

Pastor's Letter February 14, 2020

Where Did Ford Motor Company Go Wrong?



<http://www.edsel.com/gallery/r5b.jpg> (reproduced with permission)

Edsel - The Car That Flopped

As auto insider Tony Long wrote 50 years later “In an industry celebrated for its [spectacular failures](#), the Edsel still takes the cake. The car was criticized from day one for being too ugly, too expensive and vastly overhyped.

The [1958 Edsel](#) was to be less costly than higher priced Mercurys and Lincolns but in the post-mortem that followed the Edsel's early demise, the faulty pricing structure was a big reason the car failed. Also sales weren't helped either by the 1957-58 recession.

Ford's board of directors named the car after Henry Ford's son Edsel (who died 15 years earlier) in spite of Henry Ford's protests to not do it. The company also over sold the car through an intense marketing blitz while Edsel was still on the drawing board. The company prematurely promised an

eager public something revolutionary, carefully baited the hook, and then failed to deliver. The Edsel was just another Ford sedan.

But hard for marketers to also overcome was the car's infamous "horse collar" grille, which prominently adorned the nose of the vehicle. It somewhat resembled an elongated chrome toilet seat and combined with the four headlights jutting out at you, the split front bumper, horizontal taillights or rear quarter trim, it looked like stylists were playing Mr. Potato Head with a clay car body and various styling gimmicks. Others said the front of the car looked more like a Shark. But what was the Edsel? It certainly wasn't the future. It resembled more like a washing machine assembly from a World War II battleship.



Potato Head

**In today's money,
Ford Motor
Spent \$2 billion
without getting
sufficient counsel.**



Jaws

In Proverbs it says that **without counsel, purposes are disappointed.**
(Proverbs 15:22)

Ford Motor Co., with good intentions, lost in today's money **2 Billion** dollars in rushing to get a new intermediate car out to the public.

- It was not considered attractive.
- There was limited time and insufficient opportunity for input about its appearance before it rolled off the assembly line.
- It was not priced right – other Ford models sold for much less.
- The name was not popular.
- It was not sufficiently market-tested.
- It was launched off of the assembly line even as different factions in management argued over whether or not the car could succeed.

Of course, we can learn from this.

Do we get good counsel for our decisions?

Is our counsel *sufficient*? Or could we build an 'Edsel' in our lives?

It is amazing the high cost of ignorance when decision makers do not get enough input to understand what they are doing, whether it be for starting up a new business or getting married or making any other major decision.

Had Ford gotten better input and planned better, there was a very good chance that Ford could have turned this car into a popular money maker. Instead the Ford Motor Company snatched defeat out of the jaws of victory.

It is good to have a group of good counsellors or a sounding board.

Do not lean on bad counselors such as

Rehoboam's aides or

Absalom's inner circle or

Ahab's circle of shaky advisors

Good counselors don't merely tell the decision-maker "what he wants to hear" (they should be kind and not unfairly critical, of course) but give the truth.

For example: At one point when the Radio Church of God was growing, Mr. Herbert Armstrong originally wanted to have only one FOT site for the entire nation, to be held in Big Sandy. He even envisioned constructing a stadium for 100,000 people there to hold church services. So he called a sizeable group of senior ministers to his office to explain his concept and ask for input. When it was time for input, every minister there, one by one, echoed endorsement for this idea until one last man was to be heard from.

This man politely said, "Mr. Armstrong, this idea will not logistically work. Lodging will be insufficient. Bathroom facilities will be woefully inadequate because you are projecting that we will have over 100,000 people eventually attending. One hundred thousand of us will overwhelm local infrastructure and drain local food supplies. We simply cannot bring all of our people to just one location."

As soon as he was finished, Mr. Armstrong exclaimed, "You are absolutely right! Men, we will simply have to scrap this idea!"

Important to note is that for 2020 AND 2021, the Feast of Tabernacles will be held in Daytona Beach instead of Jekyll Island.

Our next public presentation will be on “Jerusalem in Prophecy”, held in Ocala before their pot luck meal.

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