

by Julie Mais
Editor



Sharp curve ahead

*Over a cup of coffee on my morning commute,
I recently listened in on a conversation with a billionaire.*

Microsoft Corporation co-founder and philanthropist Bill Gates built his fortune as an entrepreneur. In addition to developing revolutionary software for the personal computer, the once Harvard student is considered an extremely intelligent individual who can seemingly become an expert in many fields.

While a guest on a podcast, Gates answered the host's questions: "Does your brain have any deficits? Is there any price to the aptitude you have in these other areas?"

Gates laughed and answered he's not that great socially and cannot cook well or speak other languages fluently.

He continued, "Sometimes when I'm learning something new, it does take me a while to adopt to it ... It's more confusing than I expected it to be."

He credited his success to a simple mindset — be a student.

"Be willing to be confused," he suggested. "Most adults, the minute they start getting confused, they're like, 'This isn't for me. I'm not good at this.' But you have to feel good about, 'Wow, I just jumped in here and I'm so confused.' Eventually pursue things that don't fit until they really do."

I had the pleasure of attending the 137th Angus Annual Meeting in November. While we will have lots of meeting coverage to share with you



next issue, I did want to highlight a few words from keynote speaker Kevin Ochsner. "We can learn a lot from other businesses," he said. And there is wisdom in being able to anticipate consequences and turns in the road.

Ochsner said, "Now, Bill Gates has not always been a friend to agriculture, but he has some wisdom as one of the fellas who've built more wealth than anybody in the nation's history, and he said this, 'IBM was more dominant than any company there'll ever be in technology, and yet they missed a few key turns in the road.' Now that makes you wake every day thinking, 'Let's try to make sure today is not the day we missed a key turn in the road.'"

As breeders navigating the beef industry, Ochsner said it's your responsibility to not miss the turn in the road.

"The genetics you're creating today to create that herd bull that goes to that commercial cow outfit ... We're not going to be eating that steak for

another five years, are we?" he said. "It's critically important that you anticipate and recognize the turns in the road."

What turn in the road did Bill Gates just about miss? It was the internet, Ochsner explained. "He was focused on software, and he said, 'There came a point in time when I recognized that this was not going to be as much about software computing power. It was going to be about communication networks, and the internet was fundamentally changing communication networks.'"

Ochsner added, "Each one of us owe it to ourselves to spend some time identifying those epiphanies in our mind and saying, 'What does that mean to us as a cattle breeder and association?'"

The road that is 2020 has certainly thrown us some sharp curves. And while a global pandemic and horrific natural disasters cannot always be anticipated, as Ochsner advised, spend some time thinking about the future and how the Angus breed can be a beacon for the beef industry.

On behalf of the *Angus Journal* team and Angus Media, we wish you a very merry Christmas. 



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