was about 3:30PM and Ben and I had to get to the airport, which we did, and are now on the plane.

Why any airline would sell tuna salad on a flight, where the smell would make someone else sick, is my question to you. I know it is not my airline or country; therefore I will keep my mouth shut. Besides, the person finished their food so it is no longer an issue.

We should be in Thailand in about one hour, which is good both because we can find our driver, and then I will get the peanut butter and jelly sandwich out of my suitcase, because I am getting hungry. We have a two hour drive to the hotel, and then we can have dinner. Depending on how late it is will define if I do anything else, except work from my room again.

In the airport, Ben talked about the status of my book regarding starting your own company. We had some choices regarding publishing and distribution. The translation to Chinese is almost completed. Since my goal here is not to make money on the book, but get good exposure, it gives us a lot of options we might not normally have. The best offer we got was from a publisher, owned by another motivational speaker, who offered to publish and distribute the book through bookstores and airports all over China. The catch is that they will take over the rights to my book in China. I would not normally consider it, but since I can't distribute it myself; it seemed like a good offer. I have decided it is the best way to go, and Ben agrees. The widespread distribution of my book should happen by Christmas. If my thoughts are correct, the exposure will be a big help in furthering my plans for the CD set, the game, and my plan to help entrepreneurs get into business. It is strange, people are now asking about when my next book is coming out. They expect me to be writing, and the pressure is on for me to produce, which is so unlike the old days when no one cared. I like it much better this way.

Ben and I were talking about me bringing my family to Xiamen next summer for a vacation. My two sons, Ben and Alex, could take classes. Kayla and Wendy could go to Hong Kong, and I could work and do my media tour. It sounds wonderful to me. I will see what they think. It's time for a quick nap.

8/29/06

Tuesday, 11:00PM Thailand Time (12:00PM EST)

We got to the airport on time, but our driver was not there. It turns out they never got my email. Ben expertly negotiated a deal with a cab, and we were on our way for the two-hour journey. As we were nearing the hotel, Ben mentioned something about an elephant and I thought he was talking about a statue or sculpture, because there are a lot of those here. Suddenly, from behind our car, an actual elephant was brushing by us and cutting across traffic to get to the other side of the street. Of course, if an elephant wants to cross a street, you let him do it, which is just what occurred. If he wanted anything else, he probably would have gotten that also.

Thailand is beautiful, tropical, lush and full of very good-looking people. After we arrived at the hotel, Ben and I decided to split up. I wanted to get in a swim before dinner and he had things to do, as well. The swim was pleasant. The water was cool. I could see the lightening exploding in the sky in a gorgeous, luminous display. I went to have dinner in the hotel's Japanese restaurant. They spoke very little English and I didn't know Japanese, except the counting I had learned in Martial arts training. We used hand signals and pointed at the menu to communicate our orders. Dinner turned out to be good. I was going to walk a little outside, but it seemed like there were a lot of nightclubs and people hanging around. It might have been dangerous, so I decided it would be better if I stayed in.

I had some fruit sent to my room, and started getting ready for tomorrow when I noticed my iPod was missing. I must have left it somewhere, and I am distraught because my family gave it to me. It is replaceable, but it had all my handpicked music and will be a pain to set up again. However, it is a heck of a lot better than losing my passport, wallet, computer, Blackberry and mobile phone, so I am trying to count myself lucky. The lightening storm continues, and it is mesmerizing. I can see the harbor from my window, and it is hard to stop watching.

8/30/06

Wednesday, 9:32 Thailand Time (10:32 EST)

I am on route to see customers. I had little trouble getting to sleep last night, but still chose to get up after five hours to work out. I started first with emails, however, and things seem fine from the office. We are making good contacts with our customers, and the trip has gone very well so far. The gym in the hotel was not open until later this morning. The only air-conditioned area was the front lobby, so I spent about an hour walking its perimeter, talking first with Alice and then with Wendy. It is a joy having Alice as my back-up. She is thorough, caring and really knows her stuff, the perfect number two. I know how lucky I am to have her.

I then called my wife, who gave me the wonderful news that our son Alex was placed very high in his school class ranking, which means he might be able to get into an Ivy League school, one of his dreams. I never thought he would actually be eligible for that, and I am very proud of him. I told him years ago that if he got into Harvard he could go regardless of the cost. Now he might take me up on my offer.

Wendy was home alone at that point. Alice and Kayla were out, and she was giving a snack to our dog Bailey. That is always my job when I am home. It is a special bonding time he and I have, and if I am not fast enough with the food, he barks at me to let me know he is waiting. Being away is hard, and it made me homesick to hear him barking, which is his way of talking to my wife. They are fine, though, and I am doing what needs to be done. I leave on Friday, so it is not that long to go.

It is very hot and humid here. It rained last night and some this morning. The car has good air conditioning, happily, and our driver seems to know where he is going. Our first stop to Celestica went well, and we did our normal offer of making free prototypes to try and grab some of the business away from our competitors. Having a plant in China and being considered a local supplier is a great advantage. I am trying to leverage it against all the American and European label makers, most of who do not manufacture here. If the other suppliers only have a distribution center, then I know that their costs are even higher than before, since they have to pay for stocking in local warehouses. Therefore, I am trying to keep up the pressure and pull as much away from them as possible.

As with all buyers, you can never tell what they are thinking and what they will do. Often, it is a matter of timing. If you contact them or come in at a point where they are angry, upset, or need a second supplier, you have a decent chance of getting in. If not, it can be like butting your head against a concrete wall. No matter, it is the same playing field for all of us. The same rules apply and have done so all my business life which is fine since I think I have a pretty good handle on the way things generally work. Of course, when you are dealing with people, there is a personal logic to everyone. You always have to remember that everyone will react differently under the same circumstances. Your best chance it to try and listen as closely as possible, watch for visual and physical cues, keep an open mind, and try to view things from their perspective. We should be at our next call in about forty minutes. The company is called Delta and I have not met them before.

8/30/06

Wednesday, 11:37AM Thailand Time (12:37PM EST)

We just left Delta. They make fan assemblies and have plants throughout Asia. It was fascinating to speak with the buyer about how they cooperate with their sister plants, and the multitude of languages used. It seems that two thirds of their world has centered on English as their second language, which is great because I am not that good about learning another language myself. Besides, we have so many customers in different countries and it would be difficult to take care of all of them.

We are now on our way back towards Bangkok, and will stop for lunch within the hour. I guess that means I should stop eating the pretzels I brought, but they are good and I have not had any for a few days. I have not seen any more elephants, but I am watching for them. I doubt we will spend more than thirty minutes for any sales call, but it doesn't matter. We came, we talked, and hopefully we bonded a little. We showed our commitment by my coming half way around the world to see them. That is what counts. It is time to move on. Life on the road doesn't change, which is a very comforting thing.

8/30/06

Wednesday, 1:21PM Thailand Time (2:21AM EST)

We stopped for lunch at an exotic restaurant, which apparently caters to the tourist trade. We could tell that by the buses letting people off, and the slightly over-the-top Chinese décor, but it was still interesting. The food was okay. Since they did not speak English or understand my bad Spanish, it made for interesting ordering. We are now passing through Bangkok on our way to our next stop. It is now cold in the car, but I am not sure I can convey to the driver to turn down the air conditioning, since he only speaks Thai. Ben is asleep, and I don't want to wake him to talk to the driver. Therefore, I will just be cold for a while.

Our current arrival time for the next customer should be less than one hour. We have not heard back from the emails I sent to both customers there, therefore I am not sure if anyone will be around to see us. Regardless, whether they are there or not, the attempt is worth a lot. The worst case is we get 90% of the benefit for showing up, and then move on. This morning went really well, so the day has been a success already. We got a message that Vinnie and Rina are doing fine on their calls in Qingdao. I can't wait to hear what is happening there.

8/30/06

Wednesday, 3:11PM Thailand time (4:11AM EST)

We just left Fabrinet, which was very interesting because they could speak a little English and no Chinese, and we could not speak Thai. We all communicated with a minimum amount of English

words, hand signals, and a lot of good-natured laughing. It went well and we have the chance for more business. As with most situations, if the people involved want to get along and do so in good humor, then that is usually what happens. It was good we met them in person. One more call and then back to the hotel. This is good, since I am excited about the call. I also need to finish for the day, at least until New Jersey opens up and I start working from that side.

8/31/06

Thursday, 8:26AM Thailand time (9:36 PM EST)

We are at the Rama Garden Hotel on the outskirts of Bangkok. As we drove up yesterday, it did not seem like much of a place from the street. When you go through the entrance, however, it opens up to a large complex of buildings and has a resort feel to it. It turned out to be a very plush place, and I spent the evening working out and relaxing. Working the large amount of hours over the past week has caught up with me, so I had dinner and then turned in early, after first checking with the office. I slept about nine hours, which is the biggest block of sleep I have had in some time. I answered my emails. Alice had already left the office for the evening, but was on call if I needed her. I then exercised and went out for a walk to explore the facility. I like walking in places because you really get a feel for the culture and the people. I first started through the sports complex. It seems they hold a tennis tournament there. Next time I will try and bring my racquet to play.

I kept walking and called my parents on the way. They always like hearing from me when I am traveling, and they seemed fine. My dad remarked on how many changes I have made in the company. We used to have sales confined almost exclusively to our state of New Jersey, and now we have spread all over the world. I agreed with him that buyers and people are the same all over the world. It just took more time and effort to go see them, but it's definitely worth the effort. "Belly to belly" is his description for seeing people in person. It's still and will always be the best form of finding out what is really going on in a customer's mind, and presents the best prospects for getting new business.

After hanging up with them, I passed the two pools that had the feel of a tropical paradise. Their laid-in tiled floor reminded me of something from my past. When I was a boy, we used to visit my grandparents in Florida. It is amazing how, with the right stimulus, feelings come bursting back from sensory cues and different smells acquired long ago. I remember on one trip I must have been about five years old, and my dad hired one of the pool lifeguards to teach me how to swim. He did a great job, and my graduation was diving from the high board and swimming to the side of the pool. It was fun for me, but must have been a little traumatic for my parents to watch.

I kept walking and saw a soccer field. I walked in front of the goal

and played a minute of “air soccer,” kicking an imaginary goal into the net. More reminders of my past again, this time learning how to play soccer and being on the high school team. Tomorrow is September 1st, which historically marked the first full day of soccer tryouts. When I was on the team many years ago, it often resulted in extreme exhaustion and pain. Autumn is coming in the United States again and I always felt like it is time I should be back in school even though it has been almost 30 years since I last attended.

I kept walking and passed a shrine of some type. My apologies to the birds I temporarily scared away, who had their eyes on the various food offerings that someone had placed there. The incense was burning and it was a nice memorial to someone or something.

After that, I walked around the building for a while more, and came back to the room to get Wendy’s telephone number in the Berkshires. She, Alex, and Kay are there until Sunday. I miss them a lot, but the trip is going well, and we still have some major things left to be done. We have one more call today, and then Ben and I go back to the airport and fly to Xiamen.

Tomorrow morning, we see our staff. I will also join Vinnie again. I will have only a short time to greet them, give a motivating talk on how well they are doing and how proud we are. I also intend to bring in the art people to get them ready for working on the game. They have to be behind the project, or it will never go. It is a lot of work, and they have to be excited in order for it to turn out well. If I can accomplish these results, then it will be a great end to the trip.

8/31/06

Thursday, 12:22 PM Thailand time (1:22AM EST)

Thailand Airport

I screwed up. We originally planned to meet in the lobby at 10:30, but changed it to 10:00AM this morning. The only problem was that I forgot, and Ben called me at 10:03 checking to make sure I was okay. After our discussion yesterday about me never being late, I had messed up, so that record is now history. A bit crazed, I gathered my stuff and met Ben downstairs. He was not angry, just happy I was okay. He is a true friend.

We got to our driver. Happily, the trip to our customer would take less time than we anticipated, so that meant we were still on time. On the drive over, Ben spoke about his childhood. I never realized he was in China during the time of the Cultural Revolution. His family was unfortunately right in the middle of it. He had an uncle who was high up in Chiang Kai Chek’s army, and escaped to Taiwan at the end of the war. Unfortunately, anyone associated with that side of his family were not treated well, including relatives, and Ben’s family received the brunt of that bad treatment. His parents were sent out to the countryside to a re-education area, while he and his brother Wayne

lived with their grandmother in Xiamen. His parents were gone for five years, and Ben only saw them during the summer. It must have been incredibly difficult.

During those years everything that defined who you were in terms of name, property and work, was all stripped away. They had to start from scratch. That is one of the reasons relationships are so important in China. That is a typical scenario for many families there. Everything else can be taken away except personal relationships and knowing and helping each other. It makes it easier to understand the Chinese psyche, after you hear what many of the people went through. Even though Ben moved to Malaysia for a while, his contacts here are amazing and have been of immense help to us.

We got to the customer, and the meetings went well. As with the others in Thailand, they didn't speak much English, and no Chinese. Although they want to make the effort, it is tougher for them to deal with us this way. Ben suggested we get a sales agent for the country, someone who can help with communications and sales calls, and I agreed. We then drove to the airport hoping to find an earlier flight to Xiamen, but there wasn't one. So here we sit with our luggage, unable to check it for another hour, and Ben is having lunch. I will eat after we check in later, as I had a late breakfast, which by the way was very good. It is amazing how well you can communicate with people by pointing, smiling and being good-natured.

We should be in Xiamen about 8:00PM. We will grab something to eat, and then I plan to take a walk and get ready for bed. Tomorrow, it will be a long day with the plant first and then the long ride home. I have to exercise before getting on the plane, or I will probably go crazy, so I will have to get up early. Hopefully, no strange women will come to my room like last time, although it would make for another good story when I send them away.

8/31/06

Thursday, 6:17PM Xiamen time (6:17AM EST)

We are en route to Xiamen, China. Except for trying to find some food, the wait in Bangkok Airport was not onerous. I bought a chicken burger, some additional chicken and fried rice. Unfortunately, the chicken burger was spicy and filled with add-ons I did not like. As I ate the rice, I found some hair in it and I lost the urge to continue. At about that time Ben came in to meet me. He had been buying an Internet card, and we waited together for the plane. Since this is Asia Air, there are no fixed seats so it was first come, first serve. We decided to try and be intelligent about it, so we waited towards the end of the line with the idea that the bus taking us would have to offload the last people first.

Unfortunately, this did not quite work out, but it did not matter as

we got good seats in the end. I had a can of excellent ice tea with a glass of ice. While tasty, I realize now that it probably had a lot of caffeine. It does not matter, since I have no plans for sleep in the near future. We are due to arrive in Xiamen about 8:00PM. I plan on dinner. Maybe I can find a salad and who knows what else, then I can walk along the waterfront. Maybe I can track down Vinnie. We could walk together and catch up on things and discuss what we want to accomplish tomorrow.

I will spend part of the flight home rewriting my log. I will be ready to roll as soon as I get into the office, which will probably be on Sunday afternoon. Monday is a holiday, so I will play tennis at 8:00AM, go to the office if needed, and spend some time with my family.

8/31/06

Thursday, 7:15PM Xiamen time (7:15AM EST)

In Flight

I just went over the game idea and rules with Ben. He seemed to like it a lot and agrees that it has merit. He already has one company interested in marketing it in China. I believe it will be the first bilingual game of its kind. I am willing to forego the royalties in exchange for IJX producing the games, and having it widely distributed throughout China. If it works, we will try and spread out marketing worldwide, attacking the US market first. Our quiet evening has now been exchanged for gathering people together to play the game. I hope it goes as well, as a lot hinges on Ben and probably Clair becoming as excited as we are at the game itself, and the prospect of making IJUS and IJX famous not only in China but also in the US. Ben and I calculate that we can manufacture the game here for about \$4.00 USD in mass run. That means it can sell between \$7.00 USD in China and \$20-25.00 USD in the US. If we can start making our own product line, then it is the best way to maximize profits and insure our own supply of work

Chapter Nine

9/1/06

Friday, 9:00AM Xiamen time (9:00PM EST)

Xiamen Air Lounge

On the balance of the flight, Ben began speaking to a young man seated next to him, named Gideon, who turned out to be going to Xiamen University to study Mandarin. He was born in Thailand, is fluent in English, and would be perfect as a part-time person to help us with our customers in Thailand. He was interested and when we landed we gave him a ride to his new living quarters. Ben had already hired him by then, and he starts today. Sometimes it just seems that fate intervenes, and in this case it could be a very good thing. If business increases in Thailand, we may put in a small distribution depot later.

I got to my hotel about 9:30PM and Claire and Vinnie were there to meet us. We went up to the restaurant and began to play the game. After reviewing the questions, it was obvious that some would have to be revamped. As I hoped, the general “buzz” was excellent and we are moving ahead.

9/1/06

Friday, 1:45PM China time (1:45AM EST)

Hong Kong Airport

I got to sleep last night about 12:30AM after working for a while with Al back in New Jersey. Things are going well there. The end of August marked the best summer we ever had. It has been very exciting. I got up at 3:45AM, answered my email, worked out and went for a walk. Xiamen is a beautiful city, and even more amazing at night with all the lights on the buildings. As I walked along the waterway, it was steeped in fog and darkness; there were no traffic or streetlights, which made it a little intimidating, almost like a different world. But I wanted to keep going, so I resolved to be extra careful in case anyone came near me. Regardless, the only people that seemed to be out were the fisherman, the man emptying the street garbage receptacles on a bicycle, an occasional walker and me. It was dark and beautiful. As I walked, it was very hot and humid. I sweated a lot but rejoiced in the feeling of my body being alive, and that I was going home today. People here are not overly friendly. I think it is a result of the years of communist rule, where everyone was generally afraid of most things being turned over to the police. Occasionally, I got a nod or a grunt and sometimes nothing at all.

I made my way back to the hotel and got ready to leave. Vinnie met me in the lobby. We checked out and the IJX driver, James, named by Vinnie after his son, met us with Ben and we all went to the office. It

was great seeing our place again. It was spotless, as usual, and all of our employees seemed happy, contented and motivated. After being introduced to many of the new faces, I held a meeting with some selected staff regarding the game. They all seemed in favor of the concept, and were happy to be involved. They want to be busier at an ever-increasing rate and this game could do it.

JX just landed a new piece of business, and they were going after more Chinese based companies to fill of some of their extra capacity. I was all in favor of it, and offered any guidance I could give in terms of selling. I know they want to be self-sufficient, and getting their own sales is one great way to get there quickly. If they originate the sales then I have no input unless they ask me or the IJUS staff for help.

Ben also said that the young man from yesterday, Gideon had just come in for his first day of work, a very good thing, to help our sales effort in Thailand. If it works out, we may do the same thing with someone else for Malaysia, Singapore and India. I have a lot of work to do on the plane, including starting to edit this book, which is about two thirds done. I want to finish as much of it as possible, as I go, so I don't have that frustrating downtime of having to do it all at once at the end. Security here is very tight, and all of my liquids got confiscated at one of the security gates. They offered to send them onward for me, but we will get to JFK airport late tonight, and I do not want to have to search for the bag or get into trouble if I don't pick it up.

I ate a sandwich and a half of peanut butter and jelly, and I am hoping it was not a mistake as my stomach is rumbling a bit. I saw Winnie go into the airport lounge a little while ago. I hope he doesn't wait too long to get here, as the lines for security will probably only get worse. I spoke to Wendy who told me that she, Alex and Kayla will probably stay in the Berks until Sunday. I will most likely be alone on Saturday, until I pick up Bailey from the veterinarian boarding him. I do not anticipate a lot of activity on Saturday night. During the day, I plan to go to Temple, ride my bike, and if I have any energy left, I may go to the office. We should board within a half hour. I will relax once I am on the plane. Maybe I can think of some new questions, and work out what has to be done with each part of the game.

9/1/06

Friday, 6:25AM EST

I am in route back home. We have about 15 hours to go. One of the advantages of being the boss is that I can decide to go into a new area, and spend the funds necessary to launch it. One of my responsibilities, to both companies, is to share my ideas, get their feedback, and step back and check my ego to see where my true motivation is. I have to listen to what my people are really saying, and if I can convince them of my thinking, we can move forward. If I can't convince my top people

that my ideas have legs, then there are two possibilities. The first is that my idea is bad, wrong and won't work. The second is that I am in front of the curve, and I have not explained it fully enough to bring them onboard. Being the owner does not give me the license to ride roughshod over my people. Why would I hire individuals with strong opinions in the first place? I should at least listen to their advice and modify my thinking where needed, until I can convince them that the idea has merit or abandon it.

Now it is time to update my log for next week. I will go through my notes and see what needs to be done then I will be as ready as possible for Tuesday, when we all go back to work. I look forward to going back to my regular schedule.

9/1/06

Friday, 5:11 PM EST

In Flight

We landed in Vancouver without a problem, and after spending about an hour in the holding area we are now on our way home. We are racing back to try and get in before the remnants of Hurricane Ernesto, which promises to bring a lot of rain, starts pounding our area.

I decided to try and set up an indoor tennis game with my instructor Paul. Happily, I got a hold of him and we are playing at 11:00 tomorrow morning. That means I can go to Temple, play tennis, and check when Bailey will be ready to be picked up. Biking in high winds and heavy rain is, besides incredibly unpleasant, downright stupid. I am happy I could set up an alternative. I also spoke to Uncle Dave, and we might be able to get together for a walk sometime over the weekend. The weatherman calls for rain and wind until Monday, so it will probably be indoor sports activities until then. I spoke to Alice, and things at the office are running fine. Until I get in there over the weekend, we are clear sailing. Every time I go away, there seems to be less for me to do when I get back. My crew is able to handle much more of my tasks, which frees me to be away with less worries. It is slightly unsettling that they can do so much for me, as I still have an emotional tie to be needed, but I tell myself to grow up and remember the best utilization of my time is with sales and systems work. It is often better if I am working outside the office.

9/1/06

Friday, 8:10PM EST

If the monitor is correct, we have about an hour left to go. We are passing by Toledo on our way towards Cleveland. Ben, my son, is living there. My wife said she spoke to him a day or two ago, and things were going very well. He loves his fall schedule for school. It is always nice to hear when your kids are doing fine. With the weather as it is, the

Labor Day Weekend is mostly a washout, which means the traffic will not be too bad on the way home from the airport. I will be happy if we make it in under an hour and a half, which when coupled with our time to get our luggage should get me home about 11:30PM. The house will be empty and a little lonely, but picking up Bailey tomorrow will help fill that void, at least temporarily until everyone, except Ben, gets home on Sunday.

I have scheduled a meeting on Tuesday to concentrate on the final designs for the game pieces. I want to be done with the first prototypes by the early part of November. I have no idea how long it will take to strike a deal for distribution, and how long it will take after that to see the games in some type of stores.

9/1/06

Friday, 10:24 PM

New York

We have landed and are on our way home.

9/2/06

Saturday, 10:02PM

Labor Day Weekend

New Jersey - Home

A lot has been changing here. My son, Alex and daughter, Kayla, have turned into adults seemingly before me eyes. They are no longer the kids who used to ask for food off of my plate although Kayla still seems to get part or a lot of what I eat. Alex can drive and no longer needs rides. Kayla's calendar is filled with activities. She has good friends that can both be counted on to keep their word, be good people, and do the right thing. I seem to be in the middle of a fast-forward part of my life. Things are moving like the wind, and I am trying to absorb it all and enjoy it as it happens. It has been a most wonderful ride. My partner Ben suggested I take my family to China next summer, as opposed to California or Europe. I immediately warmed to the idea and when I got back, Kayla and Alex seemed in favor. Wendy wanted to think about it and I have not had the right moment to speak to my son Ben.

My partner Ben goes to Beijing tomorrow to discuss the book and the game with the potential distributor, so they are both moving along well. We hold a staff meeting in the morning to continue work on the game. Business for the summer was amazingly good. I hope the same for the fall.

9/3/06

Sunday, 4:30PM EST

New Jersey - Home

It was not easy getting up yesterday morning to go to Temple.

Uncharacteristically, I even reset my alarms after they went off for another 15 minutes of sleep. I had gotten to bed about 2:00AM, which meant I was working on about six and a half hours of sleep. I knew that wasn't enough, but I had a lot to do so I got up. Going to Temple is a Saturday tradition for me, and I try to attend whenever I am home. I have been going to this Minyan meeting for about twenty years, and we all know each other well. They could see I was very tired. I think they were waiting for me to fall asleep, but I made it through and then went onto my tennis lesson. Normally, physical activity will release massive amounts of energy, but not in this case. I almost considered stopping early, but I did get better in the last ten minutes. From there, I went to get Bailey from the veterinarian's office. He was very happy to see me and then we came home.

After lunch, I went to the office to catch up as much as possible. Things there were in great shape, and I picked up dinner on the way back home and was asleep by 10:00PM. Nine and a half hours later, I got up this morning. Still tired, but much better, I went to go play tennis with my brother. I told him about Alex's chances at Yale and Harvard, and he was very excited. He has always said to not think about the money, to let the kids go where it is best for them. I am quickly coming around to his way of thinking, but Alex still has to get accepted first. From tennis, I came home and then went biking. It was all great.

I got a call from my parents. Using gift certificates we had gotten them, they were having trouble ordering online from a popular online web store. It is a little amusing to ask me for computer help, since it is definitely not my area, but I went over it anyway and was able to get them going. I am still tired, though I am now sitting on our porch. The rains have long since passed, and it is beautiful. Bailey is sharing the lounge chair with me, and I have the feeling I may be taking a nap soon.

9/5/06

Tuesday, 9:51 EST

Last night, I almost did not sleep at all. I don't know if it is stress, delayed jet lag, or a combination of everything. Tomorrow, I go to Canada for one day of sales calls. I hope I sleep tonight. Alex and Kay begin school tomorrow.

9/6/06

Wednesday, 5:21AM EST

Newark Liberty Airport, New Jersey

Thank goodness, last night I slept. The night before was a disaster, and I only got a few hours, which did not put me into a great frame of mind. Happily, after a slightly rocky start, the day went well and I got an enormous amount done, which means my day is now clear to

focus on the matters at hand. I am scheduled to go to Celestica and Sanmina-SCI today, and if I have extra time, there may be some more stops, if people are available. The weather in Toronto is supposed to be rainy, but it did not seem too bad, so I should not be delayed. I got a new iPod this week, and my wonderful daughter was able to partially program some music and Jean Shepherd tapes into it, so I will be well prepared for my journey. Since liquids are banned, I will try and get my oatmeal, raisin and banana breakfast ready to go before I leave this lounge. Therefore, once we are in the air, I won't have to be concerned about finding an adequate water supply.

