

The Resurrection of Felix the Frog

If you haven't read an earlier piece titled "Lessons in Bad Management: Felix the Flying Frog," you probably should read it before reading this one. You can find the earlier piece at this [link](#).

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Felix the frog, recently deceased, presented himself at the Pearly Gates where St. Peter greeted him with a kindly smile.

"What is *he* smiling about?" grumbled Felix to himself, "I just leaped out of a seven-story window because that jerk Clarence gave me no choice. I died trying to meet his bone-headed objectives."

"Hello, Felix," said St. Peter, "What can I do for you?"

"Well, you can start by letting me in and steering me to the nearest pond with big, cushy lily pads," answered Felix.

"I'm afraid I can't do that," said St. Peter. "You see, you're not really dead."

"What?" exclaimed Felix. "If I'm not dead what am I doing here?"

"You're here for a second chance," said St. Peter.

"Oh, no you don't," said Felix, "I'm not doing any more of that flying crap!"

"Don't worry," said St. Peter, "your second chance will not require you to do anything that exceeds your capabilities; instead, you will be asked to do things that are right in line with them."



"So, how does this work?" asked Felix, still a little suspicious.

"You will be sent back but to a different person, one who is a much better manager than Clarence ever was or ever will be."

"And then what?" asked Felix, still not comfortable with the idea.

"Well, that's partly up to you, Felix."

Felix, was accustomed to not having any say regarding his destiny so he shrugged and said, "I guess it's better than being dead. Let's get on with it."

Felix had no sooner uttered those words than he found himself sitting on a lily pad in a large pond in a park in the middle of a big city. Nearby, sitting on the bank of the pond was a young woman. She looked very pensive. Now and then she would release a small sigh.

After a while, curiosity got the better of Felix. "What's the matter?" he asked.

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Startled, the young woman looked around to see who had spoken. Seeing no one, she continued pondering the matters that had brought her to the pond.

“I said, ‘What’s the matter?’” repeated Felix.

Again the young woman looked around and again seeing no one, she frowned and continued glancing about somewhat nervously.

“Hey!” yelled Felix. “It’s me, the frog on the lily pad right in front of you!”

“Good grief!” exclaimed the young woman, scrambling to her feet, “A talking frog!”

She fell silent for a few moments and then asked, “What’s your name?”

“Felix.”

“Well, Felix, my name is Alice and I think you might be exactly what I need!”

“How’s that?” asked Felix.

“I have to make a presentation to top management at my company tomorrow and they are so fed up with PowerPoint presentations that I’m at a loss as to how I can grab and hold their attention long enough to get my points across.”

“What’s at stake?” asked Felix.

“My career for one thing,” answered Alice, “and the future of my division, too. That’s the focal point of my presentation. You see, top management wants to shut down my division. They don’t see its potential as a source of innovative new products and services and those are exactly what the company needs.”

“I don’t see how I can help,” said Felix. “I’m just a frog.”

“Oh no you’re not!” exclaimed Alice. “You’re a *talking* frog! Do you realize how rare that is? You are *extremely* special.”

Felix turned a slightly darker shade of green, the frog equivalent of blushing, and said, “Well, I guess there aren’t a lot like me.”

“Look,” said Alice, “I’d like you to help me with this presentation tomorrow. I think if we put our heads together we can figure out a way to pull it off.”

“Gee, I don’t know,” said Felix.

“Let’s make a deal,” said Alice. “Suppose you help me with the presentation and it’s successful. I’m confident we can do that. What would you want in return?”



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Felix had never before been offered a deal and he didn't quite know what to make of it. "I don't get it," he said.

Alice explained, "I want you to help me and if we succeed I get what I want. In return for your help, I'm willing to do what I can to see that you get what you want. So, what do you want?"

Felix thought for a moment and then said, "A private pond with lots of lily pads and an abundant supply of flies."

"Deal!" said Alice. And with that she bent down, scooped up Felix and off they went to her apartment near the park to work on the presentation. She and Felix pulled an "all-nighter." As dawn broke, they agreed they had worked out a winning presentation, including the supporting materials.

Later that morning, Alice arrived at the corporate meeting room where her presentation was to be made. At the front of the room, she set up two long folding tables, end-to-end, but with a large space separating them. On top of the first table, she set out a row of five cardboard boxes stretching from one end of the table to the other.

The meeting attendees began making their way in. When all were seated, Alice stood, thanked them for coming and said, "We are here to pry open some seemingly closed issues regarding my division. I am here to convince you that results you don't believe can be achieved can in fact be achieved. In short, I'm here to make the case that my division should not only not be shut down but that its funding should be stepped up and that the demands made of it should be stepped up, too."

With that, she opened the first of the five boxes and out leaped Felix. Everyone sat bolt upright.

"Good morning," said Felix. "As you just saw, I can easily get out of the box. If I, a mere frog, can do it, surely you can, too." At this, one of the attendees, a VP named Clarence, ran screaming from the room and was never heard from again.

Stunned, the other meeting participants could do little except stare at Felix.

Felix leaped to the second box and said, "This box is full of ideas about new products and services that Alice's division can develop, launch, sell, deliver and support."

Leaping to the third box, Felix said, "This box is full of data about the markets, customer needs, competitive activity, marketing strategies, and sales tactics associated with those products and services."

Bounding onto the fourth box, Felix said, "This box is full of financial information: Revenue projections, expense projections, cash flow projections, break-even points and, of course, ROI."

Jumping atop the fifth box, Felix announced, "And this box holds the plans for pulling all this off, including process, plant and system designs."

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Pausing a moment to let all this sink in, Felix then gestured toward Alice and said, “My new boss, Alice, will take it from here.”

Alice proceeded to open the remaining boxes in order. From each she took a set of handouts which she distributed to the meeting participants and reviewed the key questions and bullet points associated with each.

When she had finished, Felix leaped from the first table to the second table and quite a leap it was. He skidded to the center of the table, turned and said, “I know, it’s a big leap, but if I can do it so can you.”

Alice wrapped up the presentation by saying, “As was agreed as part of setting up this presentation, I am available to meet with you individually to answer questions you might have so that your decision will be as fully informed as possible.” With that, she distributed a schedule of soon-to-be-held meetings.

As the meeting participants filed out of the room, all taking time to walk slowly past Felix to get a good look at this talking frog, the CEO held back until he was alone with Alice and Felix.

“I can’t say what decision the executive committee will reach, Alice, but I am supportive of your proposal. We need innovation and we need it desperately and I have a hunch you’re just the person to pull it off.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Alice.

Glancing at Felix, the CEO smiled, started to say something, then thought better of it and went on his way.

Overjoyed, Alice scooped up Felix and gave him a big kiss. He didn’t turn into a prince but he did turn a very dark shade of green.

A few days later, Alice’s proposal was accepted and she went on to succeed in making her division a center of innovation for the larger company. Her division headquarters was noted for a large, secluded pond in a stand of trees behind the main parking lot. The pond was full of large, cushy lily pads and inhabited by a frog that was rumored to be capable of human speech. The rumors persisted in large measure because the division president, a woman named Alice, could from time to time be seen sitting on the bank of the pond, apparently talking to the frog.