



GENETIC ALTERNATIVES



YOUR NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE LATEST ON SEED RESEARCH

Vol. 3, Issue 1
March, 2016

Inside this issue

Surviving the Learning Curve...1

Employee Spotlight:

Doreen Perez.....4

Sylvia Oquendo4

Location, Location, Location ...5

Surviving the Learning Curve

by *Raechel Baumgartner*



Everything has a learning curve. Whether learning new methodologies, theory, tasks, or technology, everything has a learning curve. Sometimes the learning comes smoothly; sometimes the curve is more of a cliff. The keys to surviving are hard work, perseverance, and faith that survival can and will happen. A little bit of luck never hurt anybody either.

I was looking around this morning trying to find a learning curve diagram that accurately reflects our lives in service work. The closest I could find was the Gartner Hype Cycle (*Figure 1, <http://www.gartner.com/technology/research/methodologies/hype-cycle.jsp>*).

I like that it kind of shows the roller coaster we live every year with the changes in projects and customers. I also find the names of each state amusing. However, it still did not quite fit what I was hoping to illustrate, so my next step was Five-Minute Art Class at the office, subject: Learning

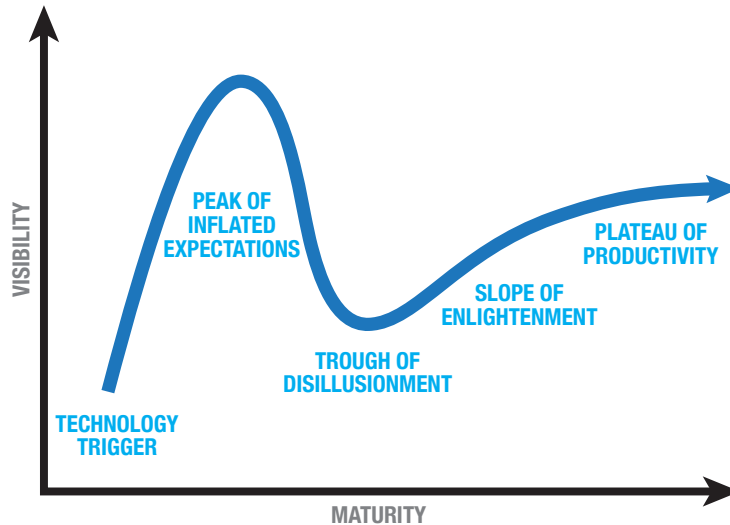


Figure 1. Gartner Hype Cycle

Surviving the Learning Curve (from page 1)

The first one I received back was Wade's (Figure 2). Borrowing from the Gartner Hype Cycle, I think he is in the Trough of Disillusionment. I just hope he feels a little better about his progress learning Spanish.

A year ago we bought a packet printer with the stake printer modification. I cannot begin to tell you how excited we were about this thing! It was going to save us so much time and be so much easier! So much better than sticking the entirety of our packet labels by hand, which is what we had been doing for years, AND it would print our stakes for us, too! Does this sound like the Peak of Inflated Expectations? You betcha, and you had better believe that it was followed by a healthy dose of reality. Matthew's Learning Curve illustrates this battle with technology (Figure 3). Was the printer faster than sticking labels? Yes. However, the pain and agony caused by fighting with it almost got it thrown out the window a few times. We actually dreaded starting the printer back up again this winter! Miraculously, though, we have not had any issues so far. This year it has been working like a dream, a dream in which we would like to stay. (All that time we thought we would save? It is happening now.)