I have been emailing Ben in China, as usual. He is now beginning to price things on his own. Pricing is one of the hardest parts of this business. People often think it is a cut and dried process, with taking the costs of the components, adding overhead, and then a predetermined percentage for profit and that is it.

But in our business, as in all others, there is a market-will-bear component, which guides you to reduce or increase those profit levels based on how you read the marketplace. It is difficult to risk an order to go for more profit, and most people can't or won't do it. I do not have that problem and happily, it seems that Ben does not either.

After our trip last week, I emailed over some suggestions about some slight modifications for the IJX operation. Other than that, things are fine. I have been told to come up to Canada today by Celestica. There appears to be a heavy business potential, but so far we have not been able to open the door. I am not sure if I am reading the signals from the buyer correctly, or if there is a path I should be following that I just don't see yet. My goal for today is to get things organized as to what is expected of me, whether I am willing to do it, and if we can move forward. After that, we go to Sanmina-SCI.

Alex and Kayla start school today. I hope they both have a good day with no hassles from teachers or other students. I always worry about what can happen, as my own memories can often influence a potential situation that exists only in my memory. I try not to bring it up since I don't want to plant any negative thoughts into either of them. Besides, they are both fully capable of taking care of themselves, and if they need my help I will be there quickly. I have no wish to go back to school, and am very happy where I am. When I get home tonight, they should both be full of stories from the events of the day. I hope they will not be upset at the teachers they have, or the classes they attend. Alex will begin his college applications soon. Early acceptances will be known by December, and if he gets into a school early it will mean a lot less stress around our house.

My last trip for a while starts next Sunday, going through England to Eastern Europe. It promises to be an adventure. Then I am finished for the foreseeable future, until either someone calls me to come in or

something new pops up. So much of what I do now is based on “feel,” if I get a new idea or I get the “feeling” I should go see someone. It is based on how I view things, and how I think they could or should be. I try to stay open to everything, because I never know when it can lead to an area I hadn’t thought possible. I could never do this without the crew I have for support and I never underestimate their worth and importance. It’s time to go make my oatmeal. I hope it doesn’t leak in my bag. I should have double-bagged it, something I have to remember for next time.

9/6/06

Wednesday, 8:17AM EST

In Flight to Toronto

I have seen the light! Actually, I have seen the advantage of flying the same airline as much as possible, which in this case is Continental. I got upgraded to first class because I am flying them so much. First class is a nice thing with bigger seats, and being in the front of the plane is a lot of fun. We should be landing soon and then it is off to Celestica. When I travel now, and I am reading the newspapers, I am constantly on the watch for questions in support of the game. It is funny, I never know how many more I will need, so I just keep writing them down, figuring I will eventually use them. I already have an idea for the advanced version of the game, which I will start as soon as this one is put to bed. Depending on the market result, I will decide if we ever do another addition. My nephew Barry is looking for work, and since the cookbook idea died I have been thinking for something for him to do. I am considering using him to sell the game to educational institutions across the United States. I think it’s a wonderful tool for helping kids learn both English and Chinese, and we will add other languages if it is successful. It is all very exciting to think that it could not only generate more business, for IJUS and IJX, but actually help people, too.

9/6/06

Wednesday, 4:00PM EST

I am back at Toronto Airport. It has been a heck of a day so far. We landed on schedule. After a short trip through customs and immigration, I was swooped up by Manny, my driver for the day. He was born in Portugal and immigrated to Canada about a decade ago. I know this because he is very outgoing, and I soon learned about most of his family history. It was not a problem, though, because he was an interesting man and knew his way around the area. I was at Celestica before 10:00AM, where we had a long discussion about how we could do more business together. It was hopeful and I have a lot of work to do when I get back.

While in the car, Manny gave me a good piece of advice. Although Canada and the United States were similar in many ways, he said they were two different countries with different cultures and political systems. I could not afford the luxury of figuring that people here will react in the same way that someone from the United States would. It is like dealing with something from Eastern Europe or even China, and although it might not be as extreme, they do think and react differently and I have to keep that in mind.

The next stop was at Sanmina-SCI, where I met with a bunch of people. We have chances at new business; it was a good visit. By the time I left, it was about 1:00PM and I was very happy to have with me a triple-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich. As I feared, the pretzels I brought were old. I had to get rid of them later, but the sandwich was good. From there, we moved over to Mara Corp., where I met the two new buyers. Then I finished up at Aastra Corp., where I met the new buyer and finally met someone I had been corresponding with for years.

It is amazing what my books can do. People who have read them from all over seem to know me, and it is great that I can get past the “hi, how are you” stage and go much deeper than before. There is nothing like being in front of the customers, looking them in the eyes, asking how they are doing, what is new, if there is anything we can help them with, and how can we service them better. Everyone I spoke to was excited about our new game, and I will make sure to send samples as soon as they are ready. Having the China plant has been a major plus, and I am very glad we have it. We are scheduled to board in about thirty minutes. It will be good to get home.

9/7/06

Thursday, 9:47 EST

New Jersey - Home

I got up at my usual time this morning, and at about 4:10AM I checked my email. We had an ink problem with a job for one of our customers in Penang, Malaysia. It looked like they might have an assembly line stoppage, which is a disaster. Two hours later, it seemed like we had most of it worked out, but I was still going crazy. I went to play tennis and ran like a maniac. I lost the match as usual, but after a shower I felt like a new man. It was back to the office, after picking up my lunch and Al's breakfast at the local diner, and the rest of the day went well.

Ink adhesion is a constant problem in our business; there is a very small tolerance area where the inks will print and adhere correctly. It is a very finicky process but there will always be problems and the only way to totally get rid of them is retire. That is surely not in my plans for a long time, if ever.

With our added capacity, we need to try and double our sales

volume within the next twelve months. Between the two companies, that is a very tall order. The pressure is on me, to constantly bring in new customers and build on the ones we have.

9/9/06

Saturday, 3:47PM EST

I am at the office. For the first question of the game, we made the artwork with the English and Chinese translation, and it looks great. I have sent it to various IJUS personnel for review, and already have an okay from Jenny in China. The translations should move swiftly now, and we can really get moving on a full-scale prototype for the game. All too soon, this will become very real. Drawings, artwork, and people testing the product will mean it will be done within a few months, and then some important decisions will need to be made.

I got a new medical product idea. This involves a pump to help evacuate older men's bladders. Emptying one's bladder completely will become an increasingly bigger problem as men get older. I will check with Don Argintar and then my urologist, to see what products are already on the market and what can be done. I think new medical devices are much easier to introduce in China.

I went biking with Uncle Dave. We did not fight too much. When we do, it is usually good natured and not a problem. Tonight it is just Wendy and me, and dinner and a movie sound really good.

9/10/06

Sunday, 2:37PM EST

I am at our home in New Jersey. I am sitting on the Chaise Lounge with my dog Bailey. He knows that whenever I come out here, the odds are good that I will be typing on my computer for a while and he likes to keep me company. But as soon as I started, my son Ben called and my wife just came home, so things have once again changed. She is eating carrots in the other room now, and Bailey always goes where the food is.

I played tennis with my brother this morning. Something happened to my right wrist, and it felt a bit weak, which is unfortunate when you like to try and tear the covering off the balls. Needless to say I had to change my game plan. I went to a more defensive game with strategically placed shots, and occasionally switching to hitting with my left arm, a talent I picked up over the years due to various right arm injuries. Although my left side hitting is not great, it was good enough to keep me in the game. With a lot of running, I kept up with my brother and we had a great time. Before we began, I told him about my idea for the Bladder Emission Device or BED for short. As we spoke about the new pump I was planning, I realized the combination of putting small balls of material in the bladder could help reduce its

overall size. In fact, not only could it help to push liquids out of the bladder, when letting go, but it could also act as a vacuum and keep fluids in, meaning it could retain better without leakage. My brother had his doubts about its functionality.

Getting this idea also meant something else. I usually do not get thoughts like these unless I am starting to get bored. How could I be bored, I wondered, with all of the stuff going on and business being good? The answer was because all of the projects we had were either running on schedule or abandoned, and I was no longer needed for most of it. The truth is that I do not have as much to do as I did even a few months ago, and my brain, realizing it before I consciously did, set me on a new course to channel my energies.

Israel has stopped the blockades of Lebanon, a good thing, but I have to wonder if the Jewish State will be able to survive. From being born Jews, we have all been indoctrinated for years about the importance of having a place where we all can go in case of crisis. But could it be that God would want all of those people, both Arabs and Jews, to fight to the death over a piece of land called Israel? Wouldn't it be better for the Jews to just find another place to go and leave the area to the Palestinians? I believe the world will probably be a better place, if the people in Iraq and Iran and the countries around them are not banded together into a radical Islamic empire having a common enemy like Israel will only help that to happen. But I also believe the Israelis will not leave, as long as they have any hope of survival as a state, which means war is inevitable and a permanent situation. It is not a very pleasant thing to think about.

Now, suddenly, there is a huge oil discovery in the Gulf of Mexico. In a perfect world, the United States would finally see the light, mandate more fuel-efficient cars, buildings and a new general way of life. Our energy consumption could drop, and coupled with the new oil we could become independent of the rest of the world. What a better way to be positioned, from one of strength rather than from one of dependence. If that happened, then China would probably step in as the major buyer of Arab oil. This also has its good points, because China will not take any grief and would not hesitate to use its million-man army for its security, or the security of its interests, if they were threatened. Unfortunately, I do not think China will care much if Israel survives or not, so again I think their future is in great peril.

I am not a believer in sacred ground. I don't believe that we are tied to the land because of what our ancestors did or did not do. If the area where Israel sits is too expensive, in terms of the blood of my relatives, then I think we should consider giving it up and moving to another area of the world. I would rather have a homeland in a place like Africa than no homeland at all. We lost way too many people during World War II. I do not believe the entire extermination of Israel is necessary,

or should be considered. Why not just move?

9/11/06

Monday, 10:01PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I got in this morning to find an email meltdown. As it turned out, someone hacked into our system. We had to bring in our IT specialist to fix it, which took most of the day. Since we had almost no email, I was forced to go through my log completing various non-emergency tasks. I eventually ended up following up on leads from an old contact list. I had been successfully avoiding this, calling people and companies I didn't know. Why did I avoid it? Simply because the odds are low that anything positive would come from it. I was not, nor am I usually, in the right frame of mind to take massive amounts of rejection, which can be very tough on the ego.

I know I have been at this for almost thirty years, but negative responses are never easy to take. The only way to force myself to be able to do it is to stay tournament tough, which means forcing myself to do it as needed. As usual, when I forced myself the results were promising, and I have a few more days to finish. Then, I will probably go back to my normal list of customers and start following up on them as time allows. It is amazing how the "rules" work. You go after new accounts, and a percentage of potential targets will come through. It is all about the odds and it does not fail, at least it hasn't for all the time I have been at it. The rules hold, a very good thing to force you to keep going.

Email eventually got back up, and life returned to normal. We got a lot of money in. We can probably pay off the credit line, part of the money we owe to IJX for the investment capital, and the bonuses we normally give in September. It is also, of course, the anniversary of 9/11. That has brought some sober reminders of what we have been through, and will continue to go through for the distant future. I am not sure how right we are as a country to feel every other country and people want the type of government we have, but I also understand we have to fight to preserve what we have. It is a balance we will have to work out.

I cannot imagine how the families who lost members have done since that day, and all those people who got sick after they helped in the clean up. I will move forward in my own way, helping to spread the goodness of capitalism and employment. I still think that is the best way for the path towards peace.

I played tennis and my injured wrist felt better. I am fine and am scheduled to play again tomorrow.

9/12/06

Tuesday, 9:48 EST

One of the good parts about making your own trip arrangements is you are in total control. One of the bad things is that when you screw up, it is usually in a big way. I have booked flights on the wrong day before, but this morning I found out I booked the wrong direction on Virgin Atlantic on my way back from London. The good news is that my credit card had been stolen. Good because they could not issue my tickets, and therefore it made it very easy to change to the correct flight. Not only that, but I got a frequent flyer account with Virgin. I was able to switch 20,000 miles from my American Express account and got upgraded to business class. Therefore, if everything works perfectly, I will get back from Romania to London with a few hours to spare, which I can spend in the amazing Virgin Atlantic lounge. Then I can actually get some sleep going home. I will get back about midnight on Tuesday, instead of Wednesday morning, which means I can get up at my usual time, plan a tennis game, and have a normal day. I will probably be tired but that should not be a major problem.

I am now hoping we can have the China business loan paid back within three years which would be fantastic.

I have been doing more selling, and will probably plan a trip to Ohio to see a new customer next month. I am hoping to combine it with going to see my older son Ben, in Cleveland, and stay there for the night. I also will probably go to the Boston area next month to see everyone, and then it may be out to California or Arizona. The more I am out the better it is for everyone, so I will try and stay on the road and sell as much as possible. I decided to aim the game at being ready to send to everyone for the Chinese New Year. How often do people get presents for the Chinese New Year, especially in this hemisphere? With that idea in mind, we have been racing to get things done. It is a true work in progress and things are changing daily on the design. I do not care if the second 1000 games are different from the first; as long as they look good, I want them out there. The benefits of this advertising should be amazing.

The bank called me, trying to look for my personal business. I told them how unhappy I was with the way they were handling our loan, the fact that I wanted to secure the loan against our receivables and get rid of the lien on my house, and they were ignoring me. Their people would not even return my call. I was not shy about displaying my feelings. The woman who called said she will forward my sentiments to the other people there. My guess is I will hear nothing back about it.

I played tennis today. Luckily for me the weather is getting colder, and we are moving indoors more. I have a power game, and like to hit the ball hard. Although I do like playing outside, it is much more effective for me to play on an indoor, hard surface where it is warm

and dry.

On Friday afternoons, I can still play with my brother Ira outside for a while.

Around the office, it is time for annual reviews and my crew is getting a little edgy. Most have nothing to worry about. They have done a great job and I plan to reward them accordingly.

9/13/06

Wednesday, 9:37 EST

It is official, or at least as plain as it will ever be. We will lose one of our better customers. It is an unfortunate combination of events and acts on both of our parts, but I believe the decrease will be at a gradual rate. Since I have known about this for about six months, I have already been pushing hard for new business and more accounts. I don't know whether it is a good or bad thing, but it is happening. The best thing I can do is accept it and move forward.

We have been working on the game, which is ever more important for the exposure I believe it will give us. It will probably cost somewhere in the range of \$50,000 - \$100,000 including time, material, shipping, etc. to launch but I am ready to do it.

I had lunch with John Rudder, my friend and mentor. It is good to be able to talk freely with someone and get top level feedback. I am fortunate to have him. I talked about my books and the game, and explained their value in terms of advertising, branding and keeping our name in front of people. He never thought of it that way, and praised me for being able to create a situation like the one we have.

Today, I spoke with our patent attorney Ed Weingram. Besides liking him, I feel he is extremely competent and is now doing a name search on "The Ideal Challenge" to make sure it has not been used in the US. My partner, Ben, will have to take care of it from the Chinese side. I am tired, and it's time for bed.

9/15/06

Friday, 10:41PM

New Jersey - Home

What an interesting day. I got a call from one of our suppliers, who may want to set up in China and possibly partner with us. They will go see our plant when they go there next month. After that, we will see if the interest is real and whether they want to buy part of IJX or start a new joint venture. We had better be done with our investment capital requirements by then, but we got more money in today so we should be able to take care of it in the next two weeks.

I leave Sunday for Europe.

9/17/06

Sunday, 4:08 EST

Newark Airport

I am at the holding area for British Airways. Friday ended well, with about ten hours of badly needed sleep. Yesterday started out with me going to Temple. After that, I went riding my bike, went back to the office, and then to the supermarket and drugstore for supplies for this trip. Last night, Wendy and I went out for sushi, and then went to see *The Illusionist*, a very interesting movie. I got up at 7:00am this morning, drove my daughter to work at our Temple, and went to play tennis with my brother. It was a beautiful, early fall morning with the trees just starting to change color. Our court was shaded so it was not too hot. After that I went biking, had lunch, picked up Kayla from work and got ready to leave.

My driver was playing Pakistani music when he arrived up. I told him it was okay to play it on the way to the airport, which gave a foreign feel to the beginning of my adventure. Checking into British Air (BA) should have been a breeze, but it turns out I was oversized with my carry-on. The BA counter person told me they would have bumped me in England before my next flight and would have missed my flight. Therefore, I checked in my carry-on without a few immediately needed articles like my laptop, food, headphones, iPod, etc. The nice BA woman gave me a plastic carrying bag, so I made my way to the security area. Flights to Britain are still on high alert, especially BA flights, so I am not surprised at the security level.

I feel better now; I found a plug and am powering up my laptop. Since I had to leave a lot of my stuff in the other bag, I only have one power pack, so I have to be careful how I use it. Unfortunately, my DVD case is with my luggage so I cannot watch a movie, which is a pity but at least I have my iPod and my book.

Once I got through security, I went to get some Euros, which turned out to be a big deal since I need a lot of them to cover the driver taking me roundtrip from Vienna to Hungary. It could be a very expensive set of rides, but it really doesn't matter as it is the fastest and best way to get there. Besides, the customer is well worth it. After that, I bought a bottle of water and had a bit of a surprise, since there is a fluid ban on all flights. They sold me a bottle of water with the cap still on, so I could theoretically take it with me on the plane. I have no plans to do so, but I thought it a bit unusual.

As I tell my people when traveling, the second you get to the airport, all rules are off and you go with the flow. Already, things are different than I planned but definitely nothing I can't handle. I look forward to being in my seat and the plane taking off. Hopefully it will be on time so I don't have to worry about my connection. I have a lot to do for the next few days, including finishing the questions needed for

the game, going over my speech for OSHA, re-checking my notes for the next course on my book, the September Newsletter and of course my running diary. I probably will get an hour or two of sleep on this flight, but I am not anticipating much. The next stop is a two hour flight to Vienna at roughly 3:30AM EST. Since I am in economy class, I may not have any room to write, so I will try and sleep then. In Vienna, I look forward to being reunited with my luggage.

Relations with the customer renting from us in China are deteriorating rapidly. I hope my efforts to replace them, and my fear of what happens if I don't, are enough to take up the slack. I find it wearing on me. Some part of me is wishing it would happen sooner, to get it over with, and other parts are hoping it is pushed out to give me more time to find more business. It is probably out of my hands, although I do have some limited control from my side.

I have 97% of my battery charged. I think it is time to go over to my gate to see if anything is happening there. I am homesick already, though I will be better once I get over there.

9/17/06

Sunday, 7:21PM EST

In Flight

It took about 75 minutes to finally get up in the air. There's lots of air traffic around Newark Airport. I was sitting next to a nice young British woman named Rocky. There was a vacant seat next to her friend, though, so she left me for her. This worked out well as I now have an open seat next to me. I just looked out the window and saw the most magnificent sunset. It is truly inspiring. We took off late, but there is still a chance we can land on time. I do not know how long it will take to get to my next plane.

It is time now to work on the questions for the game and the next newsletter, in between dinner, of course.

9/17/06

Sunday, 10:11PM EST

It is about three hours until we get to London. We are 1760 miles away and are estimated to arrive at 6:18AM. Since I am supposed to be a transfer, I should be okay in timing. It is suddenly a little bumpy, which is a little disconcerting since we are over the Atlantic Ocean. I just brushed my teeth. I am feeling very good about that, not to mention the hand cream, which is very nice to have since I can't bring on my own anymore. The clemency on chap-stick is very nice, as my lips do tend to get a little dry while in the air. I got a small nap in, but not much to speak about. My power is starting to drop a bit on my computer, so I must be conservative how much I use, at least until I get to my other battery pack in my luggage.

9/18/06

Monday, 11:51AM Austria time (5:51AM EST)

We touched down late, and I was unsure if I would make the flight. They had buses to take us to the terminal, which seemed to take forever. I ran into the area and a wonderful BA employee was there, ready to point all of us going to Austria in the right direction. She not only directed me, but actually took me through security and then sent me forward. By this time, I was actually running and I made it on to the plane. The flight to Austria was fine, and I was sitting next to two very pleasant fellow Americans. I went to go get my bags and, as the baggage carousel kept spinning, I started to get a sinking feeling that my bags were not on it. Eventually, I went to the lost baggage area and sure enough my bags had not made it onto the flight.

What was I supposed to do, go on a call with no suit, no extra books, and no samples? The answer is obviously yes. At least I had my laptop. The next flight in was at 6:00PM that night and should have my luggage. Happily, I was due to come back to this airport anyway, so I could pick them up on the way back. But all my food and almost everything else were in there. Now we will see how good I am, going on a sales call almost naked. I walked out of the customs area, not that I had anything to declare, and found my driver Lazlo. He was very pleasant and spoke enough English for us to get along. He was going to spend the day with me, and I did not have to worry about waiting for a driver on the way back at least.

It is time to take an inventory of what I do have with me. I have a pair of regular glasses. I have my laptop, iPod, earphones, electric toothbrush, and one newspaper which I have mostly read. My chopsticks got confiscated, but I do have one long sleeved t-shirt, a chocolate chip spelt flour cookie, my computer power charger and a memory stick for my laptop. I also have one of my own books, which is slightly written on, a biography of Samuel Goldwyn, and some gum.

Most importantly, I have my passport, plenty of Euros, my Blackberry, and my wallet. As I always tell people, you can do anything if you have money and a passport and I have more than that, so I should be fine. I tried to buy Lazlo and I some bottled water at the airport, but they did not seem to sell it there. We may have to stop along the way. This is proving to be a highly interesting trip. I have never been in Austria before. It looks a lot like New Jersey, actually. People hate it when I say that about most European countries, but we are all in the same latitude and the trees and landscape are similar.

We will come to the border with Hungary in under an hour, where they will check our passports. I felt like I was in a Humphrey Bogart movie, except that my Blackberry keeps buzzing because I am corresponding with my partner Ben in China.

It is starting to rain. I ask Lalso if they get a lot of snow here. He

said yes, starting in December. Just like New Jersey. I asked him if I could check the stations on the radio, and who should come up but the Pointer Sisters singing their song "Jump." I will resist the urge to car dance. Lazlo has not known me long enough for that. I feel sleep calling, so I may indulge in a nap. The rain just got worse, so I think it will be better if he watched the road as opposed to me dancing. I am glad I am not driving.

9/18/06

Monday, 1:20PM Hungary time (7:20AM EST)

I slept for a while and feel better. The landscape has changed and the towns have become very old, with lots of open air markets and places selling tourists items. Gnomes seem to be very big in this area. We have about another forty-five minutes before we arrive. I took stock of my appearance. I am wearing pants that are a bit dirty. I could have shaved, had I had my stuff. Overall, I look a little worse for wear, but I don't think they will mind as long as I don't. It is all a matter of perspective. If I had someone come this far and ended up losing his luggage, and he still came, I would be even happier to see him. Hopefully, they will feel the same way.

IJUS should be in full operation soon. It is almost 7:30AM there, Monday morning.

9/18/06

Monday, 3:50 EST Hungary time (9:50AM EST)

If you know me, then you would know what it meant to go see customers dressed in khaki pants, a golf shirt and sneakers. Oh yes, and I had not shaved since yesterday. Oh, and it was also raining, but everyone at Flextronics was marvelous, warm and friendly. We had a great meeting. They seem very happy with us, and we spoke for a while about life in the US, Hungary and China. They were interested in how we did business. It is a big operation here and they have more plants nearby. Obviously, there is great potential for more business. I can see myself coming back, this time with luggage.

We are now on our way back to Vienna and should be there by about 6:15PM, which works out well, as the plane with my suitcases should be in about 6:30PM. My flight out is not until 10:30PM, but I will see if I can get an earlier one. I doubt that will happen. There were some restaurants at the airport and I plan to eat at one of them. I have already spoken to Alice once, with more conversations sure to follow. It was positively worth coming here in person. Seeing people face to face is the best way, and at least once a year.

9/18/06

Monday, 7:51PM Austrian time (1:51PM EST)

Austrian Airlines Lounge, Vienna

I am back at the airport, and happy to report that I got my luggage and have already checked into my next flight. I even have a power cord, which is great because I am understandably starting to lose focus from traveling and not enough continuous sleep. I may put on a movie and take it easy for a while. Today went well, even with the luggage problem. I am glad it happened in a way because it forced me to change the way I conducted myself to fit the person I was today. Although I prefer going in with a suit and all of my stuff, I know now that I can operate in the other direction when needed.

I picked up some chef salads and a veggie sandwich for dinner. I am currently eating a chocolate chip cookie I brought from home. I need to exercise more than sleep. If I have any energy when I get settled in my hotel in Romania, I will try to work out and call home at the same time. There is a six hour time difference, so that should be about right to get at least one person there. I can't tell you how great it is to have my luggage back and wheeling around my laptop bag, as opposed to the large clear plastic envelope I had before. I will say it did its job and was wonderful to have. I don't know how I would have managed without it, but it was frustrating not having my own gear.

Signs are pointing more and more that we will need a plant or some type of facility in Europe. I am not that concerned, since we did it in China, and if needed we can try and do the same thing here. It is time to work on some more questions for the game. Ben discreetly said he thought there were too many repetitions on the questions I had already submitted. I will follow his counsel and continue to write more questions that are more distinct.

It looks like I am flying into Pittsburgh next month to see the people at Ericsson. This is great on two levels. First, to see our customer and second, Pittsburgh is a short plane ride to Cleveland. I contacted my son, Ben and plan to fly in that night to see him perform in the pit band for a play. It should be awesome.

9/19/06

Tuesday, 8:30AM Romania time (1:30AM EST)

I am on my way to Solectron Timisoara. I am not even sure what time we landed. After I got through immigration, my ride, arranged by the hotel, was a truly welcomed sight. It was very dark on the drive so I could not really tell what the area looked like, but the hotel seemed very nice as I made my way inside. The night clerk was very helpful, and gave me the especially good news that the gym was open all night. I had a very serious decision to make. I had the options of eating my triple-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich, working out, or going

to sleep and working out in the morning.

I chose to eat, work out, and finally get to sleep about 4:00AM local time. I got up two hours later and went back down to the treadmill for thirty minutes, then ate breakfast and took care of some email with Ben from China. We may be buying a CNC machine there, in order to help run a job we have more efficiently and less expensively than before. I left it up to Ben, but I have usually been in favor of buying additional equipment.

