



Paradigm Shift

- Al E. Bavry

While I was talking to Leif, a friend who is a realtor in Wisconsin, he made some interesting comments. Now Leif is one of those Visionaries...He doesn't just sell real estate. He tends to look way down the road and is good at spotting trends. So, he got into several subjects. First was how really Hot the market is...He's not that far from Chicago, Milwaukee, and many other large cities. Not too much of a surprise that many people are selling out in the big cities, and buying homes, property, businesses in more "rural" Illinois, Wisconsin, etc. There are some pretty obvious reasons: One, of course, is that many of these cities (take Chicago for instance) are not only crime-ridden, but it's getting even getting worse. So, folks are leaving those places. But, as Leif pointed out, much more is going on. With this Pandemic upon us, a lot of folks are working from home. Even in the small real estate office he works out of, several folks are mostly at home working, or at the least, splitting their time between home and the office. And Leif started out saying that initially this "working at home" seemed to be "the new wave." But as we go deeper into it, maybe ain't all it's cracked up to be! He already sees a kind of trend developing...Probably goes under the heading of "people being social animals," and being "alone" for extended periods is now taking its toll on many.

My friend Leif went on to explain how some people who proclaimed how great this protocol was had now started complaining that they were "missing" that interaction with fellow associates. And no, virtual meetings on a nice clear screen just wasn't the same. Another thing he mentioned was people in general are not that self-disciplined...And after spacing out their workloads, taking breaks, etc., they were becoming kinda lazy... (Their productivity going down??) It was causing things like power snacking while working at home, gaining weight, getting depressed, etc. So, even though this idea seemed great at the start, it appears now there may be more issues than problems solved.

So to a Paradigm Shift...What started out one way, is going to finally settle into *where* people live and do their job. Some will be very happy to work at home...And make it work...Some will insist on "coming back to the office" to have real, organic, interactive, fellow associate interaction. Both ways need a new "template" or model to make it work.

To recap...In Leif's world, what started out looking like new trends are now becoming something different. And it will all settle down at some point. How does that all play out in our building material world? I hear it already: "Oh, we can outsource a lot of our work." "We'll soon have a lot of folks working at home." "We don't need to be physically in front of fellow employees or customers so much!" "We don't need the 'in house' team we used to have..." And it goes on. My own simple take on all of it is...Post Covid-19 and getting "back to normal" won't be that simple. What I see, if you look at all these "shifts" going on, is that some look predictable, but probably won't be. Be careful...We'll probably have some very interesting hybrid templates come out... And a few years down the road (assuming things have settled down considerably), we will recognize that we've been living through a true Paradigm Shift...

Keep reading the tea leaves and be able to "shift" as things "shift" around you...Great selling...