



Stanford eCorner

The Road to Changing Jobs

Mark Forchette, *OptiMedica*

February 17, 2011

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2651/The-Road-to-Changing-Jobs>

Mark Forchette describes the decision process he went through before taking on the role of CEO at OptiMedica. Forchette shares how he found a way to clear his head by taking a road trip on Route 66, through the southwest of the United States. He also discusses the questions and considerations that he reviewed before making the jump.



Transcript

In early 2007, Mark Blumenkranz, Dr. Blumenkranz of Stanford approached me and he said, "You know, company that I founded OptiMedica, we're looking for CEO and you should be that guy." And I knew Mark for 20 years. I was in this great career that people never leave and I say very respectfully, "Of course, I'll think about it, Mark." And so, I was just a little bit being polite and then Mark sicked the virus on me. And the second that I met Brook and I met Craig Taylor and I met the people at OptiMedica that I couldn't meet, I was really compelled to make a change and made the decision to be the OptiMedica CEO. So I told Brook when I made that decision, I said, "Man, 23 years in one place I'm going to have to clear my head a little bit." And the people here that know me know that I love cars and I'm kind of fanatic about it and I said, "So when I made this transition, I'm going to drive from Texas and getting my car. I want to drive down Route 66. I want to drive from Texas to California. Take three days and clear my head." And so, I did. So June the 2nd 2007, I started driving across the desert kind of racing. I think 84 there, that was the slowest I went the whole time.

But about halfway through the desert, I've found myself asking, "Why, this making me do it? Why am I doing this?" I mean, this is absolutely feel like absolutely kind of crazy to leave such a great thing and do this. Well, there are a couple of reasons. One is that element of being in medical devices having breakthrough technology which I'm going to tell you about is really compelling and that was really exciting, OptiMedica's technology. The stuff that you could see at the time was really exciting. The stuff that was in the lab that was not ready to go yet was incredibly science breakthrough technology. So that was one.