There was also emailing about the game. It did not pack enough of a punch in the advice given, the results that happened, or why they were relevant for someone in business. I agreed and have begun re-working the questions. In order to give the true "Andrew Jacobs" business point of view, I suggested we also enclose a copy of the CD I had produced this summer, going over the main points of my book about selling. It won't add a lot to the cost and it should help to clarify a lot about my philosophy and the game. I also strongly suggested we keep the bilingual component of the game. I don't think there is another one like it in the marketplace, and it definitely make us different with more chances of marketing through educational areas. I am waiting for feedback from all concerned.

This morning, I go to Solectron. Then it is back to the airport to fly to London and then fly home. That is, it will happen if the weather cooperates; it is now raining and I hope I don't get delayed anywhere. I look forward to being home later tonight.

9/19/06

Tuesday, 10:51AM Romania time (3:51AM EST)

Timisoara Airport

I am now waiting for the Lufthansa ticket area to open in about 40 minutes so I can get my tickets and move out of this lounge, which is smoky and has loud American music.

My eye is starting to bother me, a sure sign of sleep deprivation. I should be able to catch up a little on the next two flights. This morning went well. I was at Solectron and spoke with a number of the engineers, buyers and other people, and all seemed generally pleased with us. The over-riding feeling here, as in Hungary, is that we would have a chance at a lot more business if we were local within Eastern Europe. I emailed Ben and told him the situation here, and he suggested a mini-plant staffed by a few people from IJX. It seems like a plausible plan, so I will start researching what would be needed to get it started. We will need a local champion to help us get through the government regulations, but I know someone interested already so we shall see what can be done. I wasn't planning to do this for at least three years, but the timetable might be moved up if the opportunity seems worthy.

I have the feeling that everyone in this waiting room is waiting for

the same flight I am. No worries, there aren't that many people and there is nothing I can do about it anyway. I can feel myself starting to lose it from lack of sleep. Perhaps finding something to drink is a good idea. The people here and in Hungary have been universally pleasant; it seems like a good area. Maybe I will duck outside and get some air. It has been raining but I think it has stopped. If we did put a plant in this area, it would probably have all Chinese equipment.

9/19/06

Tuesday, 2:20PM Munich time (8:20AM EST)

Munich Airport

We should be boarding the flight to London soon. I am looking forward to getting to Heathrow, finding my luggage, checking into Virgin Atlantic, maybe picking up some food and going to the Virgin Lounge to relax for a while. I have heard it is an amazing place, so I want to get there. Thinking about the potential site for Europe, here is what I project it will cost. Of course, I did the same thing for our IJX and it ended up costing four times what I originally projected. But I am willing to do this anyway because writing it out makes me calmer.

I will make the entirely unwarranted assumption that the countries in Eastern Europe do not have the same type of mandatory investment amount like China. With that said, I would also not plan on buying space but renting, at least in the beginning.

Therefore if we:

1. Put in one press line to start
2. Outsourced all prep work and tooling
3. Imported all the equipment
4. Send over two of our Chinese press people to start it off

For the first year:

- Equipment: 100K
- Employees, including salaries, benefits, traveling, lodging: 100K
- Materials, space and incidentals: 100K

Add another 100K for things I am not thinking of at the moment, and we are probably looking at a first year of about \$400,000.00 USD.

Each of the next 2 years would be about 200K each.

That means we would have to gross about \$1,500,000.00 USD over three years to become profitable. With the amount of business that appears over there, I do not think this is unreasonable.

I would remain the prime salesman worldwide. The only difference is that I would be selling for three plants instead of two. Having a plant local in Europe would definitely make obtaining business easier. I cannot think it would hurt.

9/19/06

Tuesday, 7:00PM London time (2:00PM EST)

Virgin Atlantic Lounge, Heathrow Airport

I got through Heathrow security with no problem. The people here at Virgin Atlantic Airlines as well as their lounge are amazing. I have been in contact with Ben in China and our people in New Jersey, and it seems like we are definitely going to try and move up the timetable to put in a mini-plant/distribution center in Eastern Europe. As soon as it begins, I will contact our customers, including Lucent, of our plans and see how we can leverage that for more business from all sides. It is all very exciting and unexpected, but that is what I love about this business.

Sales for the year continue to be about 30% above last year, which again helps to keep the momentum going.

I am supposed to have one hundred new questions ready by the end of this week. Therefore, I had better get to it so I will do some more now.

The weight and size restrictions for baggage size are much more stringent here than the US and Asia, so once again I had to check both my suitcase and laptop bag. Happily, I still had the cloth bag I bought at Munich Airport, so all of my traveling stuff is in there. I also bought some souvenirs for my family and chocolate for the guys back at the plant. Unfortunately, I only have the one power pack in my computer and no plug, so once this runs out I am finished for the trip. I find it amazing I am still awake, let alone working; I am truly fortunate to have the body that I do. I will cut out soon after the flight begins, and be good to myself and take a nap, watch some movies and eat. It will be very tough to get up at my normal time tomorrow morning, but people are expecting me so there is no question I will do it. Of course, the three alarm clocks will help make it happen.

9/19/06

Tuesday, 6:15PM EST

I am in flight, going home. The destination map is not loading correctly. It says we are near Africa, so I am going to make the assumption it is wrong and we are going to the United States. If not, I have never been to Africa and there is nothing I can do about it, so I will take it as it comes. If we stay on schedule, then I should get home about 12:30PM tonight and asleep by 2:00AM, which will mean two hours of sleep. I have lost track of how much or how little sleep I have gotten, but it doesn't seem to be affecting me. I guess I am just too excited about the prospects of what can be, and my body will sleep when it is needed. I have gotten a lot of naps, so maybe that is enough to offset everything else. I will work on more game questions.

9/19/06

Tuesday, 10:44 EST

We are about 40 minutes from Newark Airport. I slept for about three and a half hours. I did some more work and am now done for the night. I will be home soon, and I can't wait to get there. I play tennis tomorrow morning, and maybe I will have tuna salad or turkey burgers for lunch. Oh, the big decisions we must make.

9/20/06

Wednesday, 9:56PM

New Jersey - Home

The good news is that I was apparently right to put in the injection molding system in China. There does seem to be a market, and we are there at the right time. The bad news is that the customer that told me they did not want me in the business, and would cut me off if I did it, is actually already producing one part in plastic themselves. It seems we have been lied to, regarding the worth of our new process, and they threatened us with no more label orders in order to scare us out of the market. It appears that their lies have been endemic, though we are now free to do anything we want in our own best interest because they will not stay a customer for long. We will use the business they give us to help finance our new area, which will be used to market against them. It sounds like we are at war; it is not like I did not expect it.

9/21/06

Thursday

The game components have almost all been agreed upon. They include two different sets of cards, one for each language, no holders, a board with almost no words (fewer problems with translations), directions in two languages, and playing pieces. The injection molds are in. All that is left is the CD, getting the copy finished for the cards, the art for the box and the directions.

It has already been two days of employee reviews, and tomorrow should be the last. It is very wearing, but we are getting a lot of good stuff done. I sent out queries, about finding people to help us get started in Eastern Europe, to one person in Romania and one in Hungary. Let's see what comes back.

Oscar is okay with going to Xiamen to go over the press operation there. We are revamping the communications between pre-press and press. The review for shipping is tomorrow, along with doing reviews for Alice and Mike. The Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, starts tomorrow night. I have tennis first and then dinner with Jeff and Bunny, who are down from the Berkshires. My eldest son comes home later tomorrow night. It will be great to see him.

9/23/06

Saturday, 12:01 AM EST

New Jersey - Home

Reviews for our staff in NJ are finally are done. There were a few problems. Some people will probably be told to leave and it cost a lot of money in raises and bonuses, but I feel those were warranted. We have a good staff and they deserve to be rewarded.

High Holy days started tonight. I am in charge of the ushers at our Temple. Unfortunately, the reminders to them did not go out, but we should have enough people for tomorrow and next week. Tonight's two services went well.

Business has slowed up over the past two weeks; I hope it is not a trend. I think I figured out why so many eastern European people settled around here. After seeing the terrain in Hungary, Austria and Romania, it looks just like New Jersey, except the buildings are older and have a different architecture. We must be at the same geographic area as they are, since the vegetation and land look very similar.

9/25/06

Monday, 7:10 EST

New Jersey - Home

It is hard to believe that I was on a flight to Europe only a week ago. A lot has happened since then. High Holy days went well two nights ago. I got home after picking Kayla up at her friends at about 11:00PM. I got up at 5:45AM yesterday morning. It was not enough sleep but we moved forward. After picking up her friend, we stopped off for food and coffee, and then it was back to Temple for the day of services. I got home very tired about 3:15AM and rested. Then we went to my parents for dinner. It was a lot of fun with my brother, his wife and two daughters, Wendy and our three kids, my sister, her husband and their daughter. Their elder son was away at school. Everyone got along well, and it was a great time. It is rare that so many of us can get together.

I am not normally a night time person, but it was 7:30PM on a Saturday night and my wife and kids were going over to her sister's house to catch the tail-end of their celebration. To the surprise of everyone, I went also. The party there was also lots of fun. Then I got tired and went home.

After I played tennis with my brother, always a fun time, I went biking and then came home and my father-in-law was already there. We had a pre-arranged date to go to lunch and the movies. I had to slightly alter the schedule, as I usually bring my clothes for the week to my office on Sundays and check my email. He was nice enough to agree to go there first. The office was fine, lunch was good, and the movie was lousy but we had a good time anyway. Then we came back home and I made dinner. As soon as I finish writing, I will have a snack with

Bailey, take a bath, watch a little television and hope I get to sleep.

As it turns out, my nephew Barry is available to drive me to Maryland next month to the OSHA conference, where I am speaking. He is now also invited to the conference, which he thought would be dull but I think he will find interesting.

I spoke to one of my ushers at Temple on Saturday and asked him if he had experience in product rollouts. He does, so he may join my team as a consultant to help market the new game. He is also a photographer, which means he can help create and tape the reality series about my life, the game, and helping to find and launch entrepreneurs.

I believe that we all inherently have some luck. If you are fortunate enough to catch some people when their odds come up, you can tag onto a great run. Many people in this category are so battered by life that they do not feel they have any chance at all. Part of my job is to help them get the chance to prove them wrong and make things can go right. I feel my usher is at that point, and I would love to be the one to be able to help launch him, prove he can be a success, and help capitalize on it for all of us. If I am wrong, I will lose some time and money, but if I am right then we can all move skyward.

I got an email from Ben. He liked the new card design. I emailed him to check on the new questions I sent, whether he wants the new CD in the game box, if he wants to record a Chinese version of the CD, and how much it will cost.

In mass run I believe we can get the game costs down to under \$5.00, which means we can sell them at the necessary price point Ben wanted in China. I am checking now for copyright and trademark requirements here and in China, and will plan on having the game sold on the internet. Maybe, we will also get it on some of the TV shopping networks, then move onto stores, and continue with other products. It is all very exciting. Business has slowed down a bit in the US. If this is a trend and the economy is slowing, then my game, CD, and book could be a great help and might sell well. At the least, it will give us a lot of exposure that I believe will be great.

I spend a lot of time both worried and exhilarated. Between the two companies, I now have about 70 people counting on me. I feel the responsibility and the need to move forward. I cannot let the fear slow me down, but use it instead to propel me forward. No traveling this week, but I will get ready for October and November. Life begins out on the road.

9/26/06

Tuesday, 9:20PM EST

New Jersey - Home

We are now trying to set up some joint marketing with Pentair. Using their panels and our labels to sell and market for each other, we

would go after the new Advanced TCA market. This would mean that we would gain entry into their customers, and then be able to expand laterally once inside.

I went for my semi-annual check-up, and I am fine.

9/27/06

Wednesday, 9:57 EST

New Jersey – Home

I am trying to create a new group within our EPA Performance Track Program to commit to a zero-based CO2 program, to help do our part to reduce global warming and be an example to others. I am not sure how far I will get, but it is a good thing to try.

I also got an idea after emailing my friend Dan, the rabbi, that our congregation could get donations from our members, give them a tax break, invest the money in energy producing facilities like solar and wind farms, get money back for the power produced, and reinvest the balance to get more power and profits back. I would have to see how the laws would treat it all. It might make a very interesting multi-level marketing plan. Things are good.

9/29/06

Friday, 10:28 EST

It's Friday night, and I am home in New Jersey. We ended billing for the month about 15% above last year and I am ecstatic. Oh how life has changed, as have my hopes and expectations. The year has been amazing. I hope it continues. In the meantime, I am still trying to break open new accounts. Our game has become an increasingly big deal, and is starting to cause friction. People are having some very definite opinions about all its aspects, and the fact that it is raising and causing such high emotions is a good thing. We will work them out, and all parts should be ready for production within the next 30 days. This will give us all of December to produce and ship for a late January release, in time for the Chinese New Year. It has been an amazing process, and if it is deemed profitable we will continue. The goodwill and exposure from the game should be enough to cover its cost of production.

I am climbing to a new level. I can tell by the burning in my stomach and the anxiety in my being. Level changes are always tough and this one is no exception. The other side of the line is normally a beautiful place to be, at least until the next ascent begins.

Ben is checking on solar windmills to see if we have a potential market. Sounds funny, like I am Don Quixote, but I plan to possibly build, lease and sell these, so I hope I do not end up trying to attack one like in the story.

Chapter Ten

10/2/06

Monday, 11:13 EST

Eve of Yom Kippur

Last night, we went to a Bar Mitzvah of a tennis friend of Wendy's. It was very nice and the music was loud, but I brought earplugs so it was a lot of fun. This morning, the cold I was hoping I had not caught arrived. I fought through tennis, biking and going to the office, but I did not feel great. Everything was good except I was generally worried about sales, typical for a Sunday. I went to Temple to start ushering for Yom Kippur, our Day of Atonement. It is our holiday for repentance, and I spend most of it ushering and helping to keep people moving in and out of the temple efficiently, safely and watching for terrorists.

While there tonight, I was talking with one of my ushers and he mentioned he liked two of my books, and had lent them to a friend. I figured the other man never read them, but I was wrong and the feedback I got was quite encouraging. They both liked my ideas and entrepreneurial spirit. Even more importantly, he talked about my willingness to take chances, even though they sometimes misfired, and said it was one of the greatest parts and what was so lacking today in American business.

I felt much better after speaking with him. I realized it was one of the reasons he was there, a support to keep me going, fate was involved again. The holiday had already started well, with more ushering tomorrow. Wendy also helped me tonight when she found out I was short of people. I am very lucky to have her.

10/3/06

Tuesday, 9:34 EST

New Jersey - Home

I have a cold, which is a very good thing because I have not been sick in a while, and I am not on the road. Being home makes it so much easier. I have various medicines in me, so I should be fine soon. The High Holy Day holidays went well. My usher crews were fantastic and things are fine at work. I am working on a few projects right now. One is wind power for both China and Israel. Ben is helping with the hardware, as usual, and Lou Beckerman and Dan are helping with contacts in Israel. Thanks to my mentor, Jean Shepherd, for giving me the basic idea of being in Eilat and near King Solomon's mines to locate the windmills.

The logo for the game went to Ed Weingram today for review. We are slowly getting things together for the game. There will be an auxiliary website for people to download my business CD, a compromise with

my troops, our newsletters, maybe a “help” column, and anything else that might be of interest

10/5/06

Thursday, 9:40PM EST

I was talking to Wendy and I found myself committing to show the game at Game Week, the equivalent of Fashion Week in New York. The games for the winter holiday season are picked by buyers during this time and it is the biggest industry event of the year. I think it is in February, so we will have full-scale samples ready to go. It should be very exciting, and if nothing else the process will be an experience, full of adventure and a lot of learning. I have confidence our team will be ready. I hope it will be a blast.

I spoke with a man from Bell Labs. Together, we worked out a plan that will use copper label material to replace a conductive metal part. If it works, they can use cheaper injection molded plastic, add our metal label, a front label and everything else needed to complete the part. We will see if it will be cheaper. If so, it could revolutionize the industry and put us in the front seat for at least a little while. It would be fun to be in that position.

I emailed Leon Wessel, the former South African Parliamentarian on the South African Human Rights Commission. I met him about a year ago and he remembered me, which was gratifying. I was going to send him a copy of my latest book, where I mentioned him but found two spelling errors in that passage and elected not to do it. It was amazing to find two mistakes in two pages and the rest of the book was relatively clean. I will be sure to get them fixed for the next printing. In the meantime, I will send him a copy of this new book. I wanted to mention again how wonderful a man he is, and how the great work he is doing for the cause of human rights is an outstanding example of what good people can do. I hope we can one day meet again, and share a peanut butter and jelly sandwich like we did last time. I always try and carry one when traveling, and think about the good things that can happen.

I have been selling hard. We must capitalize on our chances to move to the next level.

10/6/06

Friday, 10:37PM EST

The idea of using the pressure sensitive copper, to set up shielding with lesser expensive injection molded panel parts, seems to be gathering steam. I will continue to try and sell the idea. Building on that, I thought it might work with Thales Corporation defense project based in The Netherlands. I emailed Ben to make parts out of a flame retardant material that could be colored and use the copper material on

the insides.

The game continues to move forward. The parts are moving into place and everything is on schedule to be done by the middle of November. I will start researching Game Week. It is causing a lot of excitement, and I may hire an agent to help market the game. The weather has turned cooler here and biking tomorrow after Temple should be pleasant. Oscar arrived safely into Xiamen and Rich leaves in a week. It's time for sleep.

Peter Pidgursky called yesterday. Our former employee is now a law enforcement agent in Georgia. He has been down there a few years, and now has a southern accent and carries two guns. I would never talk back to him in any case, especially now that he is legally armed. I am glad he is on my side.

10/8/06

Sunday, 9:55PM EST

What a weekend! Sometimes, when I go into an adrenaline high from what the prospects can be, I think I know what people on drugs must feel like. The windmill idea since Friday has gained sudden momentum. I have a phone meeting this week with members of the Israeli and US trade commissions, regarding helping us establish a wind field in Israel. As this point, I am aiming for southern Israel for the following reasons: It is barren, cheap, and there should be lots of wind. It is also near Eilat, which my mentor Jean Shepherd visited about forty years ago. I believe in fate.

I went onto the internet and did a satellite view of that specific area in Israel. I do think there is a good spot for a windmill field. I have been emailing Ben in China, and we agreed to start a new company if we pursue this matter much further. We would plan to start with one wind turbine and build up from there. My brother is even interested in the project, and he almost never wants to be in any of my deals. My family and I went to Barbara and Cliff's Sukkoth party today, a Jewish holiday that celebrates the fall harvest. Sam the political consultant was there. After talking with him, he agreed to bring my alternative fuel idea to the Governor of Pennsylvania, which is one of his clients. Since it is a world problem, I asked if the United States could recognize energy produced in other countries and agree to designate energy credits for them. If it works, it will open up a whole new field of investment. We could be well positioned.

My partner, Ben also has a connection with a Pennsylvania Congressman, so we can hit them from two sides. If this looks possible, it will mean a trip to Israel which could be a lot of fun. We need to see what the Israelis are offering before we get too deeply into this. I do not know if US companies would be more willing to invest in projects in China or Israel. It is hard to tell, but I am having a heck of a good time

finding out. All I have to do now is try to calm down enough to go to sleep.

I have gotten the garden ready for the winter today. I tried out our snow blower and it seems fine. I had a sweater on the other day. Autumn is coming, it feels good.

10/9/06

Monday, 9:42AM EST

North Korea allegedly set off a nuclear explosion yesterday. As the world is setting up a response, I have to wonder if it will make any difference. As far as I am concerned, all it means is that we have to keep moving forward. If the windmill idea works, we start setting up mini-energy farms all over the world, which would be much better for us and the people utilizing the power near them. There are so few things in this world I can control; perhaps producing a little energy will be one of them.

Today, one of the heads of OSHA called to officially invite me to speak at the national meeting next week. We spoke for a minute and of course I agreed. The possibilities for systemic change are there, but only if the US marketplace is scared and willing enough to move onto a whole new mindset. I am not sure if they are ready.

I spoke to my nephew Barry today to confirm our drive together down to the OSHA meeting. I also have to go up to Massachusetts and maybe he can also take me there. Maybe we will drive to the Boston area, make calls, drive to the Berks, stay the night, and then go back home through Massachusetts. It will be a long two days, but we could still get to almost all of our customers. I will have to arrange the schedule and check with his timing.

10/10/06

Tuesday, 9:52 EST

I spent a good part of the day going over one group of questions for the game. Two more days should finish it. It seems that getting a game ready to run is as much work as a book; I guess I should not be surprised. I am happy with it so far. I think the finished version will be dazzling and very easy to convert to other languages. Ben is going to put out his own Chinese version, which is fine for me. The original game will go to customers and we will try for the US market.

Business for the month looks better than I thought. I am scheduling sales calls, and pushing like crazy. I have the teleconference with the Israeli group tomorrow on wind power. Thursday it is HazMat training. I am not looking forward to it but it has to be done. Gary the accountant should be in soon. The year so far has been very good.

10/11/06

Wednesday, 9:39PM EST

Yesterday, I had a meeting with some of the representatives from the Israel Trade Commission. I had forgotten that Israel is basically a socialist state, with a very large government infrastructure, but it only took a few seconds to remember that as the meeting continued. The people were telling me that things would take time to get the ministries that would be consulted involved for our wind farm idea. At least that was my take on it. Eventually, I got frustrated when they suggested I come to a big alternative fuels conference they were having next month, so I could find out what was happening in person.

I replied I wanted some hard information before I was willing to make the trip, and ended the call saying I would send them a list of questions I would need answered before moving ahead. They agreed and the email went out yesterday. I wonder how long it will take to hear from them. They were very nice, but it felt like I was moving along in slow motion. That is not the way I like to work, especially when it is my money at stake. No worries though, I can always go to China with Ben and we can move much faster and more easily there.

I liked the idea of Israel but it is quickly fading as an immediate possibility, and we will probably leave it for some time in the future. I had HazMat (hazardous materials) training today. Although I was chided by one of the instructors for nodding off, it had its interesting points and I am glad I went.

It looks like our new idea of using the copper/tin material for panels may have legs and we are moving ahead at getting prototypes out to the field. If it works, it could be a major mover for us and allow us to get into injection molding. A little different than the original plan, but it doesn't matter as this would be just as good if not better.

Butch fixed my bike. Since I had HazMat training and could not get an early tennis game, I took her for a ride this morning. It was a lot of fun and I went by our old location in Millburn, the next town over. I also checked out a building I had my eye on. Not that I have the money or inclination to buy it now, but you never know for the future.

Tomorrow, I continue to get ready for my trip to New England. I will make sales calls and check on the game. Tomorrow, Rich is going to China. Oscar is doing well there and helping with the press people.

10/14/06

Saturday, 11:21PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Last night, Alex announced he had gotten into college. The first application he sent to was Rutgers University, and he was accepted in less than two weeks. It's an amazing feat for my wonderful son. I did not get into that school when I applied. Even though it was a "safety"

school for him, and he does not plan to go there, it still gives him a great sense of confidence. He took the SAT college entrance exams again this morning. He felt he did well, especially with the good news he got from Rutgers last night. The application for Yale University is in, and he will know by mid-December.

I went to Temple this morning and later biked with Uncle Dave. Luckily, there were no fights at either event. Then Wendy and I went to the Rudders, John and MaryAnn, for dinner. They are an interesting couple, much more cerebral in their thinking than me, and it's one of the reasons I like them. John has a definite point of view and doesn't accept pat answers for anything. He keeps me on my toes and, while we do not always agree, I like him. Alex and Kayla were both supposed to go the high school homecoming dance. Kayla got back a little while ago and announced she and her friend did not end up there. I don't expect Alex to come home until about 1:00AM.

I am having more trouble agreeing with the actions of President Bush. I do not believe his course in general to be prudent; perhaps I do not have all the information. The next election is coming soon. He may lose control of one or both houses of Congress. If he does, then he will probably be stonewalled from doing anything until he leaves office. That might be the best thing to have happen.

I may be going to the Netherlands and Germany next month, perhaps even Scotland.

I got a price for the game card questions from two American suppliers. One was incredibly low. If it is okay, we will probably print them here and maybe the rest of the material as well.

My talk with OSHA is Tuesday; Barry is set to go and I have been practicing. I hope it goes well. Wendy goes to the Berkshires with Barbara tomorrow for one night. I will miss her. I get to go to the Berkshires in November on the sales trip with Vinnie and maybe Barry. I look forward to it.

10/15/06

Sunday, 7:12 PM

New Jersey - Home

Some days it is like I have a positive glow, where everything I touch goes well and people are happy to be around me. Other days, the opposite seems to be true. I can tell in my correspondence to our people in China that sometimes my comments are well received, and other times not so much. I know they are putting out a great effort trying to be helpful and work together. I also know they are doing it in another language and a different culture. We are doing the same thing, except we have not learned their language. The cultural differences are always there and as much as we all try and deal with them, sometimes they can cause some delays.

I am referring to the progress of the game and the various changes that have come through. Ben and his crew have definite ideas of what should be marketed throughout China and Asia, and I have mine. Unfortunately, my crew here and I sometimes don't agree; and sometimes they agree with China and sometimes not. Often, it seems that we are trying to reach a consensus to move forward, but in the end the game is a side issue. Happily, the main part of the business has total support on all sides. We know where we are going, how to get there and what it takes, so that part is wonderful.

There is no time lost with questions about culture or how something will be received. We know the ground rules, at least as they are set up right now, and can move forward as a cohesive unit. Of course, my people here and I sometimes don't agree and it takes some heated exchanges before things are worked out. It is good that I am not a dictator, and that I can take and adopt opinions that are not mine. Of course, I am the boss and the final decision rests with me. For IJX, the final decision will often rest with Ben and I respect his judgment, which is the reason I am splitting the effort into two parts.

The game will work itself out. I believe it is truly important because it represents a move in a different product direction. Of course, in doing that I should expect a certain amount of changing, questioning, false starts and moving forward with hesitation. Consumer products are a new area for us. Even though I am the boss, my opinion still has to be one of many. I believe the opinions of both crews have merits, so I am feeling my way around, trying to be involved, and have the project proceed. It is the first real culture clash we have had. I am pretty sure I will solve it by going ahead with the plan to have IJX produce their own version for China and Asia, and we will do our own version here for our customers and marketing in North America.