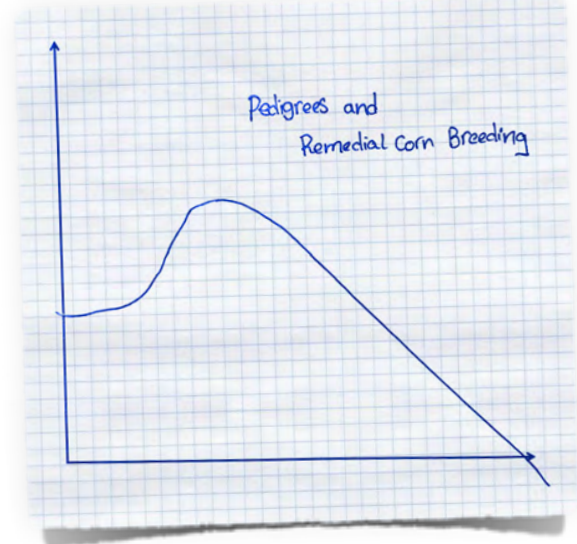


Figure 2. Wade's Learning Curve

At both 3MG and 3MG North, something we try to do is teach and train every employee not just how to do the job but to also understand the job and its purpose. We feel very strongly that this is one way we can improve our quality of service and perhaps set ourselves apart in the industry. We now have six people at our North office that have been through at least one entire cycle, with a seventh hitting her one year mark later this month. This is so exciting! Each person has taken ownership of what they are doing, and they are doing it well. I asked Jaime and Diana, who have each been here over two years now, to draw a learning curve. I know they thought I was crazy, but they humored me anyway (Figures 4 and 5).

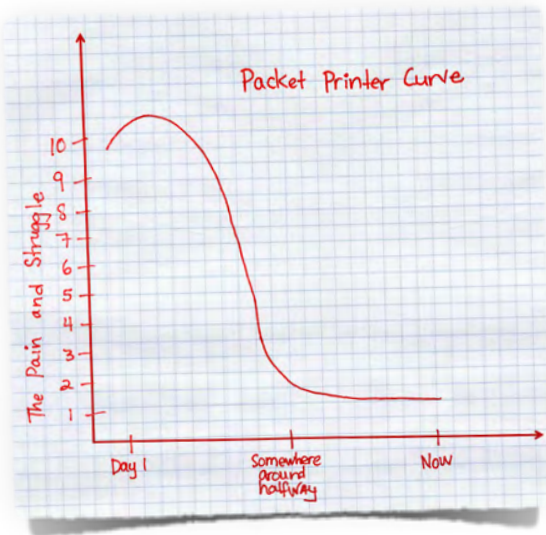


Figure 3. Matthew's Learning Curve

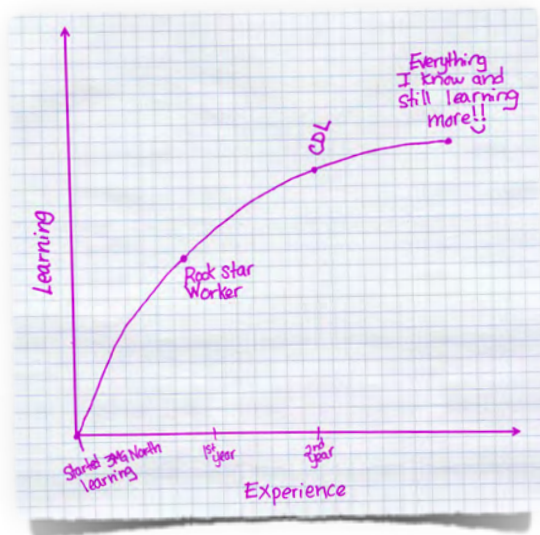


Figure 4. Jaime's Learning Curve

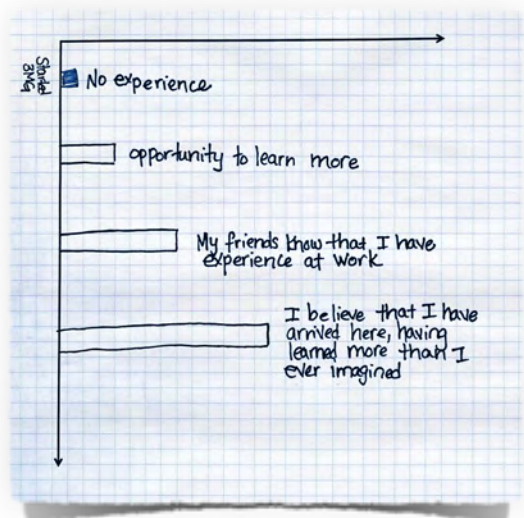


Figure 5. Diana's Learning Curve

Surviving the Learning Curve (from page 2)

Susan had the non-enviable task of learning a new crop (corn) after 15+ years working in another one (soybeans). This was her response to

