

Leaders: if you plan well, major projects can be accomplished quickly

I recently sailed across the Atlantic from Southampton, England to New York City on the Queen Mary 2. It is the largest and finest ocean liner in the world. The ship is the length of four football fields, and it holds 3,064 passengers and 1,253 crew.

Her maiden voyage was January 12, 2004. Twelve years later, in 2016, she had sailed 1,791,058 nautical miles, the equivalent of the distance to the moon and back more than four times.

After all that travel, she needed to be remastered and totally refurbished. She was dry docked and the work commenced.

The remastering cost \$132 million and included:

- exhaust gas cleaning systems installed on all four diesel engines
- four upgraded propulsion motors
- a new ballast water treatment system
- a new reverse osmosis water production plant
- the entire ship repainted
- all staterooms and public areas were remodeled (including adding 50 new staterooms)

Five thousand workers and contractors worked three shifts a day, 24/7.

Here's the amazing fact: *the entire project was completed in 25 days.*

How was that possible? 25 days. Remodeling my master bathroom took longer than that.

Here's the key: if you plan well, major projects can be accomplished quickly.

It took two years to plan the Queen Mary 2 refit. Architectural plans were drawn, parts and supplies ordered, workers hired, schedules written—then she was dry docked and the work commenced. Because of good planning, everyone knew exactly what to do and had the tools and supplies to get it done.

Leaders, I challenge you to duplicate this scenario in your organization. Visualize an important project, plan well, and then make it happen quickly.

At Stonebriar Community Church, we have an incredible children's and youth choir program. Their recent Christmas program involved 450 children and students performing an intricate, well-choreographed 80-minute concert. All the various parts came together at *one* Saturday morning rehearsal; the concert was the following day.

Though on a smaller scale, the good planning and execution that went into this concert reminded me of the remastering of the QM2. Well done, Sandi and Misty.

To accomplish a large task quickly: visualize every detail, plan meticulously, and execute well.

You can do this.