

Hi, this is Gregg Foster with a community comment.

This will be my last Community Comment as executive director of the Redwood Region Economic Development Commission. On March 1, I will start a new position as a commercial lender with Redwood Capital Bank. I'm looking forward to the challenge of working for a great local business helping other businesses succeed.

As many of you know, this ends my second stint as executive director of RREDC. I served from 1999 to 2007 and again from July of 2009 until now. It's been a fun and rewarding experience and I am proud of the work we've done on the fiber optic project, air service development, and of the many successful small businesses we've been able to provide loans to.

Since I'm in my last days, I may have gotten a little lazy, but I've revived a comment I gave in November 2011. In that comment, I talked about the power of positive messaging and risk taking in economic development.

One of my favorite quotes is one by Shakespeare from the play "Measure by Measure."

**"Our doubts are traitors, and make us lose the good we oft might win, by fearing to attempt."**

In other words, it is our doubts, our fear of failure that can often prevent us from achieving success. Of course this has been said over and over again in different ways: We have nothing to fear but fear itself. No risk, no reward. No pain, no gain. And so on. Vince Lombardi said: "Once you learn to quit, it becomes a habit." He also said, if you are not fired with enthusiasm, you will be fired with enthusiasm.

The point is that we all face a very basic choice. Move forward or move back. Try or quit. I've been fortunate because every day I have gotten to work with entrepreneurs and businesspeople who just keep trying. Their failures are temporary, success is assumed. Someday. After a lot of hard work. My favorite part of the job is going out to one of our customers businesses. It does not matter what they do or where they are, their attitude is always the same, "sure this is hard work, but we're going to succeed, no matter what."

We hear a lot about what will be the economic future of Humboldt County. And there are a lot of complicated parts to that puzzle. But I firmly believe that, ultimately, it comes down to finding, creating, and supporting those individuals who, despite their doubts, will invest their time, talent and money into the future of their businesses and this community.

Our challenge as a community is to make sure that we are doing our absolute very best in supporting those entrepreneurs and making sure that we try as hard as they do to make this a great place.

Thanks to all of you that have supported me at RREDC. I look forward to continuing to work with you in my new role.

This has been Gregg Foster with a community comment.