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Welcome to Safety Culture Excellence. Today's topic: The Legacy We Leave Behind. My name is Shawn Galloway, and I'm proud to be your host.

Greetings from Cleveland, Ohio. We often joke that when it comes to safety, there are two kinds of people - those who care and those who don't. Those who don't care about safety; well, they don't get involved. Those who do; well, they're like you. They do get involved. And I believe I'm speaking with the people who do care about the safety of others. So this message is for you today.

I'd like to begin with a question. What kind of legacy will you leave behind? We often try to create a better world for our children. Why do we not extend those same thoughts to those we work with and support? We strive to leave a positive memory with those we touch through our personal lives. Are you looking at your professional efforts in the same manner?

If you knew you only had six months left in your job, what would you do to create the best safety culture of success and support, knowing that people will have to carry on once you're gone? Do you care enough about the people to ensure their well-being after you're gone? I'm sure that you do.

So I'd like to introduce to you a book that I've just finished reading called *The Last Lecture* by a great man that I admire and who's a braver person than I think I could ever be. His name is Professor Randy Pausch who, up until recently, was a professor at Carnegie Mellon.

Professor Pausch was asked to give a talk on September 18, 2007 that asked two questions. What wisdom would you want to impart on the world if you knew it was your last chance? And the second, if you had to vanish tomorrow, what would you want to leave as your legacy? The sad irony was Professor Pausch was already contemplating these questions as he, at the time, was recently diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer.

He delivered a talk called *Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams*. There are two recommendations I hope you take away from today's podcast. As soon as possible, find some time in your life to accomplish two things: watch this lecture, which currently can be found in its 76-minute entirety on YouTube, and read his follow-up book, *The Last Lecture*, that he wrote with the help of Jeffrey Zaslow.

The introduction of this book as it was written goes like this: "I have an engineering problem. While for the most part, I'm in terrific physical shape, I have ten tumors in my liver and I only have a few months to live. I am the father of three young children and married to the woman of my dreams. While I could easily feel sorry for myself, that wouldn't do them or me any good. So how to spend my very limited time?

"The obvious part is being with and taking care of my family. While I still can, I embrace every moment with them and do the logistical things necessary to ease their path into a life without me. The less obvious part is how to teach my children what I would've taught them over the next 20 years. They are too young now to have those conversations.

"All parents want to teach their children right from wrong, what we think is important, and how to deal with the challenges life will bring. We also want them to know some stories from our own lives often as a way

to teach them how to lead theirs. My desire to do that led me to give a last lecture at Carnegie Mellon University.

"These lectures are routinely videotaped. I knew what I was doing that day. Under the ruse of giving an academic lecture, I was trying to put myself in a bottle that would one day wash up on the beach for my children. If I were a painter, I would've painted for them. If I were a musician, I would've composed music. But I am a lecturer, so I lectured.

"I lectured about the joy of life, about how much I appreciated life even with so little of my own left. I talked about honesty, integrity, gratitude, and other things I hold dear. And I tried very hard not to be boring. This book is a way for me to continue what I began on stage because time is precious, and I want to spend all that I can with my kids. I asked Jeffery Zaslow for help.

"Each day, I ride my bike around my neighborhood, getting exercise crucial for my health. On 53 long bike rides, I spoke to Jeff on my cell phone headset. He then spent countless hours helping to turn my stories – I suppose we could call them 53 lectures – into the book that follows. We knew right from the start none of this is a replacement for a living parent, but engineering isn't about perfect solutions. It's about doing the best you can with limited resources. Both the lecture and this book are my attempts to do exactly that."

I feel so strongly about the importance of the lessons you'll find in this book, that the first five people who e-mail us with their mailing address following the release of this podcast, I'll personally send you a copy. I believe that all adults should read this book, for it highlights the important things in life and how you need to really work to create a positive, memorable experience with others.

As you heard, when I quoted the introduction, his theme throughout was based on three areas: honesty, integrity, and gratitude. I believe these are very strong virtues. So thinking specifically about these powerful three, what kind of positive legacy will you leave with your safety culture?

Again, the goal isn't just organizational metrics improvement, the goal is keeping people safe wherever they are so they can continue to strengthen their own personal legacy.

Until next time, remember: "In safety, prevention trumps reaction." For more information on Safety Culture Excellence, or if you have a topic to suggest, please e-mail us at podcast@proactsafety.com.