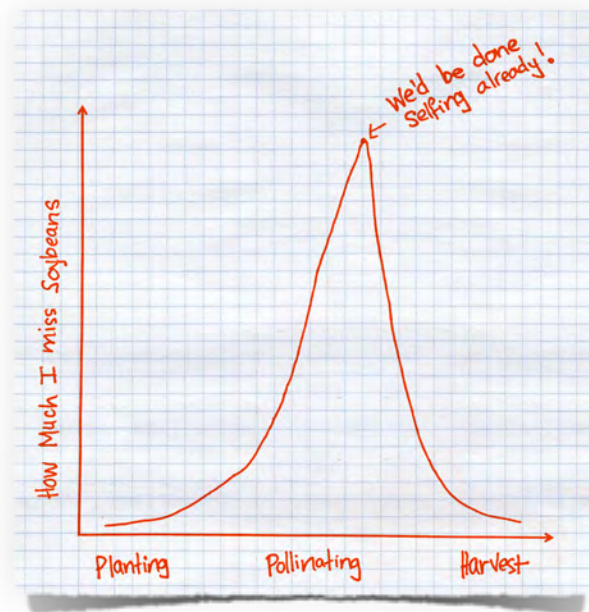


Figure 6. Susan's Learning Curve

Tuesday Morning Art Class (Figure 6). I cannot say I blame her. It took me about 3 years after switching to corn before I stopped thinking that during pollinating season.

Where I am trying to go with the article, whether I am succeeding or not, is to illustrate (ha!) that we are always learning at 3MG. We continually strive to improve, whether that is trying new ways of doing things or purchasing new equipment and learning how to use it properly. We push ourselves to the limits, even if sometimes that means face-planting into a cliff when you do something like decide to start a new business one month before planting (Figure 7). We do not give up, climbing the Slope (or scaling the Cliff) of Enlightenment, knowing that we will get to the top. At North right now the Plateau of Productivity feels a lot like the Sea of Tranquility.

Is this a good time to mention that I do not actually know how to sail a boat?

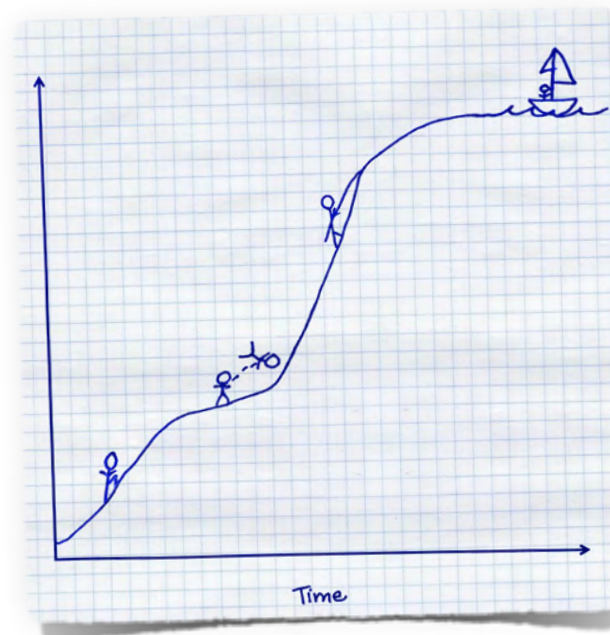


Figure 7. Raechel's Learning Curve

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Doreen Perez

We are breaking from tradition a little bit with this month's Employee Spotlight by including a temporary worker, Doreen Perez. Doreen has worked with 3MG for 4 years on a seasonal basis and has made quite an impact on us. She was born in Brooklyn, New York and raised in Santa Isabel, PR. She holds a nursing certificate from Metro College. Doreen works in various areas including: planting preparation, shelling, shipment packing and moisture tests. She is one of the most conscientious and diligent employees we have. She is not afraid to take on responsibility and has a gift for facilitating teamwork. We are so grateful to her for all her labors.

Q. What do you like most about working here?

A. I like the team of people I work with.

Q. What advice would you give to a prospective employee?

A. Give your all and learn all you can.

Q. What is your personal philosophy?

A. When times are bad, put on a good face.

Q. How do you define success?

A. Teamwork.

Q. What are your hobbies?

A. I watch sports — especially Baseball. I am a Yankees fan.

Q. What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your lifetime?

A. The loss of my son. Everything else I can get through.

Q. If you could be any animal, which animal would you be and why?

A. Well... I would not want to be a pig because I would be eaten. I would be a bird, because they are free and can go anywhere.



