

Hello everyone. This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thanks for tuning in. This week, I want to talk about E+R=O. Event plus response equals outcome. Before I get started, I want to talk about a really, really important webinar we're doing Monday, April 6th at 2:00 PM Eastern. Stay tuned to the end and I'll give you a little more background on that. But go ahead and mark your calendar now, Monday, April 6, 2:00 PM Eastern Time and we're going to roll out some brand new concepts and some stuff I don't think you've seen from any other source before.

So, this idea, E+R=O comes from Kent Pilcher at Estes Construction in Iowa. It seems like all my good blog ideas are coming from Iowa, so the other 49 states and Canada have some catching up to do with our fellows from Iowa. And it actually turns out it's a Jack Canfield, the Chicken Soup for the Soul guy, this is one of his concepts. But E+R=O equals event plus response equals outcome. And Kent doesn't use inflammatory words to describe what we're going through now in our country and around the world. He used the word disruption and that's the right approach. This is a disruption. This is something that nobody could see coming. And now we're not sure how it's all going to shake out.

So, we cannot control this event. And if you think about it in life, we're entrepreneurs and we try to control things. But what in life can you really control when you get right down to it? If you analyze that question, how much stuff can you really control? And the answer is not very much. So, what we can do since we can't control the event, we can control our responses. And Kent wrote that they've had to make incredibly quick adjustments, they've had to change how they think and change how they lead. They've got to do business differently. We have to do business differently now. You have to do business differently in order to add value to your customers.

So, Kent related a story from 2019 where they were victims of some severe flooding in Iowa and they had workstations in the offices. Well, they had to close at least one of the offices because of the flooding and that caused them to switch over to laptops so people could work portably. Well, that's terrific because it's paid off in this situation in the sense that people are much more easily able to work remotely. So, the event of 2019 helped prepare them for the event of 2020 to be more flexible and get more things done and think in new ways about how people accomplish their tasks at work.

So many people blame events, the E part of the equation, whether it's the macro economy or the weather or their spouse or their coworkers or whatever it is. And I was playing tennis the other day and my partner kept blaming his racket. I could see it wasn't the racket, it was his feet or the lack of movement of his feet that was causing the problem. But anyway, that notwithstanding, we tend to blame events and we get to choose our responses. We don't think we do because it happens so fast.

But Jean McLendon from Chapel Hill, North Carolina is a psychotherapist and she taught Dennis and me this 20 years ago I suppose. And that is we have a stimulus. This is the way the human mind works. We have a stimulus and then we have an emotional response. We like to think we're all logical and bound by logic and objective thinking. We're human beings. We have emotional responses to stimuli. And Jean developed this incredibly intelligent insight. We have an emotional response as human beings and then we have feelings about our feelings. So we have this feeling that strikes us and then we interpret it.

So we have a feeling about our feeling and we may feel guilty about our feeling or we may feel angry about our feeling, but we get to choose just as Stephen Covey pointed out, "Exercise integrity in the moment of choice." And that's what we're facing right now as leaders. We have to exercise integrity in this moment of choice. And we have to move on the fly to adapt how we're doing business for who knows how long. And this period of disruption, it's certainly not anything in our control, not anything that we would have asked for, but all we can do is choose as leaders how we respond. So that's your challenge.

Now following this disruption, lots of professionals were online quickly with articles and how-tos and checklists and how to react to the situation. And that was all really good. I mean it was incredibly speedy. Within 24 hours, some of the

professional firms had really good information out on the web, but it's all technical information. It's about reviewing contracts or what this legal provision in a contract really means. Important stuff, but still, nobody's looking at the totality of your business. Your people, your operations, your customer service, nobody's looking at that stuff.

So, on Monday, April 6 at 2:00 PM Eastern, we're going to put out a 90-minute webinar. We hope it's going to be super interactive and we're going to introduce a tool that you've never seen before. So, this tool is going to allow you to place your business on a matrix based on current business prospects. And you have to be really bluntly realistic about this now, based on future business prospects, what's in your pipeline and also the financial strength of your business. And you'll be able to apply yourself on this graph. And then depending on where you land on the graph, you'll be able to choose from a series of actions that you need to take to prosper through this disruption and come out the other side full steam ahead.

This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thank you.