If IJX is right, that will be great and we will move their idea throughout the rest of the world. If our choices are better received, then we can adopt all or part of what sets us apart. This has become a symbol of the differences between us, and it is important that we work through it as a team. We need to finish with one or multiple products that function, are well received and possibly sell to an audience, besides being a gift to our customers, and pave the way for more products. We need to be able to act both as two different companies when that works best and one single team when events call that. It is a tight rope to walk on, but the flexibility needed is unquestionably required for the changing worldwide marketplace, where we hope to thrive. In the meantime, I will be patient, keep checking where things are best completed, whether in China or here, and move forward.

It looks like we will have to create our own software to define a CO2 footprint, to help define a company's impact on global warming. If we can get it going, I believe that it might be marketable. Then, we

can try and work through the EPA and get the State of New Jersey to make it mandatory to report a company's global footprint. After that, we can try and get the EPA to declare that any renewable energy produced anywhere in the world will count towards reduction of that number, and perhaps we will have a whole new market for alternative fuel. The first step is the software, and Vinnie will head the project. I love thinking globally; it makes me feel like we can do anything.

10/16/06

Monday, 9:55PM EST

Today, after going back and forth with various game board manufacturers and one card printer in the US, it became apparent that we would have to produce the game in Xiamen. The final price appears to be about \$7.50 USD per game. Under the category of educational/bilingual games, I think we can get about \$14.00 wholesale and \$24.00 retail. Of course, I have absolutely no experience in this area, and anything we sell is really a bonus. Rich is in Xiamen, as is Oscar, and both are doing well.

The three guys from one of our suppliers who are may be interested in a joint venture with IJX. They are in Xiamen today and tomorrow.

We will now begin to stockpile money to get ready for the taxes coming due at the end of the year, so hopefully we can avoid having to use the credit line.

10/17/06

Tuesday, 9:13AM EST

We are on the road to Maryland. Accompanied by my trusty driver and nephew Barry, we are making our way to the Garden State Parkway. Travel time is about two hours. We should be back home by 9:00PM tonight. I have been practicing my speech and I am ready. I think the audience will be primed for an upbeat speaker.

It looks like I will be back in Asia in December. We will probably have to go to Lucent, as we got word today that the merger with Alcatel appears to be going forward. It could be a great thing for us; changes of any kind are an opportunity.

10/17/06

Tuesday, 7:40PM EST

We found the hotel with the OSHA meeting with little trouble. Barry is a great driver. He dropped me off and went to get gas and spend some time relaxing. I called into the office and found we got a reply from the EPA regarding the windmill project, and it was a mixed review. They suggested I contact the Business Council for Sustainable Energy, and check on RGGI which is a regional program that will allow companies in certain states to utilize energy credits for alternative

energy. I spoke to the head of the organization, who expressed doubts as to whether my plan for foreign credits could work, but we agreed to talk more and I am enthused that we have not been stopped. There does seem to be a chance for domestic or international credits. I will pursue it more tomorrow.

I was well received at the conference and very happy we came. We are driving home but there is a storm with lots of rain in progress. Things are good and I am happy. I played tennis this morning; it was fun but seems like a very long time ago.

10/18/06

Wednesday, 9:49PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Today, I was very tired, a result of the long trip from yesterday. I know that when I have a day like that, the next one will usually show its affects. It doesn't matter, as it was a great experience and I am glad I went. I have been doing more research on the wind project, and there seems to be a lot of possible incentives in our tri-state area. Ben seems to think that only a mega project will work in China. I will focus my research locally in New Jersey and see what kind of deal we can come up with for a pilot plant.

The game is now on schedule and moving along; we should be fine for the January finish date. There is another Game Show in Manhattan this Friday, but I can't seem get a ticket in advance. I doubt I will risk going in without one, therefore I will wait until February.

Next Friday, I go to Pittsburg, PA and see Ericsson, and then on to see Ben. I will try to keep business, the game, and windmills as my primary focuses. What an incredible life I have that I have the chance to do all three. I am very fortunate and I know it. With that happiness, though, comes the responsibility to keep trying new things, with the idea that most will probably fail. That will hurt me, but it doesn't matter as long as I keep going, growing, and learning.

10/19/06

Thursday, 9:52 EST

New Jersey - Home

I got a call from Ben Meng tonight, which is very unusual. He and I only speak via telephone a few times a year, since our primary means of communication is email. IJX has a big piece of business that includes forming Formex material. In an attempt to save money we looked for an inexpensive alternative. It seems that the Formex material replacement supplier I had found gave us prices about 1/10 that of the original material. Ben was afraid to use the price and asked me to confirm it. It was around 7:00PM here and I was afraid they would be closed in Missouri. After frantically finding the number and calling, I actually

got the president of the company. He explained they made the material themselves and were not going through re-sellers, and also that the price was okay. In fact, we seemed to get along and he offered to set us up as distributors for certain areas. I will pursue that for the future. I got the information back to Ben, and he should be able to offer a substantial discount to the customer, which should help us in keeping the business.

We got some drawings from a big customer today, and they looked familiar. They were asking for prices on plastic parts with plastic/metal composite material, until I realized I was looking at slot blockers (also called filler panels). These are blank parts for telecom cabinets where active panels were not in use. A combination of these "filler" and live panels created the necessary EMI shield. Previously, slot blockers had to be made of metal. I had an idea about using composite plastic/metal material but found it too expensive. Now we could add a shielding foil between the parts to produce the EMI effect needed, and use much cheaper plastic in the process. If it works, it should be a lot less expensive than the metal version. I will try and get up to the customers tomorrow to see the engineer and designer involved.

My son Ben comes home on Saturday. It will be good to see him. I need to find photos of me for the book for China.

10/21/06

Saturday, 6:52PM EST

I am getting concerned on the local front. Here in New Jersey and probably throughout most of the US, housing prices are falling and the housing and building markets are suffering. This means that people who have been trying to sell their houses are having trouble, especially those who bought their houses as investments, paid too much and are utilizing adjustable interest-only mortgages, where they only pay the mortgage loan and not the principle. In an expanding and increasing market, having these types of mortgages is not a big deal, but in a falling situation they can be a disaster. As the economy starts to contract, people who are barely making it will begin to default. Since there are not a lot of people to buy houses, then the down turns could be sharper. If the general economy is affected, which it almost always is, then people will begin to be laid off. Less wages are paid, health insurance premiums lapse and the overall tenor of the economy turns to negative versus positive.

Granted it is a Sunday night and the time where I am most paranoid, but I have a feeling we are moving to a general decline. How big it will be, is the question. The pressure from China, Eastern Europe and every other place like them will only increase as soon as the entrepreneurs there, like us, realize the vulnerability of the American manufacturers, and how quickly they will be able to be driven out of business. Most

Americans have no idea about how to compete in this type of market, but American buyers are surely good enough to hop onto the internet and starting importing their goods from overseas. This will shrink our manufacturing sector even more, reduce more well paying jobs, and make us even more dependent on foreign sources.

By not accepting the world as it is, we Americans are our own worst enemies. Many of us are burying our heads in the sand and hoping everything will be okay. What they have really done is setup a perfect scenario where, with a few bad months in business, many will be forced out. I never understood those who just stood by and watched as the worst happen. Still, I believe unfortunately that many will lose their homes, jobs and there will be far fewer chances to be able to retain their standards of living.

Internationally, I think we are in a disastrous position with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Polls show more than 70% of the people in Iraq do not want us there. Of course, their leadership does; they have everything to lose if we leave. But if the people don't want us there, why are we staying? At this point, with the elections a few weeks away, I predict the Democrats will take the Senate and the House. If they do that, then they will override the President and put in a plan for the US to get out of Iraq. When that happens, I believe Iraq will have few options. The best of which, is to divide the country into three sections, which is their only chance for a lasting peace. Otherwise, they will have continuous civil war until one group is able to dominate the other.

Iraq will also probably either divide itself or go into civil war, but it is painfully obvious that we do not have the resources to govern the entire region, and I do not want us to be there. I think we should take all of the money and resources to work on immediately becoming energy-independent.

As long as we and other countries of the world become energy self sufficient, then the importance of the Middle East region will cease. We will be in a much better position to take care of ourselves and stop trying to safeguard our oil reserves in other countries. After all, does anyone really believe we would be there if we did not need their oil? I think not. They should be able to run their own affairs without us. Trying to spread our brand of capitalism through armed force is self-centered, egotistical and doomed for failure. We are fools to have attempted it, especially based on the false intelligence information, and we are worse fools for having stayed there and had so many of our soldiers killed and money wasted. As I have been saying for thirty years, if we had put our monetary resources into energy independence, then we would be in a much stronger position.

While I am at it, let me also say that in regards to global warming, a lot of it is our own fault. We should be part of the Kyoto Protocol, and we should force all of our corporations to reduce their production of CO2.

Besides, the more efficient energy would make us more competitive in the world marketplace.

I am tired about hearing how things can't be done, how long they would take and how we have to be patient. The time has passed for that. My company is environmentally responsible and becoming more "green" all the time. If others can't follow, then maybe it is time to tax them to do the right thing. We will have to leave Iraq sooner or later with, in my opinion, the same result. We might as well make it sooner and move into what is really important, which is making us a self sufficient power, and stop trying to make the world run as we think it should.

10/24/06

Tuesday, 7:24 EST

New Jersey - Home

I went into Lucent for the new slot blocker design and they seemed to like it. After meeting with one engineer and two designers, we went through all the specifications and they told me where the price had to be. I think we can come very close, so I am very enthused at the possibility. We should know more by Thursday.

If this works, there is a large potential market out there, which is very exciting. I also got an email from a plastics specialist and he is interested in working together on the windmill blade idea. If it works, we could make a major difference in the efficiency, longevity and cost for wind turbines worldwide. Things are moving quickly. I have to get to Kean University to teach my course before the semester ends, so I will call Cyril. My son, Ben, and his friends were in for a few days and are back at school now. I will see them on Friday night when I go to Cleveland.

10/25/06

Wednesday, 9:45PM EST

New Jersey - Home

It looks like Lucent has accepted our alternative design for the Slot Blockers, as long as the materials meet their specifications. There is a smaller size they want for 50% less. I will figure it tomorrow; I was too tired to try it today. If it works and we do it, then it could open an entire new area for the company. This would be a possible boom for IJX, plus an offshoot of lots of potential label business. It is very exciting.

Lucent and Alcatel are set to merge in January. Lucent will have a layoff early next month. I had lunch with my friend Joe, an employee there who is a bit worried. It may be one reason we were asked to do the price reduction, to try and help save jobs. I think it is great we are getting the chance, but hope nobody I know is being let go.

Except for Ben, our family had dinner with Jeff and Bunny. They are

going south for most of the winter, and I am due to visit in February.

The samples for Thales should be here by Monday. We will get them ready and see where it leads us. The defense industry could be a huge new market for us.

Next Tuesday, EPA Performance Track people are due in for an on site audit, and a new buyer from Pentair might be in at the same time. Vinnie and I will shuttle between them; it should be a most interesting day with both here. I have to get ready for my trip tomorrow.

I sent a bunch of prices out today. I wonder how they will be received. You never know, sometimes you get a lot and sometimes nothing.

I play tennis tomorrow. It will probably be a good battle, as usual. Both my racquets have strings ready to break. I got my third racquet out, just in case. I will miss tennis with Ira on Friday, which is too bad because I like to see him. It would be a nice ending to the workweek, but I will see him on Sunday. I weighed 183lbs tonight, which is very good for me. I usually check myself a few times a week; it is something that has always concerned me and probably always will. I want to stay as I am or maybe a pound or two thinner.

I still see myself as an overweight teenager and that image has been hard to shake. However, it has been good in keeping me, obsessively perhaps, at a good weight. It also helps because I have my suits made in Hong Kong and it would be very hard to get the measurements altered. It is time for sleep.

10/26/06

Thursday, 9:59PM EST

Today, I sent the pricing for the smaller slot blocker in. The customer will rush the compliance testing. If it works, and we get the business, we will attempt to sell the concept around the world. It should be one of the greatest sales openers that we have ever had.

10/26/06

Friday, 5:19AM EST

Newark/Liberty Airport

I am on my way to Pittsburgh to see Ericsson Corp. This morning, I got an email from Ben in China. It seems the Chinese government, in an effort to coordinate the production of wind energy in China, has created a group that processes all applications. Without their approval, we can't get into operation or have access to sell the power back to the authority. In other words, nothing will happen unless they say okay. Ben says they are prone to go with big groups, so our chances are basically nil.

The good news is Ben has gotten in touch with a rotor blade manufacturer who might be interested in a new type of plastic created

by one of our customers. We need to make some projections and see if their new material will cost and perform as well as they think. If it does, then we have to do some testing, and if it works, we can start prototyping. It is a fun and interesting thought to go into production of these blades but it is sort of in our product area of plastic and injection molding. Yes, I am stretching a bit, but that is what business is, to stretch out and find new areas.

We hit a snag with the game yesterday. The logo is too close to someone else's and is not usable by us, so we will need to change to something else. It's not a giant deal at the moment, but we have to get it settled quickly.

It is time to head for the gate. It is good I can now take water on the plane; it will be easier when I make my oatmeal, raisin, cinnamon and banana mixture for breakfast. It is interesting to note that I only use cold water for that, and water also for my cereal, since I have mostly given up milk.

10/26/06

Thursday, 5:58AM EST

Newark Liberty Airport

I am at the gate and we seem to be on time. I bought a newspaper with the idea of looking for new game questions. It seems to be an obsession at this point, trying to come up with more ideas, even though it is finished. I suppose I am getting ready for the next edition. Another 600 questions seems daunting, but only if there is a need. I have given up on the ideas for Game Week, and instead plan to market to China as well as online shopping networks, bookstore chains and some places like that. I think I will have a much better chance with a direct sales attack, as opposed to a convention.

My obsessive-compulsive problem is close to becoming a true obsession, so I am trying to bring myself back from the edge. The more tired I get, the worse it gets and it has been bad lately. Happily, on trips I am mostly able to suspend the worst aspects, so I should be in better control by next week. Increased stress does not help, but that is where I am and I would not change it for anything. I have found that in sales, the further away you go geographically the better your chance of success.

We are due to board soon; I look forward to being in the air and having breakfast. I have directions to Ericsson. I hope I can follow them up and back. As for the customers, my main reason to go there today is to meet them, find out the possibilities, make a positive impression and check out new business. They have a huge potential, and I am happy to come back as needed to tap into it.

10/26/06

Thursday, 7:46 EST

In flight

So far so good on the timing, if we arrive on schedule and I get my rental car, and don't get too lost, then I will be in good shape. I have been studying about rotor blades and find the concept very interesting. You would think in a windmill that the bigger the blades the more power you produce. While that is correct, the additional stresses on the blades, compounding with the problem of wind gusts, have made gigantic blade production difficult. You need a special kind of material that can withstand the incredible long-term stresses. I hope Ben's contacts in China are honorable. If so, it could be a good thing.

All through school, I used to avoid math and science courses as much as possible. They never seemed to mean that much for me. Since I started working, and my interests have gone into new areas, I enjoy learning about all different things and the relationships between the various fields of science and math, and how I use that experience every day. I like making money. I enjoy figuring out what things cost, how they can be better engineered, looking for new areas for products, and not being limited to my supposed field of expertise. I see nothing wrong with trying to either put up or make components for wind turbines, even though I am a printer and injection molder. I have no problem with making new types of telecom parts, whether they are made of metals, plastics or various combinations. The only limiting factors are if they will make a profit, how long I am willing to go into them before that profit is made, and the limitations I put on myself.

I will ask Cyril from Kean University to call me today, regarding coming to teach my course in November and December. I will also let him know that my book, which he wrote the forward for, will be out in China in December. It will be very exciting to have the book in stores, and I am hoping that the same company will want to distribute the game. If they do, then I can attack US companies from the Chinese side, which should be a much stronger sell. It is very exciting. Unfortunately, there will be no media tour for the book in China, the publisher says, and I can understand this. Having English-speaking writers come over does not work well if translators are needed for the Chinese audiences.

For the book release, I suggested we make posters that I could autograph and give to the store owners, so they could hang them in their windows. They could run contests for those who buy my book, a lottery, and the winner gets the poster. Ben liked the idea; I am waiting for feedback from the publisher. I also suggested we make bookmarkers to give out, which I think would be great advertising for IJX, but I am not sure if that idea will be accepted.

10/26/06

Thursday, 12:33 EST

Pittsburgh Airport

We landed on time, and I got my car without a problem. Except for getting lost on the way, as usual, everything went well. When I got to Ericsson, it turned out that most of the people who I was supposed to see were either sick or not there, so I ended up seeing one of the managers. This however turned out really well, and we spoke for a while and took a tour of the facility. We have a chance at more business, since I now know who to contact, and will be able to follow up when I got home. It was a very successful call. Now, if everything is on time, I will be in Cleveland by about 2:30PM and at my hotel about 3:30PM. I can then work-out before dinner, or even take a nap if needed. Al called me this morning; information is coming in regarding the wind turbine project, so I have my work cut out for me next week.

10/26/06

Thursday, 1:39 PM EST

In Flight to Cleveland

This is so cool, we are on a small commuter flight and it is an older prop-propeller driven plane. There is no cockpit door. I think there are sixteen seats and no lavatory, either. The cool part is there is no door to the pilot area, so I can watch the backs of the two pilots as they are flying. Taking off was very interesting with all of the buttons, knobs and controls being turned on, off and modified. We have now leveled off in a cloudbank at about 10,000 feet, and I can tell they are now relaxing and talking between themselves. One passed some chocolate to the other, so I guess this is the easy part of the trip. Right outside my window is the prop-propeller and the noise is pretty loud. I was wishing I had my earplugs, when I remembered I had my noise-deadening earphone, and they are now performing particularly well. I may hook up some music in a few minutes. It is strange watching one of the propellers going around. The first thought is I hope it keeps turning. Then, I hope it doesn't fall off. Finally, I think of what happens if one of the engines dies. Enough of that, I think I will listen to my mentor for a while. We should be in Cleveland within the hour, and then I have to find a cab. I met a nice lady from Minnesota sitting across from me. It turns out she works in New Jersey, what a small world.

10/26/06

Thursday, 7:06PM

Case Western Reserve University

The Rough Rider Room Pub

I am sitting in a pub. Actually it is more like a lounge with a bar, which I guess is what most pubs are anyway. My son Ben and his

roommate Jeremy are downstairs getting ready for their performance of "Reefer Madness," the musical. Ben is playing bass and his best friend, Jeremy is conducting. No worries if it gets too loud, though. I do have my sound reducing headphones.

It has been a long time since I was in a college pub, and they pretty much look the same. Mary, the bartender, smiling, knowledgeable of life, has obviously seen a few things and is looking at me with a watchful eye, making sure I don't get into trouble. I don't want to embarrass Ben, because if I did he would have to transfer to another school (I am kidding), and that would not be good.

It is raining here in Cleveland; I've heard it does that a lot, probably a good reason why both Ben and Jeremy do not plan to stay here past graduation. But it has been good for them so far. There does not seem to be a lot of action going on here since it is only Mary and I in this room, but lots of theatre-type looking people in curlers are running around, so I imagine things will heat up soon.

It brings me back to my days of theatre. I studied classical clarinet for a lot of years. I played my share of musicals, and may I say I liked the musicians a lot better than the actors. Mary just announced she too used to play clarinet; I knew there was a connection between us and now it is explained.

I remember when I used to practice most days and it would drive me crazy; learning how to play music is very demanding. A very positive part of my youth, were the good times of performing and meeting new people. I have since traded in my instrument for the role of a salesman, but the idea is the same. Spread joy, good wishes, good will, and hopefully everyone makes money. Mary is studying art history, and my writing about it means she will have to finish. She is a junior and seems quite confident that her future will be fine. In another year and a half when she graduates, she will probably be going a little crazy, like my son and Jeremy now, but that is part of the cycle of life. You never, ever know what is coming, and that can be the greatest part of all.

I wonder if all pubs when I was young had the same type of chairs that were hard on your back. Maybe I just didn't notice then because I had a younger back. Anyhow, it will mean having to move soon. My diet soda is nearing its end. If I had more than a half of a can, then the caffeine would probably make me crazy and I would embarrass my son Ben and again he would have to leave. Not a good a thing. In fact, people most try to keep caffeine away at all times. That's probably a good idea for any chance of world peace.

Mary is the only child; you learn a lot about people when you are drinking diet soda. She comes from Ohio and thought about getting out, but ended up staying here anyway. Perhaps when she graduates she can end up in New York City or Philadelphia, and get a taste of the

eastern seaboard, the ocean, and salt water taffy.

Mary says that she was able to hear last night's performance an entire room away. This does not bode well for my sensitive hearing. I believe now that my earphones will be pressed into service, and I am darn glad I have them.

10/26/06

Thursday, 7:42PM EST

Case Western Reserve

I am not sure where I am. I am in this room that looks like a dancehall, with the stage set in the front side, the band with my son, and Jeremy on the left with two long sections of chairs. In most audiences, I try and sit in the last row closest to the door, so I can leave quickly and quietly as needed. Staying to form, I did the same thing and have a birds-eye view of everything. The pit orchestra is playing some jazz and it is very nice. They sound good together. The saxophone player is Mark, a member of one of Ben and Jeremy's bands; they all seemed to travel in groups.

While waiting for Ben before at the hotel, I thought I recognized a German accent at the front desk. It turns out there was an employee there who spoke that language, and was in fact from Germany. I had gotten an email earlier in the day, in German, and since I do not speak the language, she was nice enough to translate. She was also very cute and I thought she might be good for Ben, but he has another commitment at the moment, so I just asked him to keep her in mind. She looked like a nice girl.

It is good I can still go up and talk to a woman; it is a skill that one should not lose, not for any particular reason, but it is good to know I can still do it. It is something I also use in sales and everyday life. Being able to casually engage someone in conversation is extremely important, and I have to be able to do it.

10/26/06

Thursday, 11:21PM EST

Intercontinental Hotel - Cleveland, OH

A musical version of the cult classic, "Reefer Madness," put on by the Case Western "Footlighters" was a smashing success. It far exceeded my expectations and the whole production reflected the immense amount of work they put into it. Both boys did wonderful jobs, and it was a pleasure to watch. After the show, Ben drove me home and we said goodbye. I will not see him in the morning, and not again until Thanksgiving. I will miss him. He is a great young man and I love him.

10/27/06

Friday, 11:19 EST Cleveland Airport

I got up this morning at 8:00AM. It was not easy since yesterday was a good, long day. There are heavy winds everywhere. I have been extremely worried about the possibilities of a delay or cancellation, but there is nothing I can do. I decided to work-out this morning, eat my triple-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and catch a cab to the airport. Actually, it was more like a town car to the airport, which I did not ask for, but it turned out I knew the driver. I had seen him before. He was the owner of a small limo company, and I recognized him after hearing him directing his drivers, like a general to his army, on his cell phone.

Life for Will was good; he has thirteen people working for him, except his sister, who he had to fire because she was not living up to the responsibility of being a relative in a family business. As I have said, there are two types of relatives in business: those who help and those who are complete anchors. Apparently Will's sister was not of the positive kind. I know the situation well; it is common in family businesses, and for that reason I am usually very thankful that I am alone in our company, at least at this time anyway. It is good to see someone doing well, especially someone who loves what they are doing, are competent and working hard. He deserves his success, and I hope it continues.

Friday nights are when I usually am able to catch some sleep from the week. I try to get about nine hours, and last night I got about eight, which isn't terrible but I am still tired. The plane is scheduled to board at 12:15PM. I will eat my veggie burgers at 12:00PM. In the meantime, I will either read or listen to my iPod, or both. I have a movie with me, in case it is needed.

10/27/06

Friday, 1:52 EST

I am in flight from Cleveland. We started a little late but nothing major and I was upgraded free to first class. After I started drinking water and cranberry juice, I realized I may not have had enough liquids in me, which probably helped cause my headache. I have been drinking a lot and I am feeling better. They are now saying we should get bounced around a bit before we land, which is understandable considering the storm we are going through.

I will be home in plenty of time to take a nap. I may go into work today, instead of tomorrow. Hopefully, the internet at work is functioning again. If not, there is nothing I can do except communicate through phone and fax, which in retrospect is not so bad. The pilot just told us the weather in New Jersey is warm and very windy. Maybe I will take a walk, or risk a bike ride if it isn't too bad. We are up just

above the cloud line and descending into Newark/Liberty Airport. My next trip is Wednesday, when I go to Washington for the Performance Track Participants Association Annual Meeting. They are usually informative and a lot of fun.

10/30/06

Monday, 9:55PM EST

We started Daylight Savings Time this morning, which means we get an extra hour of sleep. Today, I played tennis with Ira. Then I went to my office to pick up one of my bikes and rode it home. The internet has been off mostly since Friday morning, and I have not gotten my emails. This is driving me crazy, as I cannot catch up. People are going to think I am ignoring them, and who knows what opportunities I am missing. In the meantime, I caught up as best as I could and brought home some research about wind rotors, and the propellers used to catch the wind for wind turbines. I got some great help from some people I contacted, and I know who to contact to get an idea of what the propellers cost with the new material we found. If it works, it will be big. If not, nothing much has been lost.

Don Argintar comes in tomorrow morning to work on the Internet problem.

For the game, we will use a variation of the IJ logo instead of the dragon and everything should be fine. We have to make a decision on the modified playing pieces in the morning, since there was a design mistake on our end. Rich and Mike are due back tomorrow. We will be back at full strength, which is a good thing.

Alex is still getting his applications for college ready; it will be on going for months. I am trying to give him lots of space.

I always feel somewhat helpless on the weekends because people aren't working and I usually can't get things changed or finished. Maybe I should try and take it a little easier, at least when I can't do things like answer my email this morning.

Perhaps I am being given the lesson of being more patient and learning to slow down a little, and maybe I should listen to it.

10/30/06

Monday, 10:02PM EST

I won a set of tennis today! That itself is noteworthy, as it happens infrequently. My opponents are very good, steady players. Sometimes, everything goes right and I win but not usually more than one set. Our internet service finally went back on. Don was in today and we are going to switch providers, which will help stop this problem in the future.

Don is also an avid flyer, besides being a genius computer programmer, and is thinking of starting a charter air service. It could

be very good for us getting multiple people to short-hop places. It is something to keep in mind for the future, if he does it.

We have been quoting some pieces of business that IJX will produce and sell to IJUS, and it seems to be going okay. I will try for more. Rich got back from China.

10/31/06

Tuesday, Halloween

New Jersey - Home

I emailed Don Argintar about my brilliant idea for a smaller version prop for a wind turbine, and he said in a nice way it would not work. Oh well, back to the drawing board. I offered to help him with an idea of his whenever he was ready. He said he would get back to me. Performance Track people were in today for our review. They said it wasn't an audit, but it was. However, there was no chance of sanctions except being thrown out of the program. It went well and we got some good ideas from it. Besides, having auditors in keeps us sharp.

