

# Business Lessons from 2 TV Show Plotlines

## **The Big Valley**

This 1960s western can be found in reruns on nostalgia TV, and a particular episode had me shaking my head recently. You what had happened was... a large Berkeley holding, a Gold mine flooded and the solution is for a family member to travel across country to a government auction to buy a special pump. Without that machinery the mine will be lost.

Auction's Opening bid: \$5,000. But it's the weekend and they don't have cash on hand but they are able to borrow \$5,000 from the bartender in order to get to the auction and get the equipment. The family believes they will be the only bidder for the equipment and so they will only need \$5,000, a sum mentioned continuously throughout the show.

**Take Away Lesson:** In real life this would be a situation ripe for Murphy's Law.

Because in real life, someone else could unexpectedly join the bidding... and that \$5,000 would not be enough... Hard to believe they would travel across country without making allowances for that issue.

Finally, probably the most implausible business related plotline comes from

The Cosby show spin-off about the students of an African-American college.

## ***A Different World***

Episode: Don't count your chicken before they're axed, 1992.

Consider:

Whitley Gilbert-Wayne remains in school an extra year to gain experience and study the business side of art acquisition, a

field she knows and loves. She is determined to become a buyer for the corporate arena. And she is an excellent student.

Newlywed, she spots a painting that she is positive will increase in value, and she persuades her math PhD., always cautious with a buck, always researching the angles husband to co-write a check for several thousand dollars so that she can make the purchase. They buy the artwork, Whitley is laid off soon after, and when the couple returns from dining out, they discover burglars had been there before them.

No TV,

No Stereo

No Microwave

No Computer...which Whitley's husband named Poindexter

No Designer Clothes from Paris,

and with a wail, Whitley discovers her mink coat is gone, too.

And..the couple stare at the blank walls and realize...

No investment painting...

**Take away lesson:** After interviewing an insurance agent recently, the plot line is even more ridiculous, (the episode aired recently) when you consider that an inexpensive renters' policy would have protected the investment artwork that Whitley knew would increase in value.

People do make mistakes that outsiders find difficult to understand, but no way Whitley Gilbert would have failed to take out renters' insurance to protect at least her treasured coat and designer clothing.

## References

The Big Valley

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