

Hi. This is Wayne Rivers at the Family Business Institute. I want to talk today about a situation that came up a few years ago when I was doing a speech for an organization in Curacao. Putting on this golf shirt this morning, it kind of made me think of it. Then part and parcel with that I want to talk about a consistent frustration that I as a speaker have, and I know other guys have shared with me as well.

I do this speech in Curacao for, I don't know, 150 people or something like that. Its a decent size organization. After the talk people always come up and they say nice things, I really appreciated this comment or the story you told, or I can really relate to X, Y or Z or something like that. After about ... There's a line. There's like 10 people. Five or six people come up and they always say that ... You know, they say very nice things and it's flattering. It's good for my ego and all that.

This guy comes up and he looks me in the eye and he says, "Hey, I just want to tell you – "You wasted my time. You gave us absolutely nothing. It was terrible." I was kind of taken aback, as you can imagine. I was on my heels and I said, "Gosh, I'm sorry you thought that way. If you have some questions, maybe I could give you some one-on-one time." He said, "No, no. I just want to tell you," and he moved on, and the next person was very nice and gracious.

I was a little bothered by that and I went to the executive director of the association and I said, "You might hear about this later. One of your members came up and he said that I gave you nothing, and he was very disappointed." He said, "Did he look like this," and I said, "Yeah." He said, "Oh yeah, that guy does that to every speaker we have. He's never happy." Anyway, I just thought that was funny. It's a lot of fun to go out and do these speeches, and as I say it's good for my ego because people say nice things afterwards and it's fine.

But the frustration ... Let me get to the frustration. I talk to other speakers about this too. We're at a meeting and 100 people or 150 people come to my class about family businesses and the eight building blocks or whatever it happens to be, and they make furious notes and I can see husbands and wives looking at each other and whispered conversation and shaking their heads and people really engaged in some of the remarks. I tell you, that's also flattering, and I see that as good. Back in the early days I saw that as good because man, they're really getting it. They're really going to do something about their family businesses, but they don't, and that's my frustration.

People go to a conference, and it's not just my presentation, it's other presentations as well, and they sit there and they get really valuable information from really expert speakers and knowledgeable presenters and they make furious notes, and then what happens when they get home? Nothing. I'm sad to say it's like this blog. Some of you are really keen on the blog and you send me nice notes afterwards, and as always, we're interested in your comments. Please just log them below.

But I know for the most part you're not doing anything, so I want to give you a solution about that. The problem with these conventions is that you've got 20 sessions that you go to and you take notes and you get materials from every one of them and you say by God, when I get home we're going to do things differently. Then when

you get home there's 500 emails waiting for you and a stack of correspondence and telephone calls that you must return. It takes three, four, five days to dig out from being gone for a week.

Then all those good intentions, boom, they've evaporated into the ether and nothing is going to happen. What's the solution? The next time you go to a convention or a presentation of any kind I want you to come away with no more than three things. Go back to your notes and find ... Get your highlighter out and highlight the things that are really impactful for you. Then if you've got 20 things that are impactful, it's your task now to dial it back to three, maybe even just one, but by gosh, do something. Don't take all that collective wisdom that you've gotten from a conference or a convention or a presentation and just let it go to waste. Do something. Work on your business instead of working in your business.

That's my message for this week. Love to hear your comments below. This is Wayne Rivers at the Family Business Institute. Thank you.