

Plain Talk

Jump, Frog, Jump

COLUMN BY ROB BUKSAR

A number of years ago the Russians did a bunch of experiments with frogs trying to determine their viability for space travel. One research project in particular reminds me of the evolution of our industry so I thought I'd share it with you.



Four Russian scientists (with clipboards) were standing around an examination table with a live frog lying in the middle, motionless. A medical doctor was standing at the head of the table with a surgical scalpel in hand. Once all the video and recording equipment was turned on the experiment proceeded.

The M.D. with great care and precision cut off the frog's left front leg. Once the bleeding stopped and the frog was sewn up, it was commanded: "Jump, frog, jump!"

The frog jumped.

The recorded conclusion was as follows: Frog with left front leg removed when commanded to jump did, in fact, jump.

A few moments later with a little less care and next to no precision, the M.D. cut off the frog's right front leg. Not waiting for the bleeding to stop the frog was commanded to jump—and it did. Again it was recorded that the frog with both left and right legs removed would jump when commanded to do so.

Once again the M.D. took a long, critical look at the frog. He reached into his vest pocket and pulled out some nail clippers. He then snipped off the frog's right rear leg with the clippers. Again the frog was commanded, "Jump, frog, jump!"

To everyone's pleasant surprise, the frog jumped. The back slapping went on for an hour.

Once the euphoria died down the Russian M.D. performed his last surgical act. He literally tore the frog's remaining leg right off by hand—what a mess! The frog was now lying legless

and motionless in a pool of its own goo, gasping for breath and life itself. The frog was commanded to jump. It didn't move. "Jump, frog, jump" was commanded again and again yet the frog remained motionless.

After determining they were at the end of the road with this project, the scientists recorded the following conclusion: "After all four legs were removed from the test frog, the subject was commanded to jump numerous times with absolutely no response. It is our collective conclusion that our test frog, for reasons we still don't understand, has become hearing impaired. This is the final word we have concerning this issue."

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