Sylvia Oquendo

Sylvia Oquendo is an Assistant Project Manager in Research and Development who has worked with us since 2013. She holds a BS from University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez in Industrial Microbiology with a focus on Food Science and a minor in Mycology. She is a multi-talented woman who has a hand in every phase of our agricultural processes. She does a bit of everything: mapping, planting preparation, planting, field management, shelling, advances, employee supervision and she is our in-house color sorter master. She was born in Miami and was raised in Dorado, Puerto Rico. She has a wonderful way of maintaining a positive attitude and is a pleasure to work with.

Q. What do you like most about working at 3MG?

A. I like the way working here challenges me. I have learned a lot here, particularly because it is out of my scope of study. I am grateful that I have the opportunity to continually learn and grow.

Q. What three traits define you?

A. Responsible, dedicated and easy going.

Q. What does true leadership mean to you?

A. It is the ability to teach others so that they may grow and be productive independently.

Q. Do you have a family of your own?

A. No, but I am engaged to the BEST future husband in the world.

Q. What are your hobbies?

A. Reading- I love it, music, tourism and I also play the drums (not too many people know that).

Q. What is the one thing you cannot live without?

A. Coffee. Gotta have it.



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

by Erin Rodríguez

As many of you know, 3MG has two locations, one in Puerto Rico and one in Minnesota, but did you know that we have test plots in other states and locations? This has proven to be an advantage not only for our company but also for our service customers. When 3MG North is focusing on winter tasks, 3MG Caribe is in full swing of our high season and vice versa. When Caribe is moving into the dog days of summer our work load is less and North is busy pollinating or doing third generation inbred conversions. By offering services in distinct climates and latitudes we are able to broaden our experience and knowledge base- more importantly, our customers are able to benefit from our ability to do 3 generations of advances or inbred conversions in one year in two locations.

This is what makes 3MG unique: we are able to provide more comprehensive services that extend beyond two locations or two generations. We have test plots in various mid-western states that help us provide our clients with geographical diversity that is imperative to the success of each project. We are conscientious of the fact that there are many factors that affect crops and each client's needs are distinct. We choose locations based on the analysis of each customer's needs.

We work hard to ensure that our services create real value for each of our customers while tailoring each service to their individual needs and specifications. We believe in providing personalized service. Our clients are not homogenous in their needs, and for this reason we avoid the cookie cutter approach to our service work. We take care in planning where each crop will be planted, what agronomic methods are used, and how we can produce the best result for each of them.

We work together to continually improve our work force, our educational base, and our processes. This educational growth is aided by our diverse locations. We are able to better develop our skills and the skills of our workers by learning about the effects that climate, latitude, and location have on different crops and process. This is a continual practice, and one that is constantly evolving. We continue to scout new locations and utilize our employee cross training program to develop and improve our skills.

As a service company, we do our best to maintain a competitive edge. We do that by anticipating the needs of our diverse client base and expanding our offerings accordingly. We look forward to growing and expanding together in various ways, and the addition of more locations is just one aspect of that growth. Thank you for trusting us with your projects. Rest assured that we are doing all we can to ensure their success.



Contributors

Ed Baumgartner
President

Erin Rodríguez
Editor, Assistant Marketing Manager

Raechel Baumgartner
Assistant Editor

Wade Roemeling
Contributor

Alexis González
Creative Design

Some photos courtesy of Lou Peña
Photography and used with permission
from the artist.

We thank our staff at all our locations for
providing us with support as well as many
of the photographs used on our articles.
Keep on contributing!

All brands and trademarks mentioned are
property of their respective owners.

GENETIC ALTERNATIVES

a 3rd Millennium Genetics LLC Publication

3rd Millennium Genetics LLC

PO Box 818 Santa Isabel, PR 00757

www.3mgpr.com

787-845-4600

© 2016 3rd Millennium Genetics LLC. All Rights
Reserved. Unauthorized reproduction prohibited.



Established in 2005, 3rd Millennium Genetics is a multi-faceted company that is dedicated to providing our customers with improved genetic alternatives through diverse products and excellent service programs. We now have two locations that enable us to take advantage of distinct climates and environmental factors to offer a wide range of services that produce better products and more in-depth research results. We take pride in offering our customers the highest quality products and superior service required to make your projects successful, sustainable and productive.