

Lincoln failures summary

1831 - Lost his job
1832 - Defeated in run for Illinois State Legislature
1833 - Failed in business
1834 - Elected to Illinois State Legislature (success)
1835 - Sweetheart died
1836 - Had nervous breakdown
1838 - Defeated in run for Illinois House Speaker
1843 - Defeated in run for nomination for U.S. Congress
1846 - Elected to Congress (success)
1848 - Lost re-nomination
1849 - Rejected for land officer position
1854 - Defeated in run for U.S. Senate
1856 - Defeated in run for nomination for Vice President
1858 - Again defeated in run for U.S. Senate

Then...

1860 - Elected President (success)

Some wise thoughts on the value of failure

“My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with failure.”
Abraham Lincoln

“I have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.”
Thomas A. Edison

“If you’re not prepared to be wrong, you’ll never come up with anything original.”
Ken Robinson

“There is no failure except in no longer trying.”
Chris Bradford

“Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.”
Winston Churchill

“The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing.”
Henry Ford

“It may be true that we learn more from our mistakes than our successes, but organisations have in the past been reluctant to put this theory into practice.”
Charles Handy.

“I’ve missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”
Michael Jordan

Activity

Read and think about the above thoughts.

As a group summarise three key learning points that lead to actions within the organisation that helps get more value from ‘failure’.

List the key issues this raises that relate directly to your organisational reality.

