

CHET'S "BUILDER'S JOURNEY"

The hero's journey is a really cool story of transformation. Every culture, for thousands of years, has told this story to encourage their people to both dream and do. At **BUILT to LEAD** we have decided to change one word. We do this frequently. We believe words matter. Words can change the world.

Here it is...

Do NOT miss this. This is HUGE.

At **BUILT to LEAD** we have changed the hero's journey to the **builder's** journey. Why you might ask? We're just more comfortable with the idea of being **builders**. We are not heroes and neither are our family, friends, and clients. We are, however, on a journey of discovery. A journey we're very comfortable calling the **builder's** journey. A journey where we both dream and do, fall and fail, and live and love.

The stories you will read at the opening of each *Essential* are the stories of our family, friends, and clients and their respective **builder's** journey. They are written by them. They are written for you.

Our hope is that they will inspire you to enter the construction zone, to embrace the "orange barrels," to get on your **builder's** journey and to become **BUILT to LEAD**.

Read them.

I was born on March 25, 1959 and grew up in Salina, Kansas the youngest of three. My parents were awesome. My dad was especially glad to see me, as I was his only boy. My mom spoiled me and at the same time taught me the power of being a "believer" in countless ways. My sisters made fun of me. Typical.

My first "decide" came at age eighteen. All my friends were going to K.U. and I planned to follow. My mom encouraged me to consider a "Christian" school. After much thought, I decided to check out Taylor University since Wheaton had informed me that I was not good enough. Hello T.U. and thank you MOM!

Leaving the shire was not easy. I knew NOBODY at Taylor. That lasted one day. My roommate would become my best friend and his influence is still felt to this day. Barry was a Christian and was also very cool. I had no idea how those two terms fit together. Three years later I noticed a beauty at the salad bar. Her name was Missi Cannell. A few years later she would



become my bride and together we would start an entirely new journey. The year was 1982.

Back in 1981 I landed my first real job out of college. I had no idea. I loved playing golf but knew I wasn't good enough to make it on tour. I thought selling would suit me and all the "experts" said BIG things were happening around computers. I followed their advice and got a job selling with IBM. I lasted one year. IBM told me that I wasn't good enough. They fired my ASS without even giving me a chance. Thank you IBM.

CompuServe hired me in 1982 and for the next twenty years I grew there professionally as my family grew exponentially at home. Miss and I were productive. Jordan arrived in 84, Andrew came crashing on the scene in 87, Kristi ushered in the 90's, and little Taylor kicked his way forward in 1995.

Work progressed beyond my wildest dreams. Every time I turned around there was some kind of promotion and opportunity for more. I'm not sure when exactly it happened but I fell in love with work and didn't even like or use the technology we took to market. I LOVED building a team. This was true in work and life. I became a dad and a manager at roughly the same time. What a blessing. I learned to INTEGRATE early and often.

I had no idea. I had no plan. I was self centered and really good at getting what I wanted. I was slowly learning that the world wasn't all about me. I was and still am a slow learner. Most of my **builder's** journey learning came from my best friend; from Miss. When I worked too much, she TOLD me. When my head got too BIG, she TOLD me. When I took her for granted, she TOLD me. I had no idea. Slowly, I learned. There has been no better teacher for me, than my bride...once I decided to let her.

Real SLOWLY...

In 1998 CompuServe was acquired by WorldCom. This changed everything INSTANTLY. We were no longer in control. I learned more about leadership during those four years than the other sixteen combined. I made countless mistakes during this transition. The biggest mistake was the most profound...for the first time in my professional life I chose slow death! I slowly died. I lost the desire to fight and started to think about what retirement would look like. I knew what I wanted to do but did not have the COURAGE to pursue it. I was afraid that I would FAIL. I hung around just to collect my "stay put" bonus and to let my options vest. I was too SCARED to ACT. What a LOSER. Good thing I got lucky.

In 2002 Worldcom came calling and wanted me back in sales leadership. I said **NO**. They said goodbye. I said, see you later. **BUILT TO LEAD** started the next day. I knew this was what I

wanted to do and now I felt like I did not have a choice. Isn't the mind funny?

The **BUILT to LEAD** journey has been the berries. I've been fired for wearing jeans, for talking about God too much, and for telling people the TRUTH when they were unaccustomed to hearing it. I've been hired, oftentimes, for these very same reasons. I've also been there when brothers reconciled, when dead people WOKE UP, when countless became **BUILT to LEAD**, and when the **BUILT to LEAD** team attracted other builders. Who knew?

I had no idea. I had no plan. I still don't. I simply DREAM and do. I choose to ACT. I fall early and often. I keep getting up. I understand that perpetual "up and to the right" is a myth in work and in life. I'm alright with that. I am getting comfortable in my own skin and I'm helping my family, friends, and clients do the same. I get to be there when dead people WAKE UP. I do not think much about the future. I am too interested in today. I am learning and loving my work and life. I write, TALK and ACT. As I choose to do this REAL, HARD, WORK something magical happens. Life gets easier. My BIG DREAMS get clearer. Clarity is a good thing.

I've never had so much energy and passion. I've never been so satisfied, content, and challenged. I have a team of "true friends" in work and life that are my truth tellers even when it's hard. I have a long way to go. I'm alright with that too.

Leaders are believers. I am living proof of the power of belief. Thank you, mom. I am living my magnum **OPUS** and those that matter know it. I guess that's enough for me.

THANK YOU MISS.