I made a mistake, figuring a job for a customer today. It is not horrible and won't be the last job I priced incorrectly but it is annoying. Such is life.

I got a price from a US manufacturer to produce the game, and he may want to distribute it. We have a new logo and sent it to our patent attorney. I hope it is approved; we need to go to press soon. One of the guys from my Temple, an usher, is coming in next week to discuss marketing the game. It could be fun if it actually starts to sell.

Chapter Eleven

11/1/06

Wednesday, 7:52AM EST

Newark/Liberty Airport

I am in the Continental Airlines Lounge, waiting another fifteen minutes before I go to the gate. The security was very heavy today, and they even made us separate our fluids. They confiscated my hair gel. It was four ounces, one more than allowed. Therefore, I am not responsible for the way my hair behaves tomorrow. I made a mistake pricing a piece of business we are bringing in from China. It is not that much money, but making mistakes always bothers me. I will tell the customer we will hold the prices for six months, and go from there. We are working on the props for the wind turbines. Ben got a price for a 35 meter Chinese made rotor for \$650,000.00 US dollars. I have to get it checked, as to whether we can make it at IJX with the new process and material. We will have to figure out a new type of press to handle this, but I am confident we can do it.

Washington will probably be warm today. I am not wearing a suit jacket, it is in my suitcase, yet I am still warm. I played tennis with Paul this morning. I got there before 5:00AM, and he was already waiting for me. I plan to eat breakfast on the flight down.

This Friday we find out about the filler panels, if they have the chance to work. There are many more good things happening than bad, I just have to remember it.

11/1/06

Wednesday, 6:30PM EST

Washington

I am a believer in the goodness of the common man. The bad news: I have been ripped off by pan handlers twice in my life, as far as I know, and both times it has been in Washington, DC. The first time was about two years ago when a man carrying a salad said I bumped into him and dropped to the ground. I thought caused it and gave him money for a new salad. Walking on afterwards, I saw the remains of other salad "drops" he had done. He was working his territory.

The second time was just a few minutes ago in a drug store. I was buying some glue and a man came up to me with two tens and asked for a \$20.00 bill. Thinking back, I should have asked why he needed a \$20.00 bill. Anyway, I gave him a \$20 bill. He obviously flipped it with another bill, when I didn't see it, and said I gave him a \$1 bill. Being innocent, I gave him another \$20.00 and was about to move on when he tried to get more money from me, and I told him to leave.

I am also a believer in fate. At that moment, I went right back to

the hotel where I am now. I will not leave again, especially to exercise, which I would have done tomorrow morning, until I go back to the convention center tomorrow. I believe this small event is keeping me from getting into bigger trouble, so I am not that upset but amazed at how good these two guys were at ripping people off. If they spent half as much energy on honest work, I am sure they would be much further ahead. I am afraid of this town after dark, and will try to no longer be out when dusk falls. It is too bad, since it is a beautiful city, but I will have to view it by daylight only.

Outside of that, the day was very good. The meeting for Performance Track went well, and I got a great contact into the Small business Administration. I will contact them in the hope of being able to address their members for Performance Track, and see if they would like to join us. While doing so, I can also speak about IJUS, IJX and see if anyone wants to joint venture in China. This could produce a lot of good things, and I would have gladly come to Washington just for the chance to make that contact.

I am going to work out for a while here, then go to the gym and walk on the treadmill, which I hope is safer than outside. I am not usually done this early in the evening. I will then eat dinner, get some sleep, and work out again before breakfast and the start of tomorrow's meeting. I will leave about 4:30PM and hope my 7:00PM plane is on schedule and, if I am very fortunate, get home about 9:00PM. Hotel rooms are very lonely, especially when you are not incoherent from sleep deprivation, so I will call home when I get back, and talk with my wonderful wife. I don't think I am traveling next week; it will be good to be home.

11/2/06

Thursday, 3:57PM EST

Reagan/National Airport

I got up this morning at 4:45am and exercised. I ended up using the stationery bicycle because the treadmill was taken, and it turned out fine. Breakfast was good; I brought it myself. Then it was off to more PTPA meetings. It was a long morning; I was having increasing trouble sitting down, and kept having to get up. The meeting ended at 1:00PM and I planned to go to the food court and get lunch and dinner because I was not due to get home until about 8:00PM. However, the executive board had a meeting and we went to a local restaurant. Although it was not my first choice, I liked the food court and it was not expensive. I could get my dinner and bathrooms were nearby, so this would probably be fine.

The restaurant was okay, and I stayed until about 3:00PM when I could not sit any longer. Long meals were never my thing. After all, food is usually considered fuel, so I said my goodbyes and left. I like the

people involved, so that is not the problem. It is just that the meetings take much longer than I am used to. A man outside the restaurant was nice enough to give me his place in the taxi line, and I got to the airport about 3:30PM. I anxiously checked to see if I could get an earlier flight, and happily I could so I am scheduled to leave about 5:00PM. We could be delayed, but at least I have a chance to get home earlier. I called the car service about my change in plans for pick up. We are scheduled to board in about twenty-five minutes, and I still have a triple-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich with me, which may get eaten soon. I bought a bottle of water, so I am good. The meetings went well and I am very excited about the prospect of dealing with the Small Business Association.

The midterm election is next week, and both sides are yelling at each other. It is all very disconcerting, but I think I will vote for the Senate Democratic Candidate in New Jersey. Hopefully, it will give the Senate to the Democrats and stop the President's recurring foreign policy actions, which I deem unwise.

The sandwich is now being eaten. Next, I have to work on operating recommendations for IJX and future goals. I need to have this finished by next Friday, when I promised it to Ben. Next week, I do not travel, but the week after I go to New England with Vinnie and end up in the Berkshires. That should be a fun trip. The sandwich is gone.

11/2/06

Thursday, 7:24PM EST

On the Tarmac, Reagan National Airport

As you can tell we have not left yet. Apparently, the airspace over Newark is a zoo.

The people next to me have missed their flight to Spain, and are trying to negotiate another flight here, which means their plane would then have to go back to the gate and unload them. Unfortunately, I think that would lose us our space in line, and who knows when we would get to Newark. As much as I would like them to be helped, I am torn as to what will happen to the rest of us. I am hoping we are cleared, so we don't have to decide the issue. The pilot just announced we have been released to fly. I am ready for home.

11/5/06

Sunday, 6:47PM

No worries, I finally got home about 9:00PM on Thursday night. I then spent Friday catching up. One of the people I contacted was from the National Association of Manufacturers, on a recommendation from one of the heads of the EPA. The plan was to promote PT to increase membership in the organization, increase our overall benefits to the environment, and, oh yes, give my company more exposure with the

hopes of more business and joint ventures in China.

I never said I was doing all this strictly to help the environment. Everything interacts with everything else. I have to make it possible for all of us to have positive results not only to make it possible to keep up our levels of commitment, but attract others also. Friday night was a good sleep, and after about nine hours I got up and went to Temple for services, and then onto biking. Uncle Dave could not ride, and it is getting colder, which makes it less attractive to go, but I went anyway. I felt much better after I got going, and was warm in no time.

Right now the average temperature is about 50 degrees. There is no need for masks yet, but those heavier clothes and gloves will be coming soon. Last night, we went to see a comedian in concert with my sister and her husband. It was very nice. We had dinner also with some of their friends, and I got up this morning to a normal Sunday. I drove Kayla and her friend to work at our temple, and then went to go play tennis with my brother. Today was a little different, because I needed some pictures for my new book for China, and wanted to show me playing tennis like one I had from when I was in college. Neither my brother nor I are very good with cameras but we tried.

After tennis, I had a snack and went biking. I stopped off to see my former next store neighbor, Phoebe, from our last house. She is a widower, and I nicknamed her “mother earth” because she is so grounded and steady. I go to see her occasionally, and I know she appreciates my visits. I like to talk to her; she is nice and is very supportive, so we are good for each other. After I got home, ate lunch and took a nap, I went to see my parents and then had an epiphany. Yes, it was one of those light bulb moments. I have been struggling for months trying to find my way through this entire energy question, both from a business and a world citizen point of view.

Like other members of our Performance Track group, I want to help the environment and make a better world, but I have always been frustrated because of our size and how we can impact globally.

My company can't make a world impact with solar or wind power, because I am not willing to put millions of dollars into development. But then, it occurred to me that one of the few things I can do within the United States, and New Jersey in particular, is to push conservation, and the more efficient use of the energy we have. After all, we have plenty of power if we used it in better ways, like making sure all new structures and the retrofitting of others are done with energy-efficient designs. We could also do this with cars and we could then become energy independent much more quickly, and help global warming at the same time.

I then remembered that Dan Gallagher's company was involved in just this sort of operation. Their techniques of utilizing sunlight, both for reducing electrical usage and better health, could be just the

ticket to start making a small-scale global change. But how could this be utilized by me I wondered? And then it hit me. If my company, or a new one, could get the carbon unit benefits from the use of this technology, and Dan's company got the money for the installation, and the owners of the building got tax rebates, then we would all win. Granted, my carbon credit might never be worth anything, but then again they would continually grow every year, like an insurance policy. And when they are tradable on the world exchange, which would eventually happen, then we could be looking at a goldmine. I sent Dan an email; we will see where it goes. I hope to speak with him tomorrow. Perhaps my company could fund a study to see just how good his process and equipment work. The prospective results are exciting.

In other news, Jeroen from the Netherlands got our samples for Thales, including the two versions with copper/tin and aluminum, and he liked all three types. If the alternatives work, then the prices we charge could plummet and there could be major economic benefit to all parties involved. We could then take the technology and spread it all over the world.

Tomorrow, my usher from Temple comes in to talk about the game. I am not sure what part he can fit into but I am willing to listen and see if we can utilize him in some way. As I said, I think he is due for a good turn and I would like to help him reach something good.

I am trying to accelerate the pay off of our debt from China as quickly as possible.

If the economy goes where I think it will, then those with the least amount of debt will be in the strongest position. Often, it is a psychological difference. In my case, being debt-free is the way to go. Therefore, I will probably table all other development in alternative energy, which will cost a fortune, and center instead on working with Dan.

11/6/06

Monday, 9:57PM EST

New Jersey - Home

The time to be a dad is not when everything is going great; it is in the middle of the night when someone gets scared or is not feeling well. It is those little moments that remind me of the reasons why I am a parent. My daughter Kayla has a migraine headache, and while that might not seem like a big deal, she was in a lot of pain and it is very difficult to watch her go through it. She was on the verge of tears. That is when we brought out the heavy medication. As of now, we left her alone to go to sleep. She knows she can come in anytime to wake me up, as well as her mother, although it is much more fun with me as I am a light sleeper. She barely has to say anything, and I am usually

peeling myself off the ceiling from being scared awake.

She is wonderful, and a night of sleep means nothing to me as long as I can help her feel a little better. If she is up tonight and so am I, then so be it, as long as I feel like I am actually helping. It is very difficult to watch your children in pain, and I am very thankful it has been infrequent.

As for the rest of my day, it was very good. Gary our accountant was in, and our financial picture is strong. I spoke to Dan Gallagher, and he too is excited about the prospect of joining forces to help reduce the use of electricity. I also launched my effort for the PTPA, in trying to get more small businesses interested in our group. I am also planning my trip with Vinnie to New England this month, and my solo trip to Canada. I have been emailing Ben in China, and we are also moving along on the filler panel parts. I will try for sleep.

11/7/06

Tuesday, 9:50PM EST

We had our second non-audit in the last week, this time from a representative from Pentair in California. It seemed to go very well, and even though they did not call it an ISO audit that was basically what it was. It is not a problem; now I hope they send us lots of business. After getting some information from Dan, I sent my comments to a lobbying energy group from Washington. I wonder if they will help with the idea. We may launch a new energy company and become carbon credit brokers. The revised game logo is now approved and we are moving ahead.

11/9/06

Thursday, 9:58PM EST

I played tennis well this morning and my opponent played better. My ego, as usual, is sufficiently battered to stay in line. I went up to Lucent for the filler panel project. If it works out, we will have to expand the injection molding operation in Xiamen.

Business is back on track moving forward, and we can start sending orders again to Xiamen for production. We had stopped before because things were slower.

Wendy and Alex are visiting Brown University in Rhode Island. Apparently, Alex likes it there. I miss them but at least they will be home tomorrow.

We took the last set of photos of me for the book in Xiamen. A lot is going on and I am having fun.

11/10/06

Friday, 10:26PM EST

I try to make things right, and I try to make them better. Sometimes

I can help, and often I cannot. Sometimes, I just make things worst. Having customers and accounts are like friendships. They start, go well for a long time, hopefully, and then either trail off, die suddenly, or go into a gradual decline. People change, as do events that are seen differently from those involved. It is heart wrenching to watch a relationship go bad, but sometimes there is nothing that can be done except try and end it in the best way possible. It takes so much work to get an account. I rarely will end those relationships, and it takes a lot to get me to the point of even thinking about it. Obviously, that moment is coming with one, if I am writing about it, but not just yet. I don't want to end anything I don't have to, but there are times.

I heard from the carbon footprint people in England. They are interested in our proposal for joint branding and marketing, and will contact us. If it seems possible, I will take Mike over and we will check them out in person. I got the idea for a new game based on their software. We will see if it is possible.

11/11/06

Saturday, 10:51PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I had a very calm day today. I got up about 7:15AM, went to Temple, then biking during an extremely beautiful, warm November day. At the end of it I met Uncle Dave. He had already ridden to Princeton, about a 65mile round trip, and we had a drink while sitting outside on benches in our downtown area. We spoke about life and dreams, and it was wonderful. I went home and Wendy and I ended up going to an early movie and dinner with Wendy's sister and husband. It was a lot of fun.

It was during my ride where I started to think seriously about our next board game involving carbon credits. I think it will be about a group of "carbon credit brokers" who scour the world looking for ways to buy and sell units. They would gain these credits through creation, acquisition and selling of various types of renewable fuel production. And, if possible, generate them through the more efficient use of fossil fuel and maybe increased use of nuclear fuel. There could be other ways, like reducing the consumption of meat, which will reduce the amount of gas the animals produce, if that indeed is part of the problem. I am having a lot of fun with this, and will more be formal with the idea in the next few weeks.

I am reminded about what happened on Wednesday morning, when playing tennis with Paul. The courts had just been cleaned by a machine, and the fumes in the back set of indoor courts were quite bad. I opened up the door behind me to get some air, and toward the end of the hour a moth flew in. Knowing it meant certain death if we did not get him back outside, I tried to catch him but was unable to.

A few minutes later, it flew back towards us and both Paul and I took after it, trying to trap it and move it to safety. I am happy to report we were successful, and were able to send the moth back through the door which we then closed. Paul and I were both jubilant at the rescue. Sometimes, it is the little things that make the difference.

11/12/06

Sunday, 2:15 EST

Office, New Jersey

To my selected staff:

As always, when I am afraid of something and it troubles me, I try and deal with it in an effective, positive fashion that will not only help me through it, but possibly engage others to reduce their fear and maybe make a positive impact.

While watching our environment changing rapidly, i.e. global warming and the obvious effects on our planet, I am moved to try and do something about it, not only for the world but to benefit our companies as well. However, we cannot do “something” until we figure out a plan. Therefore, I have embarked on the following and am dragging all of you along with me. I hope the ride is no bumpier than the others we have already traveled.

Step one is to define the problem, which is the increasing production of carbon dioxide by the inhabitants of our planet, helping to raise the average temperature which will make significant changes to our environment in a relatively short time and possibly destroy us all. (Can you tell it is a Sunday when I am writing this???)

Step two is to weigh the possibilities of what our companies and we as individuals can do to make a difference in this area.

Step three is to define those areas in which we can make a difference, and whether they are within our resources and determination to make an attempt.

Step four is to decide that if we can make a difference, we can also manipulate those changes to benefit us economically in the process. If not, should we proceed anyway?

Step five is to then implement all that seems possible, either one at a time or all at once.

Hence we are now working on the combined 3-pronged attack to try and deal with this potentially catastrophic problem from our own perspective.

Our plan will be to open a new energy company whose purposes will be:

1. Re-package and market the carbon footprint software from the company in England, if they decide to go ahead with our proposal.
2. Market this software through our contacts in the EPA and OSHA, and try to get them to make it a federal requirement that all companies track their carbon footprints and eventually how they are going to reduce them.

3. Work with Dan Gallagher's company to promote his company's work with utilizing passive sunlight for buildings. New studies show that their designs can reduce the use of electricity within a building by large amounts, and thus saving the building owners money in the following ways:
 - A Tax credits for the construction
 - B Money saved yearly on the reduced electric bills
 - C Potentially declaring the amount of energy saved as a "renewable fuel," thereby enabling additional tax credits for the building owners for the life of the building
 - D Having carbon energy credits generated from the amount of electricity not used for the life of the building, which could then be traded eventually on the international carbon trading exchange
4. The proposal with SolaDesign would work like this: We would help to promote their capabilities both in New Jersey and nationally. They would get the jobs to modify the buildings, and we would get all of the carbon credits permanently for the buildings as our fee. (They are coming in tomorrow to discuss the plan.)
5. Create a new game based on global warming, to help stimulate the search and trading of global carbon credits.

Here is what I have come up with so far...

Opening for the game: Welcome, you are now members of an elite group of global environment investors who are part of the Carbon Credit Consortium or CCC. Your jobs are to roam the planet looking for ways to:

1. Decrease the use of fossil fuel
2. Increase the use of alternative fuel
3. Stabilize potentially high areas of pollution, including preventing wars and shutting down high volume polluters
4. Foster more efficient systems for utilizing fossil fuels
5. Generate huge amounts of carbon tax credits, which can then be used as currency on the international carbon exchange

Your power will be based on the amount of credits you can generate, accumulate, manipulate and trade. As you move across the world, you will have the chance to move up levels which will increase both the positive and negative effects of your actions. The further you move up, the worse shape the planet will be in until you reach level 4, where your efforts will start to reverse the effects of global warming. However, if you stop producing positive results, you will be sent back down to a lower level. If you do not produce enough credits and positive change, then you and the world will not survive. The first person to reach level 6 and successfully complete the final agreement wins the game. There is no second place.

The playing board will show the various continents of the world. There are lines drawn across the board, dividing it into six equal rows. The rows will be set-up as per below:

Decrease World Temperature

Row 6, -3 less degrees F (7 spaces)

Row 5, -3 less degrees F (9 spaces)

Row 4, -3 less degrees F (11 spaces)

Increase World Temperature

Row 3, +3 more degrees F (13 spaces)

Row 2, +3 more degrees F (15 spaces)

Row 1, +2 degrees F (17 spaces)

Each row will be split into the amount of playing spots listed. Each player starts at the left side of each level, and moves across with each turn. If, at the end of the row, they cannot move up with the assets needed, then they will be forced down a level. You can move up immediately as soon as you have enough carbon credits.

With each space you either pick a card or do whatever written. There will be 4 types of "Action" cards involving:

- Personal Decisions
- Local Decisions
- National Decisions
- Global Decisions

Topics will cover:

Financial

Medical

Political

Family

Home

Government

Business

Farming

Animals

Sanitation

Lighting

Building Construction

Wind

Solar

Nuclear

Geothermal

Wave Energy

Hydrogen Fuel

New Technology

Terrorism

Good versus Evil

Paradoxes

11/12/06

Sunday, 9:55PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Apparently, I screwed up prices to China twice, and the buyer there is understandably upset. I will check it in the morning, but I am bugged at myself. Being tired doesn't help. I have turned off my cell phone for the night; no more communication with the rest of the world.

Today went well with lots of paperwork, and a lunch meeting with Dan and his brother Hugh to talk about their company and ours. If our plan works well, as outlined above, then the carbon credit area could indeed not only be a lucrative but environmentally positive area. We may launch their energy saving Day lighting technology at the Environmental Summit in New Orleans in May. We all seemed to get along well, but the question is if can I help to push the initiative, will it be adopted and can we all do what is needed to optimize the results? I want them to create an instructional video. I hope they do it. It is time for sleep, before I make more mistakes from being tired.

11/13/06

Monday, 9:49PM EST

Scott from our art department tried to talk to me about the directions for the game. This is the final check. I am so tired of talking and looking at them that I left it in his hands to go ahead. I have done all I can, and need to get some space between the game and me. In a few weeks, after the bulk is done, we will start getting samples in. Then I will be fine again, but for now I need to leave it.

No word yet from the software company in England, regarding the carbon footprint software. Every hour they delay is actually every minute I come closer to taking on the project here, and leaving them out. They do not have much time left. In the meantime, I have been studying about carbon credits and how to trade them.

The filler panel project is moving along. We are working on various types of gaskets that will insure there is no gap between the panels in the chassis. They have to touch for the EMI shield to stay activated. We are nearing the end of the line, and hopefully we can come to a successful conclusion. I have been calling potential customers who might need this technology, and the list is growing.

I know it is not proven but it does show our lead in the technology, and our ability to tackle problems like these. I love the idea of doing things people think we have no business being involved with. Going through our contact database is tedious and difficult, but it always yields good potential selling results, so I have to force myself to do it.

Thursday and Friday in New England look busy; Vinnie and I should have a good time on the road.

A big bug is crossing my carpet. At first I thought it was a cricket,

which would have been a pain since I would have had to try and set it free outside. But luckily, it is just a big spider so I can let him alone to eat any little bugs he finds. It is amazing what scares people and what doesn't. I have my fears, but spiders are not generally one of them.

I packed most of my clothes and food for the trip, and am charging my computer and iPod. We have switched to cable from DSL in the office. Our email has been a little haywire, but is okay now.

Tomorrow, I play tennis with Paul and then later I will find out if we got a big order from Avaya. I am inclined to think not, since I was not counting on it anyway, but it would be nice to get it. The Lucent/Alcatel merger happens in January and things are moving now. I am trying to get ahead of my competition into Alcatel, as I am sure they are doing with me. Wendy really wants to go to France if we do business with Alcatel there; I will try to bring her for the weekend.

11/13/06

Monday, 9:45 EST

New Jersey - Home

I just took an antacid pill. My stomach is in mild rebellion. Tomorrow, a sales swing starts that can help determine not only whether we can expand some of our markets in New England, but also if this new product line has legs. There is a lot riding on this. As soon as we launch, our potential competitors will know what we are doing. I feel however they will think it will not work, so we probably have some breathing room.

If our injection-molding line of products fails again I am not sure where else to go with it. If it succeeds, I hope we are ready. I am on the cusp of a new level; I can feel it. The push through the wall will be painful and then, if successful, it will feel like nothing at all. It is the preparation that hurts and the stress it causes and how it affects others around me. Business is holding on fine; we are ahead of last year even with the gradual loss of one of our bigger customers. Our finances are good; we are paying down our loan, and Xiamen is doing well. The time will never be better to launch, and we are going ahead.

I spoke to Dan Gallagher. I had checked his literature for hybrid solar units. It seems the best way to publicize them is to install it into our building, so I will have his crew over in the next few days to run an assessment of how much, how long, and if I can convince the landlord. Our building owner has been innovative, and if I promise to fix any problems with the roof, then we should be okay. How can I help market a product if I am not willing to go out on a limb and put it in myself?

I gave the software company in England until Friday for feedback. Either way, we will move forward in some capacity.

Kayla is probably working for me for a month this summer. Her project will be to help put together the carbon footprint software,

market the new product, or help with the new carbon credit game.

No word yet from our attorney on the new energy company name. I will check with him again next week.

The game continues, and we have a slogan that we sent to Ed Weingram. I hope it passes.

Will one antacid pill be enough?

I should be fine as soon as I get in front of everyone. I need to see their reaction to know if the new panel design has a chance. If not, I will decide if we have the wrong people in front of us, are headed in the wrong direction or if we need to change something.

My public apologies to my wife; it must not have been easy to be around me for the last few weeks. I am not mean or abusive, just withdrawn and inside myself. It is how I prepare to attack. I get very quiet, prepare as needed, and then hit with full fury. Tomorrow, it begins.

11/14/06

Tuesday, 8:07PM EST

Westford, MA

It has been a heck of a day. I started off at my regular time in the office, played tennis and lost as usual. Then Vinnie and I set off on our latest adventure together about 9:00am. Things were fine until we got to the New York thruway, where our progress was painfully slow and I began to wonder if we would make our 1:15PM appointment at Pentair in Rhode Island. Things finally got better, though, and we made excellent time shortly after reaching the New York side.

We made it to our first stop with just time enough to eat lunch in the car, and the meeting went very well. Our customers there are pleased with our performance, and helped us to get approved to start doing business with another division they have in California. They are also interested in our new filler panel product line. This was extremely important, as we are now starting to gauge how much possible demand there is in the industry for this product. Their initial reaction was extremely promising.

We will get back to them with samples as soon as they are ready and have been tested. In the meantime, our label business should hopefully grow well with both groups. It was a great first call. We have put a large amount of time and energy into this new area, and after the false start five months ago, I am particularly anxious that it be received well.

We later made it to a very nice hotel called the Westford Regency, located in Westford, Massachusetts. I picked it because it is very close to our first call tomorrow morning.

It is unseasonably warm here and I went for a walk outside. We are scheduled to leave tomorrow about 7:45AM. We have five planned

stops tomorrow in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and then it is off to Lenox, so it promises to be a busy day.

I found out that my in-laws are coming back home to Lenox tomorrow. I left a message for Bunny to see if they, Vinnie and I could have breakfast on Saturday morning, before we leave for home. I will see them next week, but it would be fun to see them sooner.

I have been under a lot of pressure lately. The new filler panel project is not just a single product, but a whole new area for us. I know we are printers, but it doesn't mean we can't branch out to non-printing areas. We have to be able to change people's minds, and not have us pigeonholed into one place. The good news about tougher times is that people are willing to listen to new things; the bad thing is that regular business starts to slow up. Right now, people seem to be listening and we have to capitalize on that momentum before it evaporates.

The game is moving forward slowly. The questions should be edited and proofread by early next week, and I am hoping we can dry-run the game on Wednesday. If it works, we can finally put the whole project into production. Our customers seem very happy at the idea and prospect of getting a sample of the game. I hope they like it.

11/16/06

Thursday, 10:17 PM EST

Lenox, Massachusetts.

