

BIG BALLOON AND BELT MANAGEMENT.

By James Collins.

For 30 years, I worked for Kollsman, one of the most prestigious engineering and manufacturing companies in the area of aerospace and avionics. The company had a reputation for being demanding and maintaining an attitude of excellence. From the outside, it appeared so. Those on the inside, have a slightly different perspective as to the management philosophy.

The following description describes the complexity presented to you by the company; management wants to put you in a new vehicle and they want you to control and direct this vehicle over a prescribed path. Your raise will be commensurate with your ability to handle this task. Management takes large two-story inflatable balloon and fills it up to check for leaks. Now management lets out about one-half of the air pressure and you have to climb up on top of the balloon. You are now standing in the bottom of a cone and no matter which direction you turn, it is uphill.

Your vision overhead is restricted and you can see the tops of trees, the sky and clouds. However, when you start to walk forward, the balloon takes you backwards. It takes a while for you to adjust your thinking so that you can now control the direction the balloon is going. As soon as you demonstrate this skill, management lets more air out of the balloon to further restrict your vision and make the task more difficult. If you can effectively accomplish this task, you can advance into the ranks of management.

The security department was extremely restrictive and concerned about all aspects of your involvement. They checked and double-checked everything and Security then added their own extras to the process. The security process was likened to the following image; the department calls you in and asks what are you doing to maintain security. You describe how you follow every process and the security officer says that is like putting a belt on to hold up your pants – necessary but not sufficient. Security now directs you to increase the process and the paperwork and they liken this to adding a pair of suspenders, in addition to the belt, to your pants to make them happy. When corporate hears of this, they like to add their input to the process. Their approach is equivalent to coming around with a heavy-duty staple gun and stapling both the belt and suspenders to you. You feel the pain, but they tell you that this is required for their security standards. You never forget this process and that may be the whole point of their thinking.

THE END