

"About Roads and Geometric Lines"

In order to achieve a goal, there is a long way to go, at times clearly marked, at times altered by the passing of time, and at times not even there, thus, it must be built.

To reach the goal, the achievement of a project, no matter how simple, a number of steps should be followed.

The first –unavoidable and mandatory– step of this long road is to decide what we want to achieve.

Creative situations exemplify this moment. That is the case of a painter in front of his white canvas, a writer facing his empty page or –nowadays– his computer screen with just the title on it, an advertising designer observing once and again the product to be promoted. But it could also refer to other group activities, such as solving certain problems of our profession, and definitely refer to organizational issues.

On this first stage, which may be called the creative stage, dreaming is allowed, recommended and healthy. A wrong brushstroke or a failed paragraph is acceptable. In the case of group projects, open exchange of ideas, brainstorming, spontaneous and intuitive arguments are welcome, because they help to build the goal.

If I wished to describe this process geometrically, it might be said that some ideas may follow a spiral, frequently downwards, which will inevitably become exhausted.

On other occasions, the idea follows a circular path, as if we were walking upon the arch of a circumference. We get away from the center and start from a zero degree point; we feel we are going forward, and when we reach 90 degrees we are proud of our progress, because we have toured a quarter of the circumference only to realize that the distance to its center, its radius, is exactly the same as in the starting point.

The road often follows a Greek key pattern. It forcefully moves to the right, stays there for a while, settling and forging alliances and, eventually forcefully goes back on its steps to the left, to acquire new partners and allies, and then it goes back for a second time and repeats the change of direction.

Sometimes, this change of direction is so fast that there is almost no time to settle down, since it has turned in the opposite direction immediately; that is the case of the zigzag road.

Fortunately, some ideas are gaining acceleration as a result of the boost provided by the acceptance of the majority; these ideas take an upwards spiral and help build the goals.

Just as a painter's wrong brushstroke or a writer's dull paragraph may be tolerated during this creative step, a change of direction made by the organizations may also be accepted. But it should be a brief step, an adjustment step; otherwise one would be wasting efforts and resources of all kinds when changing the objective.

The Argentine Society of Cardiology fixed a direction 75 years ago, successful in the academic and educational aspects, and has turned towards the community more than three decades ago through the Argentine Heart Foundation.

It would be unwise not to admit that, throughout this period, there have been major changes in the world, in the country, in medicine, in the way physicians relate to knowledge and in their relationship with patients, with government agencies, and with the industry, as well as in their needs and in the value given to scientific societies, just to mention a few discussion points.

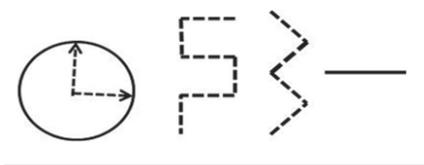
It is a challenge to keep all the positive elements of our Society plus adding and updating all the necessary features to make it grow.

This is why the Argentine Society of Cardiology (SAC), supported by a group of specialized professionals, is carrying out a strategic plan which will initially deal with the diagnosis of the situation; by collecting the opinion of multiple actors involved in our Society, and by defining the goals (the mission, in organizational terms) in order to achieve and sustain them in a medium-term.

This will be the creative step, where thoughts may follow different roads until we agree in the goal pursued.

The following step is to define the strategy to move from the point where we are towards the point in which we want to be. At this stage, the way forward should be chosen and maintained relentlessly.

We must remember that the shortest (and in this case, the best, in my opinion) distance between two dots is the straight line.



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