I got up at 4:30AM, worked out after breakfast in my room, and met Vinnie in the lobby at 7:40AM. We got to Lucent a little early and saw an engineer. Then we went across the street and saw another group of engineers. Everyone seemed happy with our company, and they really liked the idea of the filler panel design, and even had some additional applications. If it passes compliance, this could become a massive set of cost savings for them. We then went to Tyco, met the purchasing people and one engineer. It was good to actually meet them all in person, since we usually only talk on the telephone or by email. They were excited about getting samples of the new board game, which was really good to hear. Marketing a whole new area like consumer products is a big deal, not nearly as big as the injection molding and filler panels, but still a big deal.

From there we tried to get to New Hampshire, but the GPS in my car did not seem to want to get there. We eventually made it anyway and went to see people at Benchmark and Filtronic-Comtek. Again, all were happy with us and they were also very interested in our new design. Then we went on to the Berkshires, to our home in Lenox, and got there about 5:00PM. This enabled me to have some time to not only check in with the office, but also go biking.

The weather was beautiful and the only problem was it was dark out, even though I still thought there would be enough light. I was

wrong and not having a light for my bike made it rather dangerous and unsettling. Not one of my smarter moves, I admit. As soon as I got back and checked into the office again, I charged my bike light to be ready to go tomorrow morning. Vinnie and I then went to dinner at a really good, local restaurant. I am now ready for some sleep.

The last two days have gone well. The only problem is that we are now directly competing with one of our biggest customers for business that will utilize the filler panels. They are bound to find out quickly. I have already offered to work together with them, but they have turned me down. I will not back down on this. I can't because the opportunity is too big and we have too much to gain. I am not sure they will do anything.

11/17/06

Friday, 7:36PM EST

I got up at 5:30AM and went biking. After yesterday's warm temperatures, the approximately 28 degree wind-chill was quite a shock. I ended up using my heavy gloves, but didn't quite need the mask. After yesterday's sojourn in the dark, I had powered my light, and it worked well for about the first twenty minutes and then flickered out. Apparently, I had not charged it long enough, a mistake I hope not to repeat in the future. No harm done though, as daylight was well on its way. I rode through the second loop of my usual ride, as I did not want to go through the woods because it wasn't quite daylight yet. If I fell there no one would be able to find me, and I would most assuredly freeze to death. I was on the look-out for wild turkeys but saw none.

I did the second section twice, figuring I had time before I needed to get back to close up the house and get breakfast with my in-laws. Vinnie had my car keys, so if he wanted to go out before breakfast he had transportation. The second lap was a little warmer than the first, and this time I did indeed see turkeys. Actually, there were two groups in one area. It looked like one group with four males and a bunch of females, moving toward another group of females, and when they got close all the females starting fighting each other. It was quite a sight, and I watched in fascination for a few minutes. I continued onward and a few minutes later saw another flock just crossing the road in front of me. They did not seem to have fear of me, as I made my way very slowly through their single file crossing. Thankfully, I did not get too close.

The rest of the ride was uneventful, and I got back in plenty of time to put away my bike. Bunny had left a message that Jeff was not up to coming to breakfast, but Vinnie and I decided to drop over and see him anyway. He was not in great shape. It was not easy seeing him very unhappy in bed, but his eyes lit up when he saw me. We have very high regard for each other, and I was glad I had come to see him.

Vinnie had waited downstairs; He accurately deduced that men don't like to see other men when they are sick. I only stayed a few minutes with Jeff since he was tired. Vinnie, Bunny and I then went to breakfast. It was a wonderful meal for both the company and the food. We said our goodbyes and went home. The trip back was peaceful and the traffic moved quickly. We split the three-hour drive; while I was a passenger, we started going over some of the metal parts we were hoping to convert to our new plastic system.

I dropped Vinnie off to get his car at our office and went home. My original plan had been to then drop off luggage and go back to the office, and work for a while to catch up. But I knew Kayla was home, and if she needed anything, it would take precedence. I called her on the way and invited her to lunch. She agreed which was great, and also had some additional errands to run so I did not get back to the office at all. No worries though because I could always go in on Sunday, and we had a great time being together. During our afternoon together, I started teaching her about cash flow in business. She has a very sharp mind, and I like to try and give her all kinds of information that she might not normally be exposed to. Yes, I have the ulterior motive that I want her to someday run my company, but it's no matter as I love talking to her about everything in general. She is one of the few people of any age who can understand what is going on, the tactics and goals involved, and focusing on what needs to be accomplished and when.

Afterwards, Wendy and I dropped her off at our Temple, where she is doing "Midnight Run." That is where they bring supplies to the homeless people in Manhattan, and I volunteered to pick up and bring some kids home about 11:00PM.

11/20/06

Monday, 9:49 EST

New Jersey - Home

We got the letter from Jane Kenny, former regional administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency, who has agreed to supply a foreword for my book being published in China. That is now completed, and should be ready for release in January. My CD about the same book, "How To Start and Run Your Own Company or Sex, Money and Power ...It's All The Same Thing," will also be ready by early January and is set to be used to help sell the game in the United States as needed. The game itself has everything but the questions ready for press. They will be checked this Wednesday, which means the game will be done by the first of the year. So far, so good!

I go to Canada tomorrow to see Celestica and Sanmina-SCI. I have no idea how the airports will be.

11/21/06

Tuesday, 5:20AM EST

Newark-Liberty Airport

I am on my way to Toronto, Canada today, and should be back tonight. Tomorrow will probably be relatively quiet at the office, as it is the day before Thanksgiving and many people will have already taken off for the holiday weekend. My eldest son Ben is due in tomorrow with his girlfriend, which means our family will be at full strength. Thanksgiving is always one of my favorite holidays, and I am looking forward to the next couple of days of relaxing and getting some sleep. That will all start on Thursday, so for now it is back to business.

11/21/06

Tuesday, 2:46 EST

Toronto Airport

My 5:17 flight is delayed until 6:00PM. If that is the worst, then I will not complain too much. The day went very well starting off at Celestica. We have the chance at a lot more business there, dependent on our ability to achieve preferred vendor status with Avaya Communication. I think our chances are good, so we may have a good new influx of business. I will decide later whether it is made by IJUS or IJX. I also met one of the engineers there; he has been instrumental in helping us to get some drawings, and he is the kind of person you want to be on good terms with.

I never expected him to come down when I called, but he was nice enough to do so and I gave him a copy of my latest book. A nice man and one whose good will I will do my best not to impose upon. While in the meeting with the buyer, I also brought up the new filler panel design and she seemed pleased at the prospect of utilizing it. I told her I would send up samples after they were tested, and perhaps we could save her company a lot of money and get us new business in the process.

I just called home to check on Kayla. When I was shaving this morning, she came into the bathroom almost crying. She was sick and feeling badly. My wife gave her some cough medicine, and I got her the humidifier and she went back to sleep. I just spoke to her and she is better. My wife is also fine, so things are good and I will eventually get home.

After I went to Celestica, my trusty driver Carlos, a man who had driven me a few years ago, took me to Sanmina-SCI. Once there, I was mostly talking with people about labels in general and then the filler panel idea. Everyone seemed happy with us and liked the idea, so we have more fertile ground to move on if the idea passes compliance tests.

I fell asleep in the car on the way back, another reason I don't like to

drive in foreign countries. Plus, I don't have to worry about finding my way back to the airport. This for some reason reminds me that I have to get my tie fixed. I don't know if you wear many ties but there is a little loop on the back side to hold the other end after you have tied the tie. Once one side breaks, which happened today, it looks very sloppy, besides the fact that your tie is not staying in place. I was hoping I had some glue but I did not. I then bought a tooth care kit with some toothpaste, which I needed. I asked the cashier if she had any tape. She did and I was able to use it as a quick fix. I was very grateful to her, and she seemed happy that she could help me.

I checked in with the office. Alice had left to get ready for Switzerland to see her kids for the holiday and things seem quiet which is what I expected. Tomorrow afternoon, we will dry-run the game with the final version of the questions (I hope), and then the vacation starts. I think I will go buy a drink and then watch either a movie or possibly some of the TV show, "The Wonder Years." I bought a full set of the show on EBAY and it turns out they were pirated. I am not happy about that, but I bought them in good faith, so I will watch them until they break down, which probably won't be long. It is too bad the actual programs were not allowed for sale; I heard they had a problem licensing the music they contained.

11/21/06

Tuesday, 4:25PM EST

Toronto Airport

So far we are still on schedule to leave at 6:00PM. The pilots were standing next to me and one turned to me and asked if I knew what was going on. I felt a little strange giving an update on the plane to the pilot, but he said he had just arrived. I look forward to getting home and eating dinner.

11/22/06

Wednesday, 10:14Pm EST

New Jersey - Home

After the big day yesterday, getting up was not easy. Things were crazy the second I got to the office. I tried to answer as many emails as possible, before working out and eating breakfast. Then it was off to play tennis.

Tomorrow is Thanksgiving, of which I have a lot to be thankful for.

Alice is in Switzerland visiting her family. I finally told her to stop emailing me and concentrate on having fun. I hope she wasn't insulted, but I want her to have a good time and forget about us for a while.

I have a feeling something big is coming and I want to have everything ready. I have to stay open to new and better ways of doing things. Many of my ideas might not have been given weight by others

in the past. Perhaps it is because of the unsure energy I gave out as opposed to their worth. It is time to spread my wings and see how far I can go. Happily, there are lots of people to help support me, and to definitely keep my ego in line.

I have to keep in mind that a lot of taxes are due in April, and they get priority over almost everything else. Unless it involves expansion, debt is something I want to try and keep away from.

I almost forgot, Ben is home and he looks great. He is working very hard but loves what he is doing. His girlfriend Fiona is here, also. She is bunking with Kayla who likes her, so it is all good.

11/25/06

Friday, 11:12 EST

I got a lot of sleep last night, which is why I am up this late. Thanksgiving yesterday was a good day. I started off at the office working out. Due to the cold rain, I did not go biking. Then I checked my email and walked with Uncle Dave.

Afterwards, I went home and played the new game with Bunny. It went well but the directions will need to be edited at least one more time. All of it can be done next week. My parents dropped over for a brief visit before moving on to my sister's house for dinner. The actual celebration was a lot of fun. The food was plentiful and good, and I was in charge of clean-up, as usual. Today, I played tennis with Ira. Then it was off to the office, which was good because I ended up having to send out some rush samples to a customer in Canada. It has been a long time since I shipped anything, and I hope I did it correctly. Then I went home and biked with Uncle Dave.

He was telling me about a business situation, and I was giving him my opinion and ended up yelling at him because I did not think he would follow my advice. Not that I am perfect, but I do feel strongly about certain things. Of course, I felt guilty after I yelled at him and apologized. It is a game we continuously play. He is my best friend and I look out for him, and sometimes my feelings of what is best for him move me to strong emotion.

My in-laws were over for dinner and we had Thanksgiving leftovers.

I have been emailing Ben in China and things seem to be going well over there. Within another year, they will need me much less. I have to make sure I continually modify our relationship as to make sure he and they are treated as the equals that they are quickly becoming.

I was watching television with Wendy and I found myself thinking about success and failure and how it is much easier to handle failure, because it is a known entity. Since a person generally experiences it much more than success, it actually has a certain comfort to it. I find I always temper my hopes regarding anything with the idea it probably

will not work to the maximum potential I believe it has, which can also be a limiting factor.

I don't want to be severely disappointed, so I try not to "bet the ranch" on any particular idea or plan, knowing the odds are against it becoming a home run. Still, I have the ache to have a blockbuster hit. Not only for the success and good things it can bring, but also to prove that me and my companies have the capabilities to do something that has not been done before.

It must be a heady experience to suddenly shoot to a higher level with an idea or product that you have planned, produced and marketed. I hope I am ready. It is not as though I am a boy wonder or overnight success. I am seasoned, tournament tough and ready for more success, but I highly doubt that, if it happens, it can turn my head and make me forget who I am or otherwise rock the grounding I have created.

Perhaps that is one of the things limiting me; I am not willing to place myself in the position for total failure. But I also don't want those potential consequences, so if that is going to stop me from being all that is possible, then so be it. My psyche is based on my structure and my adherence to the lifestyle I love. I will not risk everything to make more money, to prove that my ideas were right, or that I can see a market where no one else can.

I have reached the stage in life where I don't have to risk it all to go for my dream, I have the team behind me, the resources needed, and the drive within myself to go where I am capable. Failure is safe, and winning in stages is stressful but definitely manageable. Jumping multiple levels is an unknown, and I will not know how capable I am to handle it until it happens. In the meantime, I will train and position myself to be ready if it does.

11/26/06

Saturday, 10:36PM EST

I went to Temple this morning and stayed for the discussion, since I was not in a rush and already taking my family to lunch. The dialogue covered a portion of the Old Testament, and how they relate to today. This morning, amongst other things, we were speaking about Esau and Jacob and their struggle as brothers, their positions within their family, and their roles in the world. Historically, Esau is seen as a bad person who sells his birthright because he is hungry for a meal. He is swindled out of the blessing of his father by the trickery of Jacob and his mother. But at the end of the story, Esau has an army of 400 people following him and ends up fathering an entire tribe as his legacy. This is not the deeds of a man without personal energy, power, or intelligence.

I changed the perspective on the story, as to how great a man he was for seeing that he could not be the supreme leader; that he saw

the potential in his brother and stepped aside, by letting himself be tricked, for the good of his family and his people. He should be seen as a hero for recognizing his limitations and then being able to maximize his abilities, which were obviously also immense. With this thought, I am going counter virtually all of the great scholars in our religion, but that is not an unusual thing for me. I always like to go against the grain and see the other possibilities.

On the way home, I saw two dogs sitting patiently on the steps of one of the houses. A little while down the road, I saw a postal carrier on his way towards their house. They looked like they were either waiting to see what was in the mail, or they were about to take aim on him.

When I got home, I worked a little on the game questions. I then met Wendy, Ben, Kayla, Fiona and Alex for lunch. It was great having everyone together. Later, I went biking where I thought about the DuPont family. During the early part of the last century, three of their young men were offered control of the company but did not have enough money to pay for it. The eldest of the three decided they were not going to offer any money, but stock in the company instead, and the other family members agreed and they were able to take control. It is a good lesson to remember that there are often unconventional ways to do incredible things.

I then went out to dinner and a movie with my lovely wife. She is and always has been a good date.

Five more weeks and this book is scheduled to be over, and then the editing begins, which is the tough part.

11/27/06

Sunday, 10:01PM EST

I showed the game to my parents and they liked it. I played the game with my mother-in-law this weekend and she liked it, too.

I emailed my business partner, Ben, saying that if we had a go ahead on any of the plastic telecom prototypes Vinnie and I would come out to China in January. I want us out there to help with the first set of prototypes.

11/27/06

Monday, 9:50PM EST

New Jersey - Home

IJX and Ben especially have had it with the game; the changes have been going on too long and I am finishing it tomorrow no matter what. Everything will go to them regarding files and decisions and that is it. There appears to be a big boom going on for board games in the US, so maybe we will have a market for "Ideal Challenge."

I am thinking we can try and sell the game for Valentine's Day in China; it is starting to become big there. Maybe we can advertise it as,

“give the gift of your own business” or something like that. I agree the concept may need some work.

Tomorrow, I have a phone meeting with the head of the energy-lobbying group in Washington, where I will try and push Dan’s passive, hybrid solar technology.

It seems my building is not suitable for his technology, too many shadows and roofs, so I got the idea of partially donating a system to a building here in Maplewood, NJ. Dan and the person in charge of the Town Environmental Program are meeting to see potential buildings. Both are very excited at the prospect, and maybe I can use it to fulfill some of our Performance Track requirements, and get the carbon credits as the first in my new company. Perhaps we can shoot a video of it being built, use it for selling, and maybe get a lot of good press from the township. The township might even move it towards demanding energy efficient building techniques. Sometimes, it is good to start small. I doubt the carbon credits will amount to much, but my new game on global warming has a lot of potential.

We are starting to work on getting my partner an American visa; it may take a little while because there is a lot of paperwork involved.

I had lunch with John Rudder today. He liked the game and thought our new technology was interesting, with a lot of potential. He is a wonderful man, a good friend who is supportive, and always looking towards the positive. I am lucky to have him.

11/28/06

Tuesday, 9:45PM EST

The only thing more frightening than failure is success, because it is more of an unknown. We got word back today that, for two of the parts we re-engineered for Lucent, we will find out this Thursday if they are a go. If it works, we can save the customer hundred of thousands of dollars over the lives of these parts. The tension of waiting is palpable, and with the caffeine I had for lunch I could tell I am wired.

I am pushing my people very hard to finish the game. Ben said he would send a full-scale sample in a few weeks, but basically the game is over. The CD art for the “How To Start and Run Your Own Company or Sex, Money and Power ...It’s All The Same Thing” cover is being done, a revised master for the recording should be finished by Thursday, and then that goes out for manufacture. I haven’t decided whether to send the CDs out as holiday presents, or combine them with the game. I can hold on that decision.

I spoke to the head of the energy-lobbying group we joined. She is very excited about our new game on global warming, and gave us a contact for Dan Gallagher to try and get his lighting system put into public school buildings. Dan left word today he had contacted the man from Maplewood about finding a suitable building to try and set up a

test site. If the work is done and we help financially, then I will demand that the carbon credits are instituted, formalized and awarded to us.

11/29/06

Wednesday, 9:55 EST

I played tennis with Bruce today. He is the guy who had the problem with the infection in his brain, and lost part of his eyesight. When we finished, I turned to him and said he has never played better in his life. I am lucky to split sets with him; he has truly taken a potential disaster and made it into an asset. He is forced to concentrate harder, with a tenacity that would rival steel, and that has enabled him to come back triumphantly. As for me, he is now another man destined to keep my ego in check and help me burn calories, a true friend in all respects.

I spent the day doing paperwork and selling our new product line. We are still waiting for confirmation of a meeting at Lucent tomorrow, to hopefully get the go ahead on the first filler panel to make prototypes. I also sent in an application for a design patent for the filler panel idea, with help from our pre-press department, to our patent attorney to see if we have a claim.

The end of the day concerned some parts we had been making that were not RoHS compliant, meaning the parts contained banned substances like lead. We were told by one of our component manufacturer reps that new non-lead parts were becoming available soon. We told our customer who was shocked we were still using the old ones. After a few discussions, it looks like some of our inventory can't be used, though I am not sure how much of a financial beating we will take. It did not end the day on a calm note but everyone was civil, well humored, and centered on the problem that needed to be handled and completed.

Really, all you need when a problem comes up is all sides talking and working together, so that by the end of the week this whole thing should be settled. Wednesday night is usually date night for Wendy and I. We went out for a simple dinner of turkey burgers at our local diner, which we both enjoyed. Being away for a little on a date is a nice break, and being man and wife as opposed to parents is a good thing, even if it lasts for less than an hour.

11/30/06

Thursday, 9:52 AM EST

We had a very interesting new development in the filler panel/ slot blocker area. One of our customers, with huge potential in this area, is now indirectly threatening to take our design and give it to other suppliers, in order to insure they will have a second source. Amazing, we develop an idea that can potentially save them millions of dollars a year and they are threatening give it to someone else so they can

compete against us. Welcome to big business.

I spent the day with the worst and the best. The worst being one of my best ideas ever may be taken; and the other being one of my ideas is good enough that a company wants to take it. So much for the fact they we are “not engineers” and have no business being in this area. Regardless, I did what I always try and do, which is to attack.

I called our patent attorney Ed Weingram, and Vinnie, Mike and I went over to see him today. He is now readying a provisional utility patent, which should be ready within the next two weeks and will hopefully protect our design. This doesn't mean total protection, but at least it will give us some ammunition if we have to fight, or at least threaten to fight if we are victimized. Ed, as I have written before, is the best patent attorney I have even seen. If there is a patent to be won, he will get it for us. What we have to do now is slow things down with this particular customer, unless they just give us the business, so that we have time to file all of the necessary paperwork.

We will offer to fully prototype their units using injection molds, and not charge them for it, which is unheard of in the telecom industry. I feel confident they will say yes. This will not only help to lock them in later if it works, but give us an additional five weeks to file for the patents. This customer said they may try and use another material instead of ours. I checked the price per pound, and, as far as I can tell, unless they pirate some or all of our technology, they will not be able to compete with ours.

Perhaps I am naïve to think people will play fairly. Perhaps I am an idiot to believe, that if we produce a better product at a better price, we deserve the business. I prefer to think that we are doing the best we can, but we also have to protect ourselves. Even if we get all the business tomorrow from this customer, we are still going ahead with the patent applications. I believe in fate, and it is sending us a message to be prepared for battle, and I am listening. I have other ideas for this area, and we need this documented so we have a platform to launch other products and patents. Perhaps they were doing me a favor by making me start the paperwork now. Regardless, it is the direction we are going.

The lead-based parts for the connectors we made for one customer will get worked out. We may even get paid for some or all the inventory we will have to discard. I am definitely not bored.

Chapter Twelve

12/2/06

Saturday, 10:35 PM EST

Yesterday turned out to be a normal day even with all that went on. No word from Lucent regarding the big project, although they were acquired by Alcatel. As usual, I continued attacking other companies with the new design and there is potential interest. I think it is a matter of time and effort, so I will continue to push it while out in the field, and also via email and the phone. Yesterday afternoon, my brother and I played doubles with Kayla and Paul, my tennis coach. It was a lot of fun.

Last night we had an early surprise birthday party for Alex for his eighteenth birthday. He was shocked, and we all had a great time.

This morning I got up at 6:00AM went to my office, dropped off my clothes for the week, checked my email, and then went walking with Uncle Dave. Then it was off to home for a hearty breakfast. Afterwards, I drove Kayla and three of her friends, one of whom stayed over last night, down to Philadelphia for the start of their camp reunion weekend. It was a fun drive, and the girls were singing their cute camp songs for most of the way.

However, one small glitch occurred when Kayla got the time wrong for the reunion. She thought it began at 12:00PM when it was really scheduled for 2:00PM. We solved that dilemma by just walking around Philadelphia for a while, which was not a big problem, as it is steeped in our country's history. We were going to take a formal tour, but the times were not good, so we wandered into two museums and had fun.

It reminded me of the time when I worked in this city as a news intern for one of the local TV stations, while I was in college. My dreams for becoming a television anchorman were meteoric and I loved being here and working at the station. But fate did not have me entering that field. I did not have enough talent and it is definitely better that I ended up where I am now. I dropped the ladies off at the restaurant for the reunion. After getting home, I went biking and then went out to dinner with Wendy and friends. It has been a good day and I am tired.

12/3/06

Sunday, 3:52PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I am going to have to go to Arizona in the next two weeks. Some of the people from Motorola want to see me, which is a good enough reason to go. We simply have to decide on a good time for everyone before I make the reservations. They have facilities in a few places,

therefore I am not sure if I will be staying in just Arizona or will also go to Mexico. It really doesn't matter. I just have to know when and where, and the rest I can schedule around. I would like to work it so I am only gone one night, but will do as needed.

I should also go to California in the next two months to see potential and current customers. It is just about time, I can feel it. I will therefore also need to prepare for that.

Once we have the new game ready to give away, it is an automatic good excuse to get in to see almost anyone. Generally, people like to see me anyway, because they like to hear what has been happening, how China is going, about the new technology, and just the personal touch of me coming in person. I think they will also love to get a copy of the new game, especially if it is personalized. This takes any pressure off them to think we have to talk about normal business matters, even though that is usually done anyway.

It helps that I really enjoy seeing our customers and talking to them about their companies, their positions within them, and the future. They often turn to me for information regarding their company and the industry, since I usually talk to a lot of folks all the time and often have better access to what is going on than they do. They also know I am on the lookout for things that will help them with their careers and anything else that might be a benefit. It is a part of my job to help them everywhere, and they know I understand that.

I plan to give out the game all over the world, and since it is in Chinese and English, it will cover a lot of my sales area. In addition, if the game is successful we will also put out an English/Spanish edition, then maybe an English/German edition and so on.

I played tennis with my brother, as usual a very pleasant experience. Then I went biking and stopped at the office to check my email. One of the messages was from Dan Gallagher, the man I have been working on with passive, hybrid solar systems. He is now working with the township of Maplewood to try and find a building that might be suitable to try out his technology. The first building they looked at would need about \$50,000.00 to convert to Dan's system. This is more than I planned to invest, but they also mentioned they could change a bunch of windows in one of the buildings, which is losing a great deal of energy, so I thought this might be a good place to start. I emailed Dan and will speak with him tomorrow.

But then I got to thinking. It occurred to me, what if we offered a township to put in these energy systems for free? We would then contract to get all of the energy savings that were created by the new systems to be paid to us. In other words, if a new system cost \$100,000, then we would put in the system for free, and the township would agree to pay us for all of the energy they would have saved over the next ten years. In other words, if they normally pay \$25,000.00 in

energy per year, and now only paid 10,000.00/year, then they would pay us the 15,000.00 they saved. Over ten years, they would end up paying \$150,000.00 to us and get the system for free. They would also sign over the energy credits to us.

Obviously, we would have to be sure of the energy savings, but if this worked on a large scale basis, we could save a large amount of energy, generate a lot of money and credits for us, and give the township a free energy system. I will check with Dan on the potential. In essence, we would be creating a bank; it is an interesting concept. I would do it if I could get capital funding for this. I will check with my banker and accountant.

Laurie Levey is a local artist whom I have known since the third grade. It is amazing to think it has been that long. She was having a showing of her work at her house, which is in the next town. I have known her husband Jerry since high school, so they are both old friends. Happily, when Wendy and I got married, she and Laurie got along well so it has only served to strengthen our ties through the years. I give Laurie a lot of credit; she showed her paintings from the last twenty-five years and it takes a lot of strength to put yourself out there and show people what is inside you.

Paintings are not just color on canvas; they are mirrors to your inner soul. It leaves the door open for critics to throw darts or javelins at who you are and what you consider important. I salute her for the guts to expose what is inside her; it is not an easy thing to do. I feel the same way with my writing; it enables people to see how I really am and, for someone sensitive to critics, it is very tough. But people will never be honest with you unless you are to them. Although the potential for pain is great, in the majority of my experience people have been fantastic and positive in their response, which is more than enough to keep me doing it.

While there, I was speaking to Jerry's father, whom I have known for a long time. He is of my Dad's generation, and is rare in that he is still working. We spoke a little about business and I told him about our China operation and how things were going. He has three of his kids in his company business, plus numerous other relatives, so he is well aware of the dynamics of family businesses. One thing he said rang out clearly. He said, at my time of life, things often go well with the directions and decisions that I would make and I should continue moving forward. It was a nice piece of encouragement, and I will take it as a good sign.

