Lesson Learned Over 31 Years in Agricultural Economics

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Agricultural Economics
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Thank you

- SAEA
- Family
- Teachers
- Students
- Mentors
- Colleagues
- Organizations
- Country
- God
Lessons Learned Framework

- Student
- Faculty
- Administrator
Lessons Learned
Student Background

- Mercer University, English Literature 1975
- University of Georgia, Agricultural Economics 1981
- Virginia Tech, Agricultural Economics 1986
Lessons Learned
Student

- Learning is hard work!!

- Applied Economics Attraction
  - Logic & Explanatory Power of Theory
  - Completeness of methods used to analyze problems
Lessons Learned
Student
Top Ten Lessons

10. Failure is part of success
9. Ambition is good and necessary
8. Preparation is necessary but not sufficient
7. Find good teachers
6. Good teachers are not easy
Lessons Learned
Student
Top Ten Lessons

5. Find a discipline that “floats your boat”
4. Read the assigned material
3. Study continuously and in spurts
2. Shine when the time arrives
1. Do not let failure define you
Lessons Learned
Faculty Background

- University of Georgia, Agricultural Economics 1986-2003

- Mississippi State University, Agricultural Economics 2003-Present
Lessons Learned
Faculty

- Duty to inquire, analyze, & record as investigate mysteries of world
- Seek alternative solutions
- Beware of advocacy
- Remember you were (are) a student
- Learn from your predecessors
- Respect and Evolve
Lessons Learned
Faculty
Top Ten Lessons

10. A career is like compound interest
9. Never forget that you were (are) a student
8. Be persistent
7. Be careful and caring in relationships
6. Be enthusiastic (especially in class)
Lessons Learned
Faculty
Top Ten Lessons

5. Learn about your administrators
4. Be organized
3. Be nice to fellow faculty and staff
2. Be persistent
1. Enjoy your work and life as faculty member
Lessons Learned

Administrator

Background

- Mississippi State University, Department Head, Agricultural Economics, 2003-Present
- Southern Agricultural Economics Association, President, 2002
- Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics (C-FARE), Chair, 2004-2007
- Mississippi State University, Faculty Athletic Representative, 2005-Present
Lessons Learned
Administrator

- Know yourself
- Chosen because of strengths
- Necessary personal skills (conditions)
  - Listening
  - Writing
  - Reading and interpreting
  - Salesmanship
- Patience
- Must have some vision (Proverbs 29:18)
Lessons Learned
Administrator
Top Ten Lessons

10. Deal with problems quickly (but not too quickly)
9. Listen to those you work with and for
8. Do not lose yourself to the job
7. Administration is important and makes a difference
6. Know standards and uphold them
Lessons Learned
Administrator
Top Ten Lessons

5. Be merciful and kind
4. Be consistent
3. Remember you were a student and faculty member
2. You are a public figure
1. You get paid for the 4:30 phone call on Friday afternoon
Conclusions as an Administrator

- Many things out of your control
- Increasing responsibility increases gravity of decisions
- Administrators often have additional information to utilize in decision making
- Hindsight crystallizes both mistakes and success
Concluding Remarks

Thank you to SAEA

Hope – SAEA continues tradition of helping fellow citizens better understand consequences of economic decisions