

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

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Introduction

I was complaining about the weather last month - I should have saved my breath for this month! It is hot and sticky in the Phoenix area, but it seems to be that way in much of the world.

July is historically the slowest month of the year for wine sales and 2018 did not disappoint.

New Sales person: Brandon Kimball

Since graduating from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff with a degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management, Brandon has held several positions in the hospitality industry in Flagstaff. In 2016 he bought the Vino Loco Wine Shop and Bar in Flagstaff, one of our good customers. Brandon said he wants to explore the wine distribution business - hands on is the way to do it!

Empowerment

I have written about deliveries and warehouses and sales approaches, but I realize I have not covered how we manage the company. Those who have worked with me for a while are aware that "Strive for Simplicity" is a guiding light. What has that meant for how Orangewood is managed? It comes down to one word, "Empowerment". In order to allow everyone at Orangewood to be empowered we have to know what we are trying to do. We are selling great wines from small wineries to customers who understand that having special wines adds to their customers' enjoyment. Within that overall mission, each person knows what their responsibilities are. The roles, by the way, are designed to be a win-win. If one of us wins we all

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New Customers

win. Of course, there are times when my decisions are needed. In these cases I try to be predictable. Sometimes people predict my decision incorrectly, but that's OK. We all learn from making mistakes and there is no penalty for trying. Cecilia, who recently celebrated 10 years of selling for Orangewood, texted me last week with a question from a customer. I texted back. She replied "That's what I told them."

That's it. This is what we do, this is your part of it, ask if you need help and learn to predict my response. I have your back. Simple.

Rambling

Well, I did talk about management back in December 2005. The topic was systems thinking. [Look it up](#). I have been in management for a long time. I started out as a programmer - the major skill then was being able to spool up paper tape without tearing it (oops) or getting paper cuts (ouch). I developed my management thoughts over the years based on my experiences, my reading and my paper cuts.

As I tried to gather my thoughts on how Laurie and I run the company, I had a terrible flashback to making Power Point slides. I could have put down bullet points for page after page. I even started to write the "Empowerment" section that way, but it was too complex and had no structure. It had good length but no grip. I started again with an emphasis on balance.

Last month I rambled about unsolicited phone calls. I suggested that phone companies should charge per call. I received a lot of emails in support of this proposal - thank you. One person said they would contact their congressional representative. I added a comment to a Wall Street Journal piece about such phone calls. Can't hurt, may help.

The Rambler simply rambles on...

Cheers,

Richard (newsletter writer) and Laurie (editor)
Orangewood Wines

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