In about another 30 minutes I will start to get dinner ready. It is Sunday night and I normally take care of the meal. I love my life, the structure of it, and I truly love the possibilities that anything can be done. It is my job to push to see how far I can go, involve as many people as possible in good deeds, and enjoy the journey. As I push and

grow, I will make mistakes, say things I wish I hadn't, and sometimes want to crawl inside a hole. But that is all part of moving upward and I hope that the level of embarrassment and fear of rejection that I feel will lessen, so that I can increasingly focus on the good that can be.

12/4/06

Monday, 10:14 EST

The new plastic design filler panel business is growing in potential almost daily. We will have to expand just to do the jobs we have a chance at now, not to mention all the others that may be coming. Expansion is a wonderful, exhilarating, frustrating and scary time. If it works out, it is wonderful. If it doesn't, it can be deadly.

I am going to Mexico and Arizona next week. I will finalize the schedule tomorrow.

Lucent is now part of Alcatel and people will start to be laid off soon. I wonder who will make it through. There are a lot of people involved I have known for years, and I realize how tough a process this will be for them.

12/5/06

Tuesday, 9:44PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Our first filler panel project is making it way through compliance testing with the end goal of 100,000 units in the first twelve months. Our design has been accepted, which is especially gratifying since we came up with it ourselves and we are not engineers. Sometimes that is better because your thought processes are not limited to the standard way of viewing things. We came up with this design by focusing on the label and moving backwards, as opposed to the basic metal part and moving forward. We are hoping to have changes back from the customer within the week, and then we will move to make injection molding molds and supply full-scale prototypes. We will not charge for anything until the customer is satisfied with our parts, and is ready to place orders. Then it will only be for the parts themselves, not any tooling, design, or samples. If we own the tooling, then it will make it much harder for them to change suppliers later on.

It all sounds really good and if our design does prove out, it does open potentially an avalanche of new business and possibilities everywhere. I have been in this business almost thirty years and have happily experienced a general rise in sales over time. I have thought about having a "hit" but that has so far not occurred. I am used to not succeeding in the short term, and instead building for the long run. Therefore, having ideas not work out well at the beginning does not scare or frustrate me. Having something succeed in a meteoric rise does however present some potential worries, including:

1. My expectations about the market will rise
2. My expectations with myself will rise
3. My fear of not capitalizing on the potential gain will rise.
4. My fear of not having a chance like this again will be overwhelming
5. My fear of breaking into a new level, not knowing what is waiting for me

I think that about covers it. I am still going forward, but it is nice to try and see and think about what is happening inside myself, as well as outside in the marketplace.

What have now become my normal two antacid tablets, I have taken for the night. I will do my nightly routine to get ready to go to sleep, and hope it occurs. My stomach has been in havoc, and I do not see it improving until I see what is on the other side of this next level, and what it will take to start that journey. Fear of the unknown is one of the worst types because it is hard to prepare for what you don't know. But no matter, I am not stopping and will try to keep my eyes open, my head clear, and my priorities in line.

12/5/06

Tuesday, 9:44PM EST

Finally, it is time for one of my former, better customers to vacate their space in our plant in China. We have been growing apart anyway, and we will need the room for our new planned expansion. It is too bad it has to end both their being a customer and a tenant, but nothing lasts forever. People and relationships change, as this one has. Soon we will give thirty days notice and they will be gone. It will be good to be in control of the whole area again, and I have no plans in the future to rent the space to any outside company. We are better off alone with no partners or other hindrances. Our strength is within ourselves, and others will just sap our energy.

We are quickly gaining experience in this new product area. Already Vinnie and I feel comfortable enough most of the time where we do not have to get mold prices from our suppliers in China through Ben, but can instead figure them out ourselves. We know the material we plan to use, and the rough costs of the injections molding process, and the other parts involved, like gaskets. Therefore, we can often price parts within hours, as opposed to the days and weeks of our competitors.

Fast pricing is an amazingly potent weapon that can often mean the difference between getting an order or not. Since we are not charging for the molds or the prototypes, the customers simply have to say yes to get going, without having to get us a purchase order. We

have decreased the timing cycle to get to the prototype stage, by weeks or months, giving us another big advantage against our competition.

I hope this will make us unique in the industry, at least in the short term. I think few will be willing to follow us there, but I am willing to wait for the payback and do not need the tooling money up front. Happily, we are very well financed and can afford to make a bunch of molds on spec to attract the attention of our customers. It looks like the turmoil in my stomach will be with me for a while. It will make me stronger.

12/7/06

Thursday, 9:50PM EST

Today is Pearl Harbor Day, the time when we remember the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the entry of the United States into World War II. Wendy and I went to see the memorial a few years ago when we were in Hawaii. It is something you can never forget, all those young people who lost their lives to help everyone else. They were truly selfless acts.

Today we have the problem of the war in Iraq. Our President now seems ready to change his perspective on what needs to be done. I take this as a good sign. I have never been in favor of one country trying to force its will on another, even with the best of intentions. I have never seen it work out, and it hasn't here either. When will people figure out that the only way to bring everyone together is in the exchange of goods and services, where everyone will profit? It is only through business that the world can become global, in its scope toward opportunity and benefit for all.

My anxiety and lack of sleep last evening and this morning lessened, as I attacked potential customers throughout the day. I have often found that to be the case. If I am worried about something, I have to go right at it. If it is sales, then I have to go after more. If something or someone is causing trouble, then I need to try and figure out how to handle it right away, if possible, or develop a long-term containment plan. I might not even need antacid pills tonight.

Several more people from different companies are interested in the new product line. We sent out some pricing today, and it appears to be extremely competitive. We have our chance. I am not going to let anyone cause us trouble, by messing with my head saying we cannot be in this area because we are not formally trained engineers. They are scared of what we can do; I know it and so do they.

Our first panel looks like it can save 40-50% over the cost of metal design currently in use. Savings for other parts are ranging from 10-50%. Many potential customers are taking notice. I am having a lot of fun with this.

12/8/06

Friday, 10:03AM EST

The assault continues. We are after everything in the new area and I am offering free molds almost everywhere. No one, as far as I know, has ever done this and the response is cautious optimism. We have to keep the pressure on to get those free prototypes into the field, so they can be compliance tested. Once a few main accounts agree it is okay, then the others will probably go along. We are now quoting regular panels that don't even have shielding or handles, and we will hopefully take a good percentage of the market we are seeing. It will necessitate a sea of change in the thinking of the customers, but I will keep pushing until it works, or I am told to leave. The good thing is that it will also help our regular business. People know us for labels; this new line is an addition. A sales onslaught by me covers everything we do, and all areas should benefit.

Gary our accountant comes in Monday. I am hopeful he will tell us how much money we will have to pay in taxes, so I can be sure we are okay. We should have a nice profit coming from IJX, which we can use for the expansion into the new product line. Our debt is down to almost half in about two and half years. We are doing great.

The annual audits for our Quality, Environmental and Health and Safety System need to be done in the next few weeks. I will start getting ready; it gives me a chance to poke around and see how things are running. My employees would probably rather I didn't bother. Two out of the three mold files for the filler panels are now with Ben in China. It should take about four weeks for these molds to be completed. The handle design should be sent to us send next week, and it will also take four weeks for that to be ready. In case the aluminum shielding design fails, we are checking General Electric about other materials to use in its place. I hope we do not have to go to it, though. I think we will also prototype our own Advanced TCA front and Real Panel designs, at the same time, for use in the future.

It is cold here today, but I checked the weather for the places on my trip and it will be beautiful. We sent a suitcase ahead with some of my food and supplies and I am not bringing a coat or an umbrella but traveling on the lighter side. How unusual for me.

12/9/06

Saturday, 11:41 EST

I went to Temple today, and then I went biking with Uncle Dave. Since he is brilliant when it comes to general ideas for life, I decided to ask him for help in marketing our game. He did not disappoint me, and by the time our ride finished we had a plan. He belongs to an extremely large service organization that is dedicated to helping others. He thinks that our game could be marketed through them,

especially if I guarantee to develop another game directly for them. Then that will help them to gain new members, and help guide the ones they have already. I am okay with that, and will happily leave the initial thrust in his hands.

Tomorrow, Wendy leaves for Florida with her sister to see her parents. That means it is Kayla, Alex and I until Tuesday night, when Wendy returns. I then leave Wednesday morning for my trip, and I will be back Friday night. It promises to be a crazy week with a lot of potential for good things. Kayla saw me emailing Ben in China, and basically told me I had to stop because it was too late at night, which of course I did. I know when to do as I am told, at least most of the time.

12/10/06

Sunday, 9:27 EST

New Jersey - Home

Wendy left for Florida and arrived safely. I miss her. Things went fine here today; the kids and I have the same routine when I am away, as does Wendy. When they need something they ask; otherwise, we have our own lives and meet for dinner when possible. We all like our own space to be left alone, so it tends to work well. Ben and I have been emailing and we should be putting in patent applications in China for the new panel design next week. We are now making plans regarding marketing, if the new design works, and how we hope to position ourselves over the next twelve months.

I started reviewing this book. The final entry will be the last day of this year, and it is very interesting to read what I was thinking twelve short months ago. Some things have changed radically while others seem to be running on course. Judging by the world, I guess that is about normal for trying to predict what will happen.

As I have said, editing is the part I like least about writing books, but it does give a different perspective to go back and read what was important and weighing on my mind a year ago. One thing that is for certain is that the debt for China we incurred was as much on my mind then as it is now. That will not change until it is done. In the meantime, our provisional patents should be submitted this week in the United States, giving us some protection for the new design.

It sounds like there are fireworks going on in the distance, which is a little strange as I do not think there is a holiday going on right now. Who knows, maybe someone is just getting ready for the New Year. I spoke with Uncle Dave, and the initial reception to my game for his group was cool. No one said it would be easy, so we shall just keep on going. For now, I will attempt sleep. I am due for tennis at 6:45AM, right after I remember to call the kids to make sure they are up.

I think in the far future, if I ever decide to add an additional job title, it will be as a talk show host regarding business on satellite radio

on Sunday nights. What better time to make people feel better about the coming week, and calm me down about the week to come? It is something for me to think about.

12/11/06

Monday, 9:02PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I was picking out a paperback to take with me on my trip. Prerequisites for a traveling book depend on the duration of the trip itself. If I am going a long way and will be traveling with a lot of baggage, then it really doesn't matter how big or heavy the book is. However, if it is a short duration or I am traveling lightly, totally against my usual form, then it has to be small and light. Light, meaning I want it to weigh little and not tax me on the subject matter. For instance, I am reading a book about physics right now, and that would not be appropriate to take on a trip. Usually, I am very tired when traveling and I have plenty of work with me, so by the time I am ready to read. I want it to be fun.

In this case, I pulled out a novel and while searching, a box fell down and a bunch of small books of Shakespeare's plays fell out. As I picked them up, I glanced at one and it was Hamlet, so I decided to also take that with me. Who knows what significance that has, but perhaps it will show itself later.

Today went well; Gary our accountant was in and we agreed we had a great year. When combining the two companies, IJUS and IJX, together our sales are up over 30 percent from last year, a new company record. It's a figure I am extremely happy about. Now we are working on paying the taxes, but we have until April, which is very good because we will need the time.

I spent the day partially working on sales for the new product line. As soon as we have some actual samples in January, I will go on the road to all of the big company engineers to show them our new capabilities. I am contacting former Lucent engineers, hoping to set up a network of designers we can use to help convert the metal Telecom parts to our new plastic design. They are good people, know their jobs well, and are looking for some extra income, which I am happy to provide.

Offering free prototypes to potential and current customers will help us to move into new areas quickly that would have been closed to us. I hope to use the new design as an "opener" for not only the parts themselves, but also the labeling and the total product assembly.

The business we had from the big customer who rents space from us in China is quickly fading, which means we are also trying to replace that while everything else is going on. It is up to Ben as to how and when to get them to leave.

I am pretty well packed for my trip, except for the various foods I

will prepare tomorrow. I will check in the morning to make sure my suitcase arrived in Tucson, and that it will be waiting for me when I get there very late Wednesday night.

Wendy gets home tomorrow night. I will probably get to see her for an hour before I go to sleep.

Wednesday morning I get picked up at 4:00AM, which means I get up at 3:00AM. If I am lucky, I will get to sleep at 1:00AM Thursday morning, which is like 3:00AM here meaning I will be awake for most of the day. I will try and get naps along the way.

Kayla has a Temple meeting tonight and should be home soon. Then we can lock up and everyone can eventually go to sleep. I miss my wife.

12/12/06

Tuesday, 10:07 EST

Today, we got in a prototype of most parts of the game, and it is very impressive. I gave the go ahead to finish them out, so we should start getting in some actual prototypes within the next three weeks. The balance will come by container in February. If it doesn't sell it will stem from my efforts or lack there of, not because of the quality or presentation of the game.

We are moving along on the Filler panel prototypes, and will now be using two kinds of material to test. I had to choose one type for the molds, because of different characteristics, so I chose the newer, less expensive one. If I am wrong, we may have to make the molds over again. If I am right, then it will add to our overall competitiveness. It is worth the gamble.

I tried to check-in and get my boarding passes online, but I could not because it is not my usual airline. I hope the check-in lines are not too bad at the airport.

Wendy is home again from her parents, a good thing.

12/13/06

Wednesday, 4:34 AM EST

Liberty/Newark Airport

I have my boarding tickets and I am through airport security. So far, the plane is on time for a 6:00AM departure. I should be in Mexico this afternoon.

Ben and his team are selling in Thailand; I hope things go well for them. One of my goals for the next hour is finding a place to buy a bottle of water. It may not sound like a big deal, but it is good to have your own supply when you are up in the air.

12/13/06

Wednesday, 7:27AM EST

I am in flight, and we are on our way to Dallas. After we fly in and out of Dallas, I go to Guadalajara and the adventure begins. First thing is to find a taxi with a driver who speaks English. With my halting Spanish, I can probably get by with a driver who doesn't, but it will be easier and less stressful for the former. Regardless, the first stop is Sanmina-SCI. If I have the time, which I doubt, I will try to get to Flextronics. That will require a three-hour window, due to their location, which I probably will not have. Solectron is also in the area, and I now wonder why I did not schedule more time here. But I didn't, so I will do the best I can.

I have to make one sales call, and a second will be a bonus. I will probably be back here in six months or less anyway, and can see the people I don't see now the next time. In the meantime, it is time to review the book, so I will listen to Celtic music and go back a year to when this book begins.

12/13/06

Wednesday, 12:07 EST

In Flight

We landed into Dallas/Ft Worth on time, and now we are on our way to Guadalajara - on schedule. I hope to be in a cab going towards Sanmina-SCI by 2:00PM, local time.

I will try and get my boarding passes for tonight before I leave the airport. At the moment, I have a headache and just took two pills. I will probably try and take another nap soon. I will be going to Germany next month, and will set it up after the first of the year. It is time for some more editing.

12/13/06

Wednesday, 4:51 EST

In Flight

I got to Guadalajara on time, and was through immigration and customs very quickly. I did forget to get my boarding passes for the next flight, which turned out to be a good thing. I got a cab and with my taxi driver, Raphael. He spoke as much English as I did Spanish, so we got along fine. We zoomed off to find Sanmina-SCI. We got there in less than fifteen minutes, and then I found out that the buyer I was going to see was out sick. In addition, the other people I was scheduled to meet were either out of town or I could not find them. This was not a good thing, as I had come a long way. Yes, I know that I always say you get most of the advantage of a call by just making an appearance, and from the farther away the better, but I was still a little frustrated.

Happily, the main buyer had given me the name of the label buyer

who I had not previously known, and she was in and came to see me. We met and seemed to get along, and I think we have a chance to do business in the future. She was also very interested in the new product line. Meeting her was well worth the call. I had hoped to be able to go see the buyer at Flextronics and Solectron, maybe, but they were on the other side of the airport. There was a good chance, with traffic, and Guadalajara being a very big city that I would not be back in time for my flight. Therefore, I emailed my apologies and resolved to have more time during my next visit. I then hopped back into the cab and Raphael whisked me back to the airport. Once there, as I checked in I asked, as I always try to do, if there was an earlier flight to Houston. It turned out one was leaving in a few minutes, so I was able to get on that flight. I got through security and was the last one in line for the plane.

Security at all airports is different. Here, right before boarding, they did a full bag search of everyone. I have not seen this before. Nevertheless, we all got on board and there were even some spare seats. Talk about a good thing, I got an empty seat next to me. Therefore, I will get to Houston a few hours sooner in the end. I am not sure if there are any earlier flights to Tucson, but I will try to get one if there is. Worst case scenario, I will hang out there, call home, find something for dinner and maybe watch one of my movies. I ended up being in Guadalajara for less than three hours.

When my partner, Ben, emailed me this morning, he said that everyone he spoke to was also very interested. In the new product line how often do you have the chance to sell something at 10-50% less than everyone else? I hope we handle things well; you don't get many chances like this in your career.

12/13/06

Wednesday, 7:22 Central Time (8:22 EST)

Houston Airport

I could not get an earlier flight to Tucson, so I have spent the extra time checking in at the office and calling my wife. Everything is fine at home. Then, I had a dinner of pasta, salad and fruit, which was very good. In about another half hour I will go to my gate, and that should put me into Tucson about 11:00PM. If I am fortunate, I will be in my hotel room by midnight. I will then decide what time I am getting up. Things are good; I am pretty tired and think I will watch a movie on my laptop, if I can figure out how to use my headphones correctly. I am so technologically challenged in certain areas that it amazes me.

12/14/06

Thursday, 7:50 Arizona Time (9:50AM EST)

In Route to Nogales, Mexico

I got to my hotel last night at about 11:15PM. The first room key I got opened into quarters with someone asleep in it. Getting a little upset, I marched back down to the main reception of the hotel and got another room. Once all the excitement was over, the hotel was nice enough to give me some shaving supplies I thought I had forgotten. I went to sleep about 1:00AM. I got up at 4:30, worked out, had breakfast in my room and I am now riding with Jerry, my driver for this part of the day. Yesterday, not including naps, I was up for 24 hours, which means I will probably be taking a lot more naps today. I have only one stop scheduled this morning, and that is Motorola. They called me to come down, so I am excited about what may happen. Jerry and I chatted about business while driving; it turns out we all have the same stresses.

12/14/06

Thursday, 1:26 Arizona Time (3:26 EST)

Tucson Airport

Jerry got me to the border. I have to admit I was a little apprehensive since I had no ride set up on the other side in Nogales. After I crossed and looked back, I noticed a huge line of people waiting to get into the US. I went to the taxi stand. The first person I saw picked up my bag. When I asked if he knew English he said no, which meant we were now relying on the address I had in Spanish and my limited ability to speak the language. We got to Motorola, but the person I was there to see was not available yet. Without an okay from someone, I was stuck at the entrance gate and could not even get into the reception area.

It is amazing what pressure can do; it forced me to remember enough Spanish so I could communicate with the guard. I was trying to find other possible contacts, and had my office attempting to call the buyer, when she put word through to let me in. By this time, I was now speaking Spanish. Few seemed to know much English, but that was okay since we were all good-natured about it, and it was even fun.

The buyer apologized for keeping me waiting. She had been in a meeting, and I spent the next hour with her and two other engineers. I spoke about new possible label business, our company background, my latest book, which I had given them copies, and the new panel design, which I also was presenting to their facility near Phoenix tomorrow. They were happy with our company, wanted to do more business, and were very excited at the potentially huge amount of money they could save with the panel design. We have one new label to work on right away, and I have new contacts to follow-up on. It was a great trip.

However, all during this meeting I was worried about crossing back

to the border, and the one-hour queue that was there before I left. By the time I got back, though, it had disappeared and I got through easily. Jerry was waiting for me and I treated him to lunch. Then we started back to Tucson. About half way back, I fell asleep for a while; I did not really have a choice and got dropped off at the airport about 1:00PM.

Immediately, I went to the ticket counter, as I was hoping to get an earlier plane. There was one available and I am waiting now for my 2:15PM flight, which should get me to Phoenix about 3:30PM and to my hotel by 4:30PM. This will give me plenty of time to check in at the office. It will be about 6:30PM their time. Later I will go for a long walk or work out in the hotel's gym, have dinner, and get a good night sleep. I am scheduled to be picked up about 8:30AM tomorrow morning, which means I can work-out again before I leave the hotel.

Tomorrow is really important. I am meeting with a few engineers for both labels, and the new design area, with a lot of potential business.

12/14/06

Thursday, 7:23PM Arizona Time (9:23PM EST)

Clarendon Hotel Phoenix

I found this hotel through the Internet and I am extremely pleased. You never know what you are going to get, sometimes. In this case, it is a newly refurbished hotel with an interior courtyard, swimming pool, hot tub, and palm trees. You travel to the rooms via outside walkways, and the whole place has a 1940's vintage Los Angeles feel to it. I really like it.

I went to dinner in a nearby restaurant, and there are a few things I really need to remember for the future. First, a Cobb Salad has bacon in it, which should not be a problem for most people except I don't eat pork. The other is that I am in the Southwest, where spicy food is the norm and I forgot to tell them not to make it spicy. Let's just say it took a little while for my mouth to stop burning after dinner. It tasted good, but the after-kick was quite explosive. I am afraid I am just boring when it comes to food.

I was reading a report on games while at dinner and, although it centered on Internet games, one thing came out pretty clearly: Unless you have something to "rope in" the customers, the odds are good no one will distribute your game and give it space on their shelves. Thus, people will not buy it.

For our game, "Ideal Challenge," there is only one real way to push it, which that is if I have my own business radio show and promote it that way. This is not the first time I have mentioned my own show, and the idea has appealed to me for decades. With the advent of satellite radio, both networks, and their large amount of potential on-air space, I am thinking maybe I should consider trying for my own half-hour

weekly radio talk/call in show. It would be a large time commitment, and I would have to talk to Wendy about it. She will know whether it is a good idea. It would be on Sunday nights, because that is the worst part of the week for most people, since they are worried about what is coming for the rest of the week. It would be my chance to help those out there who are worried, and to put things into a different, less threatening perspective. That would also help me to calm myself. I need to give this a lot of thought.

With the game and CD coming out soon, and my new book in the spring, there is a lot of potential stuff I could advertise. At the same time, I could help people and in general help our two companies. Ever since listening to my mentor Jean Shepherd on the radio all those years when I was growing up, I have developed the hunger to have my own show. I am sure it would not be a surprise to the people around me. I will know if I am serious if and when I take the first step. For now, I will let it bounce around my subconscious and see what comes out.

12/15/06

Friday, 11:32 Arizona time (1:32 EST)

Phoenix Airport

I got up early, worked out and had breakfast; this is a really nice hotel. I then went to Motorola. After meeting with a few of the engineers, it appears that there is indeed a possibility that our new panel design might be of extensive use. In fact, we re-engineered one of their parts during the meeting, which may mean a breakthrough for a better, more economical design. It was a lot of fun, and on the way out I met the boss and he is open to trying our ideas. I will submit prices next week, and if approved they will send full-scale prototypes sometime in January. One of the people involved will become head of price reductions for this area of the company. As for now, I am waiting for about an hour until we board and then it should take about 4 hours to get home.

12/15/06

Friday, 4:27PM EST

In Flight

We were delayed for two hours, but someone from the plane called in a favor with the ground control people in Newark and we got out sooner. This is the second time this has happened to me, where people knew people and we got out earlier. Life is all about relationships, and I hope I keep traveling with connected travelers. At this point, we will be about an hour late, which is no big deal. I am excited to be home before 9:00PM. The weather for the weekend looks great for biking.

One of the things I like about traveling are some of the fantastic people I meet. One of them is named Theresa. She is in acquisitions

in the medical field. We met going into the plane, and as fate would have it I sat in the wrong seat and she ended up sitting next to me. She is reading one of my books now, and we have already discussed her going into her own business.

As I go through life, I like to think I can sometimes tell who might be good in their companies and Theresa is a natural. I wish her well and will send her some more of my books as soon as I get back. We have about four hours to go, and I plan to work on the December newsletter, the global warming game, maybe some editing, and perhaps even a movie. Dinner will be served but I already ate before, so I think I will stick to cranberry juice for most of the trip. I can't wait to get home to see my wife, our kids and of course, our dog Bailey.

12/16/06

Saturday, 7:30PM

In Flight to Newark Airport

It has been an exceptionally nice flight and should come to a close within an hour. I have written the December newsletter, even done some editing, and watched parts of two movies. I was thinking before, if things go extremely well in a monetary way with the next few years, what I would do if I suddenly had a lot of extra money. From my travels, I truly believe that the books I have written and the other supportive work would be of some benefit to large groups of people. I feel that I can add assistance to people trying to define and reach their goals, and I think this would be an extremely worthwhile endeavor.

I would still charge for my services, but I would hope I would create a venue where the money could be used to help finance entrepreneurs all over the world. The small percentage of those who would be successful would be enough to create a ripple affect of more success from the people they hire, the profits they generate, and the people, they in turn, help. The world can only be made better when people are able to help themselves, have the potential to improve their lots in life, benefit directly from their sweat, brains and toil, and have the chance to reach at least part of their dreams. That is my goal, and it is a goal I will strive to achieve in whatever capacity I can muster, whether I make money or not.

12/18/06

Monday, 4:48PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I got home about 9:00PM last night. I saw my wonderful wife, but Alex and Kayla had already left for their religious retreat. I then went to sleep until 8:00AM yesterday morning. In addition to the Holiday of Chanukah, it was also our 22nd wedding anniversary. Hard to believe that Wendy and I have been together that long, but it has been quite a

ride and I hope it only keeps getting better. I went to Temple, and then rode bicycles with Uncle Dave. Then it was off to the office to catch up on email and get ready for this coming week. I went home and Wendy and I went out for a nice anniversary dinner, which was a lot of fun. I slept well again, except I had a recurring dream that I was being kept in a doctor's office waiting for an appointment. I kept threatening that I would charge them for my time, but happily I woke up.

After breakfast, it was off to play tennis with my brother and then biking again. While riding, I stopped off at the office again to clean up some more email. Then, I saw Phoebe on the way back and she is well. When I returned, both Kayla and Alex were home. Yesterday, we got the news that Alex did not get into Yale University, which was a disappointment for him but not that unexpected. His strongest schools are coming up. We are in for a long wait until April, to hear from all of the other ones he applied to.

Kayla needed a ride to a friend's house to do some school project. Happily, I drove and on the way we stopped to get her some coffee. Then, I bought a Chanukah present she wanted for Wendy.

