

Finally, the Moment of Truth (Part 2)

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What exactly is a *moment of truth*? I have heard many people use that expression countless times. When you sit back and give it some real thought, it becomes quite clear. First, there is a time period that precedes the *moment of truth*. During this time a variety of events occur involving you and things around you. These events build up in momentum and quickly create an expectation of an eventual outcome. This expectation is directly attributed, or connected, to your previous and current actions or things you may have said—of course I am describing a scenario that is of our own doing and that is completely within our control.

Next there is the *moment of truth*—the arrival of that point in time when a revelation occurs; events unfold and the reality and the facts are revealed. Everything is on the table, few things are hidden, and the expectation that was built is soon confirmed or questioned.

Moment of Truth

A Moment of Truth is a point in time when expectations meet reality and facts.

Finally, there is the time after the *moment of truth*; the time for accountability. This is a time when the reality and the facts that have just been revealed are compared to the expectation that you created and built up. If the reality and the facts meet or exceed the expectation, you are lavished with praise and admiration and viewed in a positive light; on the other hand, if the reality and the facts fall short of the expectation, then you are held accountable by those around you, and accountability can take a variety of forms—including, and most often, disrespect.

A great example of a *moment of truth* that plays out everyday is the case involving a job application process. When you pursue a job opportunity, you present and market yourself on a resume. The resume becomes a tool and a medium for projecting who you are and what you bring to the table. Most often you are tempted and encouraged to hype certain skills, experiences, and attractive attributes about yourself—in essence you establish a certain expectation of your capabilities.

If you succeed in this first round, you move on to a second round—job interview—where you present yourself in person. Your efforts now focus on matching your projected expectation (of yourself) with your appearance, your words, your actions, your track record, and many subtle promises. In many cases the expectation that you now project becomes even higher and a fair employer either buys it or rejects it!

If you are fortunate, you receive an offer and get the job—cool! But then comes the moment of truth—the first few weeks on the job. Will your job performance measure up to the expectation that you have built through your resume and during the job interview? The outcome of this moment of truth can go a long way to establishing lasting credibility on the job and earning significant initial respect.

Let's return to our story—from Part 1—of the family learning of the content of the last will of their late father. As the half-sister heard those directed words, "*I have a*

statement here that I am to read to you," she felt her inner-self tremble. It was as though her late father was preparing to speak to her. She stared at the executor, her eyes focused right on his lips as he prepared to read the statement. And then he continued.

As the first few words echoed from the executor's lips, she began to recall a specific event. It was an event that had occurred less than three months earlier. The event was very vivid in her mind and the memory came in a flood. It was a bright and sunny weekend, and she had been summoned to her father's house. She arrived knowing that her father, a tall and stern elderly man in his eighties, sought to discuss a family matter that had been a source of conflict between them. It was customary for the elder in the family to intervene and resolve major family matters and this case was no different.

Their discussion had started much like any other previous father-daughter dialogue. Her father got right to the point and raised the issue at hand. He spoke with a very clear and calm tone, careful with his choice of words, making a case that revealed an error in judgment on the part of her daughter concerning the matter. It was clear he was trying to employ the wisdom that can only come with age in an attempt to help her daughter perceive things differently. She had listened calmly to her father's plea, but soon became very defensive. It was in her nature to hold firm to her views, especially if her views are rooted in firm principles—right or wrong.

Before long the discussion turned into an argument. She had become very emotional and was unable to separate her personal feelings from the criticism that her father was leveling against her. "Why is my father being so critical?" she had thought. "Why is he being so mean?" "Why doesn't he just hear me out and see things from my perspective?" She recalled these resounding questions as the flashback continued in her mind.

As the executor continued to read the statement in the will to her, it was clear that the statement was in reference to the very specific event that was now flooding her mind. She was reliving the whole incident over again. As she stared at the executor's lips, she felt herself in some sort of a trance. It was no longer the executor speaking to her, it was her father standing right there just as she remembered him.

To be continued in Part 3.

About the Author



Niyi Taiwo is the founder of EKTIMIS and the lead editor for the EKTIMIS eLibrary articles. He is the author of several books, including the EKTIMIS Top Ten Laws series. He is a continuous improvement expert with over 21 years of industry experience – operational, management and consulting. He holds an undergraduate degree from WPI and a master's degree from RPI. He is a certified Lean Expert and an ASQ-certified Six Sigma Black Belt.