

Attention to detail in competitive edge

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Volume 55, Number 4, 1988

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1104597ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1104597ar>

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Publisher(s)

HEC Montréal

ISSN

0004-6027 (print)

2817-3465 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this document

Pugh, N. (1988). Attention to detail in competitive edge. *Assurances*, 55(4), 542-543. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1104597ar>

Article abstract

La qualité du travail est essentielle, aussi bien en assurance que dans tous les autres domaines. M. Ned Pugh rappelle cette vieille formule, en soulignant qu'elle est à la base même du succès de nos entreprises. Nous ne saurions trop signaler le fait. Nous remercions l'auteur de nous avoir permis de reproduire son texte dans notre Revue. Il y a là une très vieille idée, mais qui mérite d'être signalée à nouveau.

Attention to detail in competitive edge⁽¹⁾

by

Ned Pugh⁽²⁾

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We have heard the old saying that begins "For want of a nail, the shoe was lost". This maxim concludes with the loss of the battle, and ultimately the kingdom, all stemming from a missing horseshoe nail. The moral is obviously to illustrate the importance of small details to the "big picture".

Attention to detail is certainly a hallmark of success in almost all business endeavors. Top achievers in any field invariably display that trait. The value of dotting the is and crossing the ts is quite apparent in our company – particularly in light of our increased emphasis on quality and professional standards.

Moreover, being a detail-oriented insurance broker can provide us with an extra competitive edge in our production efforts. As insurance professionals, we must constantly strive, in a paper-intensive industry, not to take anything for granted. Aside from the legal exposure with which shoddy work threatens us, there is the risk of having our clients, prospects or competitors discover mistakes we should have found and corrected.

⁽¹⁾ Published in *The Production Line*, Volume 7, Number 4, July 1987.

⁽²⁾ Mr. Pugh is President and Chief Executive Officer of Corroon & Black Inc. of Washington, D.C.

A client of our office, one of the most successful retailers in the country, built its reputation on the motto of its founder : "Trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle". The true standard of excellence, to which all Corroon & Black professionals are dedicated, includes a commitment to perfection in every task we undertake.

No matter how insignificant it may seem at the time, our daily work as producers, account executives or placers involves us in a myriad of transactions, each of which has the potential of creating enhanced opportunities for us if performed in a superior manner.

Every human is subject to error and, for that reason, we should be continually vigilant to detect our own mistakes. A few extra minutes spent rereading a document or rechecking our own or someone else's math can avoid an embarrassing and costly problem later. Likewise, returning phone calls promptly, answering letters expeditiously and being on time for appointments can also pay dividends in terms of client goodwill. All of these are trivial but important habits to cultivate.

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If we are well-organized, allow ourselves ample lead time and focus our attention on the work we are doing, we will set ourselves apart from our competitors. This spirit of quality workmanship and attention to the smallest detail should permeate every level of our office. Not only managers, producers and account executives, but every employee, including the file clerk, must share in the dedication to being the best we can be, every day.

That is the Corroon & Black way and it will continue to ensure our growth and profitability in the future, no matter which way the market turns.