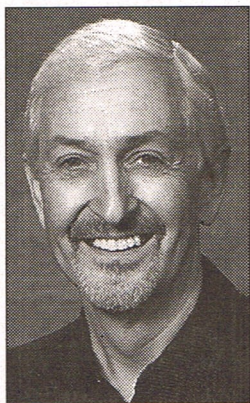


My first job

Dwight R. Frindt

Now: company co-founder

Then: assistant awning installer



Current position: Principal and co-founder, 2130 Partners, an executive leadership development and education firm

First job: I helped the lead installers with building new awnings, assembling frames, installing awnings, taking them down, washing them and helping put them into storage for the winter. At 16, I could get as many hours as I wanted for \$1.36 an hour in this seasonal job.

How I got the job: I went to the bookstore at my high school in Niles, Ill., and scanned the job notices on the bulletin board.

What I learned: This company was a well-run, well-respected and successful firm, and yet I was dumbfounded at the number of screw-ups that went on daily. Inevitably, the awning canvas was too big or too small, the frame wasn't the correct size or there was some other problem. It was clear that much of the mischief was caused by misunderstandings and miscommunication. I believed businesses could be run better than this. These exact issues are what I spend my time on today as I work with CEOs and business leaders to make businesses run better.

*Want to tell us about your first job? E-mail
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