

WORKING UNDER PRESSURE©
And
Ignorance as a Key to Business Success

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Because all of the firm's clients are business owners, and I was one myself before I went to law school at age 36,¹ sometimes I am asked, particularly by start-up entrepreneurs, "When, at what stage, does it get easier? When does the pressure go away?"

Before I give my answer, first these provisos:

I am not a management guru,

Spend too much time working in my business rather than on it,

Compensate by working 7 days week and

Mainly subscribe whatever success I have enjoyed to Woody's Allen's dictum, to paraphrase: "80% of success is showing up."

None of these show great management prowess on my part. That being said the answers to the questions, for me, are:

It doesn't get easier. In fact it things become more difficult as you grow because the stakes and complexity of issues are greater. A mentor once told me that "Bigger (business) people have bigger problems."

As for the pressure: You will always be under pressure because the stakes are your career, business, family and life.

So, how do people take it? The answer is: As the business or problems grow, you grow. You learn to make the 3 pointer at the buzzer. This is one of the wonderful side benefits of owning your business or career growth. As your problems grow, you grow, and vice versa. Consequently, while some things might be "stretch," there is never a problem you can't handle.

Students (when I taught business law at ASU) used to ask me: "What does it take to succeed in business?" I would jokingly answer ""Ignorance." What I meant and explained was that if you knew starting out all of the challenges you would face and probable failures you would experience along the way, you might never start. But, you don't know them starting out, so you are not covered by the challenge. And, as you face the challenges you grow and as you grow, even though you feel the pressure, you learn to deal with it and keep showing up.

¹ I tell people that "I was a real person before I became a lawyer."