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# Analyzing Systems: Why Do It That Way?

Kevin Lee Elder

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# Analyzing systems: Why do it that way?

When analyzing a system to see what the problem really is, not what the symptoms are, I teach my students to interact with the users or customers and try to determine not only what the current state of the system is, but also determine how it got that way.



Kevin Elder

An important question to ask is, "Who said to do it that way?" If we don't understand how a system got into its current condition, we are doomed to repeat the same mistakes in the next system.

I often tell my students and clients the story of the standard width of railroad tracks. While probably not entirely true, it makes a lasting impression and reinforces my point.

Does the statement "We've always done it that way" ring any bells? "That is our stan-

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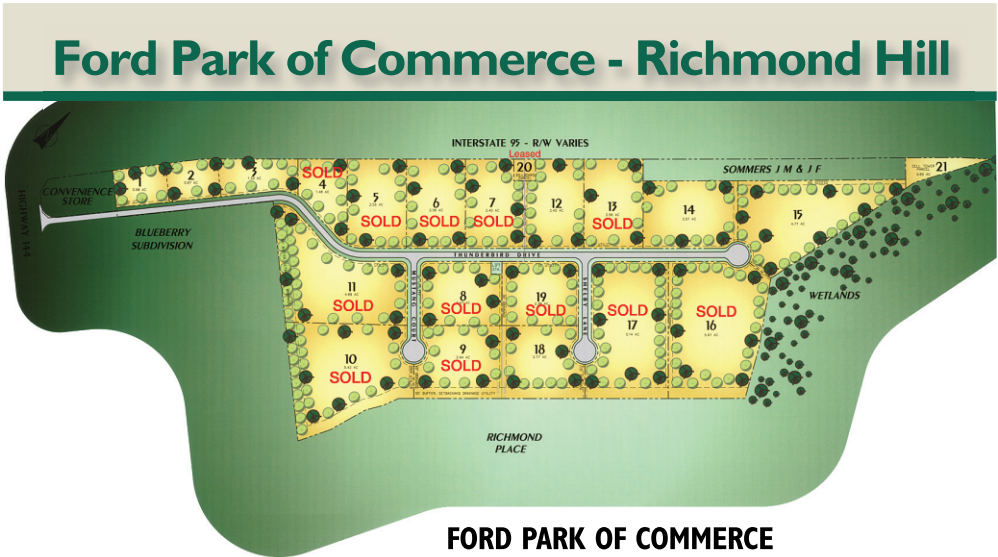
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