On the way home, I stopped at our local bicycle shop to get a tire repaired, and to also look at new bikes. That is what I decided I wanted for my birthday present, as my Birthday is coming in February. I saw a real beauty and bought her on the spot. I will get fitted next week, and can ride her within the next two weeks. I know I am a little early for my birthday, but everyone involved can contribute whenever the time is right for them.

Tonight, I may do a little editing or work on my new game, and tomorrow it is back to work. The new product line has a lot going on, so I will probably focus on it this week, plus start the annual audits for the Quality, Environmental, Health and Safety System. It will be busy.

12/18/06

Monday, 9:55PM EST

In a way, we have come full circle. At the beginning of the year, when we first started with the panel idea, I figured we had to make stock sizes of all of the panel types we would need and then machine-to-spec as we go. As of today, I realized that for the filler panels we would have to do the same thing with generic versions. In fact, we could actually start our own brand, because we could then make many and sell small groups for less than our competitors.

We will need to make the base units and submit them for compliance testing. Of course, it means we will take all of the risk they might not pass, but I was prepared for that anyway. We should get the final drawing of the filler panel parts approved tomorrow, and then send it to Ben to start the mold.

If we can get multiple companies willing to do compliance test

and use our new Advanced TCA Front and Rear panels, then we can market the parts worldwide. We can then go after other generic panel markets like Micro TCA, and submit them to all of our customers for evaluation. Even if only a few agree to use them, it could mean large amounts of new business, plus lead us into all kinds of other areas, a truly exciting prospect.

I think if the manufacturers themselves agree they work, then all the contract manufacturers will also agree to use them. This would mean a geometric increase in their use.

It is hard to believe it is less than two weeks until the end of the year. People are already starting to leave for vacation, and it will get harder to get things done. It has been an amazing twelve months. I have learned a lot with a lot more to go. As soon as the next groups of games are in, I will start to distribute them as test samples and gain some insight as to where they are sellable.

12/19/06

Tuesday, 9:56PM EST

I hope business stays good, as I have just committed to spend a portion of our 2006 profits into an expansion in 2007. Oh well, so far so good. We received the one file we needed for the latch for the Filler panel, but it was corrupted and I hope it is sent again to us tomorrow. The plastic material for the tests started arriving in China today. At this point, Mike will go over to Xiamen at the end of January to insure the molded parts are okay and show the IJX crew how the assembly will work.

Mike and Ben will also go to Avanex in China, to see if they can reach an agreement where IJX will make all of their artwork for free in exchange for getting most of the label orders. Vinnie and I will also go to China during the first or second week of March, when we should have some positive compliance information about the Filler panel. By then we will have completed one or two of our own branded parts. We are putting a newspaper ad in China for engineers to come work for IJX. It is time for sleep.

12/20/06

Wednesday, 9:52 PM EST

New Jersey - Home

I had lunch with Wendy tonight and she asked me what was wrong. I had looked troubled and I answered that things had been going very well. In the new product area, I was learning as much as I could as quickly as possible, but I knew I was going to make mistakes and I did not want to blow this chance by not seeming knowledgeable. Over the past twenty-nine years, I have accumulated a lot of knowledge regarding business in general and labels in particular. This new field

is just that, new, and I am worried that I cannot absorb what I need quickly enough. I don't have complete confidence in my background information, that my ideas have merit; but I also don't want to short-change myself, either, by censoring what I am thinking or what I think can work.

The normal business stresses are multiplied because of the uncertainty of this new field. On the other hand, the enjoyment is also heightened because I am learning so much in so short a period of time. A new world of potential is blossoming forth in front of me, beckoning me with the idea of what can be. I am working on the edge, and my stomach and stress levels are showing the effects. I will keep exercising a lot and keep my antacid pills close by. The support system I have with my family, work, and friends is helping to equalize the paradox of total fun and fear/stress at the same time.

12/21/06

Thursday, 9:53 EST

We are putting together a team of the best mechanical engineers available on a part-time non-employee basis, so when we need design or modifications, they will be ready. The work will be sporadic but we will pay well, so I anticipate we will get fast results. So fast, in fact, that I believe we will be able to use basic assembly drawings from our potential customers and modify them as needed for our new Ideal line. Then we will get them to a handpicked group of reviewers, from the various Telecom manufacturers, and contract manufacturers for review. After that, we will have full-scale prototypes ready within 45 days and then send finished parts into the field, all within eight weeks. The normal time for this is 3-6 months, which means we can beat our competition to the market whenever we have the designs ready.

We picked up another company from California who wants to be in the review process. When he asked if he could buy prototypes, I said he would get them for free and he was ecstatic. We won't even charge for the parts until they are proven acceptable. My plan is to have a review group that is willing to check over our new designs immediately, in exchange for free prototypes and substantially reduced pricing for the various parts. If it works, then everyone wins.

We started giving out our new CD, based on my book "How To Start and Run Your Own Company or Sex, Money and Power ...It's All The Same Thing." We will send them out for the Chinese New Year, in conjunction with the new game. We may also include copies of the Chinese version of the book to go with those shipments.

Today, I had four antacid tablets. My stomach may never calm down. It is a price I am very willing to pay as long as it is not endangering my health. Tomorrow, I will probably call more people to join the "Review" group. I hope the parts work, and if not we will find a way to make

them work.

Today, I had lunch with Joe Daley, an old friend, and he works for Alcatel-Lucent. There are lots of changes going on with his company.

I called about my new bike today; it seems I have to be “fitted” and it takes from 60-90 minutes, time which I do not have. I like the fact they are being careful, though. I will try to give them the time to do it as they see fit.

In the spring, I am on a review team for the Environmental Summit in New Orleans for the EPA group I am in. We read proposals for talks and decided who will get the chance to speak. Some ideas were interesting. I cannot wait since the conferences are usually a lot of fun. I can tell my stress level is high, since it now takes me four alarm clocks to get up. I wasn't sure if one was working all the time, so I added a fourth. I think I am going past the norm here.

12/22/06

Friday, 10:21 PM EST

New Jersey - Home

It's Friday night. As usual, the sleep deprivation from the week is peaking and I need some badly. It was a great day; more companies agreed to be on the panel review team. We got a new panel design to look at, and a group of mechanical engineers have agreed to help us design new parts. Ed Weingram said he would be ready the middle of next week for the patent. Also, I thought of three EMI shielding variations, in case the initial design doesn't work.

I spent part of the day getting ready for the year-end interior audits, and I will work more on those next week. I started handing out my new CD. As usual, it is pretty much ignored by the people who know me, but I am confident it will be well received by the audience it is aimed at. Familiarity does breed contempt, since the people close to me know my work. Therefore, it doesn't mean much to them. This can be seen as a good thing, as it will keep my ego well in line. It's definitely time for sleep; my Blackberry is now off.

12/24/06

Sunday, 10:16 EST

Christmas Eve

The time has come for me to start the roll-out for the new game. The first ten finished samples are due in the office this week from Xiamen. Now I have to set up how we are going to launch. The easiest and best way, I think, would be if a national chain of bookstores carries it. Since it is a business board game in Chinese and English, and might have my CD, I think it will have a lot of interest. Right now, board games are supposed to be a popular form of entertainment. The choice will be critical, and I will probably only get one shot. If not the book chains,

then maybe one of the shopping networks on television.

The main reason for the game was advertising to our current customers, and keeping our name in front of them. I am hopeful that, through continued name and brand recognition, it will help to generate millions in business. If the game actually sells to the public then it will be good money and very supportive to my ego. Don't undersell ego, it is extremely important. No matter how successful anyone gets, the accompanying amount of ego-bashing is necessary to break through to the infrequent wins and has to be taken into consideration. Trying to say you have no ego, or it doesn't matter, is a recipe for disaster. I have one, I know it. I like to keep it under control, but I can only do that with the chance for satiation at decent intervals.

I found out a little unsettling news. I had thought my grandfather had come from Hungary, but after being at my brother's house for their annual Chanukah party last night, which was great as usual, I found out he was born in either the Ukraine or Romania. It is hard to be sure since the borders changed frequently in those days, so my path for the next plant is now no longer a straight, delineated line. Originally, it was easy; I would put the plant in the country that forced out my grandfather and his family. How apropos to go back to the same country, and have their people come work with us. It was easy to know the path before, now I am not too sure what to do. Perhaps fate has it to stay open for a while, as my son Ben and I discussed it on our bike ride today. That is fine with me.

Wendy and I have a party to stop at in the afternoon. Then in the evening, we are having our traditional Chinese dinner at home with the kids. Tuesday, it is back to work and then we go on vacation on Wednesday until Saturday.

I have been getting a lot of sleep over the past two days and I do not plan to set my four alarms for tomorrow. It is nice being away from the office, but I am sure I will get bored soon.

I will not stay idle for long, as there is always plenty of editing to do. Work has to be done on the new game, too.

12/25/06

Monday, 10:03 EST

Christmas Day in the United States is a strange time for someone who is Jewish. Even with Chanukah, you still feel somewhat left out. The standard ritual for Christmas Day defines us to go to the movies and eat Chinese food, because they are usually the only restaurants open. In our area, however, there is a bagel chain of delicatessens that are also open, and this morning Wendy, our three kids and I went out for breakfast. It was fun eating and being together, and afterwards I went biking. At first, there was a minor problem; the bike I was using had a rear tire spoke problem. I had to change bikes, but the rest of the

ride went without incident. I also stopped by the office to check my email. Later in the day we went to a friend's house for a small party, and then came home to have dinner with the kids.

At this moment, Kayla is home and Alex and Ben are out. I have been trying to figure out a good way to market the game. I have come up with a few areas, one of which was to market it with companies who teach foreign languages, figuring they could use an actual product to sell, instead of an intangible like a language. We could even brand it with their name. I will start working on it tomorrow. It will be a short week. We are leaving for the Berkshires on Wednesday, and will be back on Saturday. Of course, I am bringing my laptop, Blackberry, and plan to finish the last entry for this book. It has been an amazing year; I hope next year has more of the same.

12/26/06

Tuesday, 9:05 EST

New Jersey - Home

Today, Alex is 18 years old. Time flies. He has turned into an intelligent, handsome young man and I am very proud of him. As I figured, it was a reasonably slow day at work, due to many people taking off for the holidays. I spent part of it working on the marketing for the new game, and part on the end of the year auditing for the quality, environmental, health and safety system. It is an end of the year ritual to re-check all the systems, see how we did in all areas, see where improvements need to be made, and make some projections of where we want to go next year. So far, everything is fine and I am excited about our potential for what is coming, I believe we are ready, but that will be proven one way or another as the future months go by.

I played tennis with a new partner today. Even though I won, I was neither happy with my play nor with some of his court etiquette, so I am not sure we will play again. We all have our own ways we like to handle ourselves on the court, and the people I play with go out of their way to be extremely courteous and pleasant. Whenever decisions about balls falling outside the lines are in question, we either play the points over or freely give up the points to the other person. Competitiveness and the desire to win rarely trumps good manners, and these are the people I prefer to spend my time with. Regardless, I had a good workout and maybe he will play differently next time.

I spoke with our patent attorney who is personally working on our applications. Although I know it will be expensive, I said to him I also know it could not be undertaken by a more capable attorney. As soon as it is ready, we will review his initial application and submit it quickly, which will give us patent pending status.

I also spoke with our insurance agent regarding liability coverage for the new game and the places where we want to market. National

book chains and television shopping networks all demand certain amounts of insurance, which I wanted to make sure we had. We did.

Since our pre-press people have some time I am having them do some of the legwork to go after multiple marketing targets simultaneously. By the odds, at least one will pan out but it is never guaranteed. I also spoke with our insurance agent about our new plastic panel area, and here it might be a big deal to get liability insurance, so I will send him a copy of the patent application as soon as it is ready. Since this could mean millions in sales, it is imperative our insurance be adequate, and I trust him to make sure we are covered.

We will go to the Berkshires tomorrow, and both Kayla and Alex's friends are excited and ready to go. The weather should be above freezing, which means I can bicycle without too much trouble, although I am not sure if I will go into the woods or not.

12/27/06

Wednesday, 9:42 PM EST

The Berkshires in Massachusetts

I got up my normal time this morning. I went to the office, worked out, had breakfast, played tennis, went home and picked up Bailey, and then drove up to the Berkshires.

My new CD has received one rave review so far, so I am enthused at its possible worth. I may also bring back the workout CD - anything to brand myself and our company names.

When we got up to the Berkshires, I was tired and my stomach was bothering me a little. Ignoring it, I went out biking for about an hour. By the time I got home, I was concerned I was sick, but a nap and taking it easy for a while helped. Wendy and all of the kids came back from shopping, and we went out to a fine dinner. The kids are now watching a movie downstairs and Wendy is watching something else upstairs. Since I get up at 4:00AM, I am getting pretty tired and will enforce some noise-level rules soon, so I can get to sleep.

There are some snow flurries up here. It is nice, cold, peaceful, and calm.

12/28/06

Thursday, 11:06 EST

The Berkshires in Massachusetts

The day started normally for vacation. I got up, ate breakfast, and got ready to ride my bicycle. After checking my email and the office, it was out into the cold New England air. It was pretty cold; I had on my facemask, three shirts, underwear, spandex shorts, heavy sweat pants, insulated boots, two pairs of socks, my goggles and a helmet. Since I was riding uphill at the start, I did not wear my outside jacket, extra sweatshirt or the pair of extra heavy gloves I was carrying in case of

extreme cold. My travels today were to be along my usual long route, which meant climbing a long hill and then going into some woods. Once inside those woods, I knew there would be few if any people to help me if I got hurt. In fact, there might not be any cell phone signals, which all meant I could die very quickly. I was prepared for the weather, carried a safety kit, and was careful.

When I was in the heart of the woods, I heard my cell phone so I stopped. It turned out to be my patent attorney. He had a few questions, and then said my new patent for the panel design would be ready within a few hours. He could then submit it today if I approved it right away. Remembering the history of how delayed patent applications had cost some people huge amounts of money, I made arrangements with Alice for its immediate review. Then I finished my ride, because it was getting awfully cold standing out there. I finished in about two and half hours, and had a big lunch.

The afternoon was to be set up for the kids to do as they wanted, but we started having plumbing problems. I called our caretaker who came right over. Meanwhile, Alice from our office read me parts of the patent application. I made two changes, and then it went back to the attorney who then submitted it later that day. This was fantastic and I felt great about the protection it would offer, the support Ed could give us, and the bargaining chip I felt it would give us in the future. This is a very big deal, and I feel much better that it is done. Unfortunately, the plumbing got worse as the day progressed. After we got home from the movies and ate dinner, it became evident that the plumbing was having a major breakdown.

We made arrangement with the caretaker to call us first thing in the morning, as to whether he could have a plumber come in early. If not, we would cut our vacation short and go home a day early. For the two guests of my kids, I said not to worry as they could both spend the extra day at our house in New Jersey. They both seemed fine. All the kids had been having a great time, and I felt badly we might have to go home early. We do not get to use the house that often, and to have this happen during one of the few times we were there was very frustrating, not to mention potentially expensive.

Wendy's cousin, his kids, his girlfriend, and her daughter were staying at a nearby resort. We went over to see them for a short visit tonight and, yes, to use their bathrooms. We had never met his girlfriend and her daughter before, and they were both very nice people. Wendy's cousin has never looked better in his life, so I think the relationship has been a very positive thing for him.

Tomorrow morning, I am expecting a phone call from the caretaker before 7:00AM. If the plumber comes right over and can fix the problem, then we stay. If not, we go after breakfast and I will plan to ride my bicycle at home.

12/29/06

Friday, 11:12PM EST

New Jersey - Home

As you can tell from the entry, we are home again. I got up this morning and realized we had not heard from our caretaker. Eventually, we spoke and the news was not good. Our plumbing system was completely messed up and we decided to leave. I went to get gas, returned some rented DVDs, got two sandwiches for the ride home, and went back to the house. We loaded the cars, and Bailey and I took off first. The others would follow later after breakfast.

Our ride was swift and uneventful; Bailey and I travel well together and he appreciated sharing my two Turkey sandwiches.

Once home, I re-tried the bicycle store to see if I could get my new bike delivered earlier, as now my second bike was in need of repairs and my third bike, while okay, is very hard to pedal. No word from the bike store, so I rode anyway. I had a really nice time, but I was very tired by the time I got back, which was more than two hours later. Then I got the good news that my new bike would be delivered later today. I went to the office to check my email from the last few days, and then took Wendy to a nice dinner.

I have been emailing Ben in China for the last hour. We spoke about sales potential for the next year, of course. We have three main areas for new sales generation, and they are:

1. The new plastic assembly design, where we have started prototypes. It would multiply our sales by many times, in addition to exploding our labels business to go on them.
2. The Alcatel-Lucent merger, which meant most of their labels would have to be changed with the new logo, will hopefully bring us large amounts of label orders.
3. The game, CDs, new books and the chance to move into consumer products.

There are multiple chances for business, and we just have to stay focused on the potential and follow the leads as they come in. It is a very stressful time, but one which is full of really good things. We have to stay focused. On the other side is the loss of one of our bigger customers, who are now part of our competition. So far, we have more than compensated for the loss of label sales, but battling them head to head in the panel arena could be very difficult. No matter, the pressure will help us to stay focused on the practical versus the theoretical. We need more business, and that has to stay in the forefront of our thoughts.

12/29/06

Friday, 4:04PM EST

New Jersey - Home

Within the next hour, Wendy's sister and her family will be coming over to celebrate a late Chanukah Holiday, as this was the first time we could all get together. They are nice people and I like them.

I did not sleep well last night, more dreams of being in frustrating situations. In one of them, I was in a big meeting. I had a seat in front of the main speaker and I had to use the restroom. After I did, I could not get back into the meeting and was stuck outside. I have had more dreams like that, based on frustration and not living up to the expectations of what others had of me. Not that it is surprising, since I am constantly in that situation when I am awake. Having the two companies, with the various mixes of personalities and cultures, makes me spend a large part of my time trying to make sure everyone is working together, moving ahead towards the same goal for all concerned. I guess that is my main function now, dealing and handling people so we can all be better off.

12/29/06

Friday, 10:40PM EST

The evening was fun. I had a great phone call from my Uncle Nate this afternoon. Actually, he is Wendy's Uncle, but I have adopted him as my own. As I have mentioned, I have great respect for him and his opinion, and he called regarding my new CD that I had sent him. He really liked it and having him say he was proud of me was wonderful to hear, and it meant a great deal.

Reaction to our new game, from everyone who has seen it, has been extremely positive. This is good, as I am continually trying to sell it and have hopes for some orders for the future. At the very least, I am hopeful that our customers who get a free copy will be pleased to get it.

I went biking with Uncle Dave today. I tried out my new bicycle and it was wonderful. She is beautiful, and a lot of fun to ride.

I am approaching my 51st birthday, which sounds pretty old, and I can tell things are changing. It is a little harder to stay in shape and my body tends to ache more. There is no stopping the passage of time, but the added benefits of experience and lessons of life more than make up for any slowing down that occurs. It would be nice to think that my books and CD could actually help people to avoid learning some of the lessons I had to go through, and avoid some of the pain in the process. I can only offer; it is up to them what they do with it.

Glossary of Terms

Assembly - a group of metal and plastic parts that are put together to form a new product like a circuit pack

ATCA - Advanced TCA or Advanced Telecommunications Computing Architecture; a telecommunications platform targeting requirements for communications equipment

Chinese Joint Venture - a company set-up where a Chinese partner owns some of the stock of the company

Conductivity - a substance that will allow the passage of electricity

EMI - electromagnetic interference

EMI Shield - a material that will stop the flow of EMI “noise”

EPA - Environmental Protection Agency

Flame Rating - a designation for a material that shows it is resistant to a certain level of heat and flame

Globacom - conference for ATCA discussion and product displays

OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration

OSHA SHARP - Regional group for those companies with excellent health and safety systems

Performance Track Group - associated with the EPA; an association for those companies with excellent EMS (Environmental management Systems)

PTPA - Performance Track Participants Association

Passover - Jewish holiday celebrating the freeing of the Jewish slaves from ancient Egypt

Ring Cycle - a group of operas composed by Richard Wagner

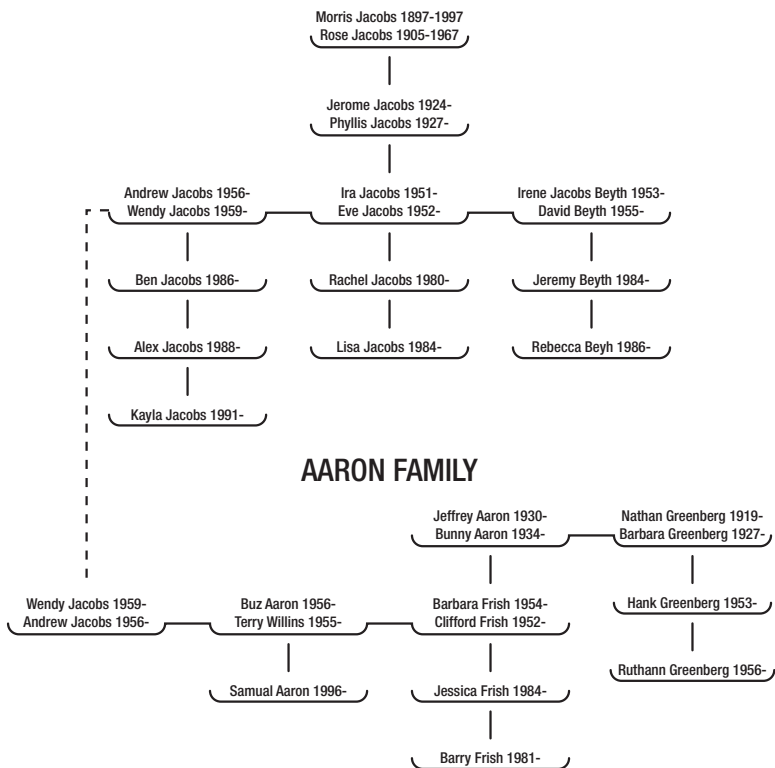
Tanglewood - a music resort located in Lenox, Massachusetts that features outdoor concerts during the summers and classes for students

W.O.F.E. - a wholly owned foreign subsidiary; a company operating in China where there is no Chinese ownership of stock.

Andrew's Name Locator

The chart below can be used to help figure out who Andrew is talking about.

JACOBS FAMILY



AARON FAMILY

FAMILY FRIENDS

- David Williams "Uncle Dave"
God Father to Ben Jacobs
- Gary Moscovitz
Accountant / God Father to Kayla Jacobs
- Howard Davis
Corporate Attorney
- Alan Holzman
- Rabbi Dan Cohen & Elana Cohen
- Paul Gross
Tennis Coach
- Dr. Browne
Andy's Dentist
- John Rudder
- Bailey
The Jacobs' Family Dog

BUSINESS ASSOCIATES:

- Ben Meng
President, Ideal Jacobs Xiamen
- Lencon Patents, Netherlands
European Design Partner
- Jeroen Kuiper
- Jan Willem Lucas
- Ed Weingram
Patent Attorney
- Dan Gallagher
Renewable Fuels
- Don Argintar
Corporate Computer Specialist
- Dr. Cyril Nwako, Kean University
*Director of Graphic Communications
Management Technology Graduate Program*

Colophon

This book was prepared using Adobe InDesign CS3 on an Apple PowerMac G5 running OS X 10.4.8. The original text was supplied from the author as individual Microsoft Word files and was imported into Adobe InDesign CS3.

The body text is set in 10 point Book Antiqua. The chapter headings and section breaks are in 24 point Papryus. All body fonts are PostScript Type 1 fonts.

Chinese translations were performed by Rosalyn Liu.

The front and back cover designs were created using Adobe Illustrator CS3 on an Apple MacPro running OS X 10.4.9. The cover was designed by Igor Lebre. Globe graphics were created by Michael T. Valentine.

Layout and formatting were done by Richard Green III and Rosalyn Liu.

Editing was performed by John Kotsalos. Proofreading corrections were entered into Microsoft Word files by Richard Green III.

The finished layout was exported from InDesign CS3 in Adobe Acrobat 8 format. The resulting PDF file was used to transfer the volume to the print facility for imposition, set-up and printing.

RG3

Also By Andrew Jacobs



Books



My Road to China

I never planned to have a manufacturing plant in China but when one of our customers “suggested” it might be a good idea, we decided it was time to do it. *My Road to China* is a diary of the adventure from start-up to full-scale operation of Ideal Jacobs Corp. in Xiamen, China.



How To Start And Run Your Own Company -Or- Sex, Money And Power...It's All The Same Thing

Have you ever felt like starting your own company? Have you ever felt that you could do a better job than your supervisor or the owner of the company you now work for? Have you wanted to make the decisions and live or die by your own wits? Most people, at one point in their life, have wondered what it would be like to own their own business.

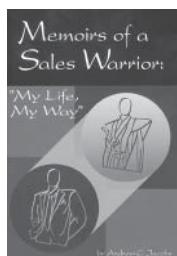


A Sales Warrior's Global Excursions

Have you ever wondered what goes through the mind of a salesman when he is going after new customers, fixing trouble, and clawing his way to fame and/or fortune? *A Sales Warrior's Global Excursions* provides insight into this as well as contains the fictional novel by Andrew Jacobs about being the first “embedded” in the Iraq war.

Also By Andrew Jacobs

Books



Memoirs of a Sales Warrior: My Life, My Way
Memoirs of a Sales Warrior covers many of Andrew Jacobs' life experiences and offers advice for dealing with the trials and tribulations that we all encounter during our journey through life. It also provides a blueprint for success, both within the working world and in our personal lives.



Say Yes or I'll Keep Calling

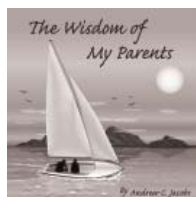
Available in English and Chinese

A quick reference for navigating the world of sales, *Say Yes or I'll Keep Calling* provides insight into every step of the process of selling, as well as some advice on maintaining one's personal stability and mental and physical fortitude.

Audio CDs

The Wisdom of my Parents

Like many people of my generation my parents retired and are getting older. They have a lot of wisdom and life experience that I wanted to record because I knew it would be valuable.



How To Start And Run Your Own Company -Or- Sex, Money And Power...It's All The Same Thing

Everybody thinks that owning your own company and being the boss is the best job in the world. For an extremely small group they are right; for everyone else it is a complete disaster.



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We love RUSHES and NEW areas of business.