

# REMEMBER, REGENERATE, REPEAT

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Written by Linda Banks

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*Tech CEO Harley Lippman's generosity  
affects the past, present, and future.*

It's a somber scene: A small group gathers in a wood where a black granite marker is unveiled. There is a speech or two, along with recited prayers. And finally, Jews who had long been forgotten save for the memories of a few—people who lie in mass graves on the outskirts of Polish towns—are mourned, blessed, and given eternal rest.

The job—finding the people who remember these mass shootings, finding the graves themselves, and making sure they're properly marked and recognized—falls to Harley Lippman, the CEO of the technology services firm Genesis10 and a member of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad. He was appointed to the commission in 2006, and to date, monuments

have been erected in Strzelce and Wólka Dobryńska, and additional mass gravesites have been identified at Brzyska Wola, Czernic, Dąbrowa, Feliksin, Godziszów, Jagiel, Kawęczyn, Krzywda, Przymiarki, Serokomla, Smuga, and Zdziłowice. The project speaks to something that a rabbi once told Lippman: One of the most important things you need to do to be a good person is to do something for someone who cannot say “thank you.”

“What I’m trying to do is give [the deceased] some honor and dignity in their death by finding where they [died] and having a memorial and a monument erected in its place,” Lippman explains.

One reason these deaths have gone mostly overlooked is simply because people didn’t know where



these graves were. Lippman's team combs through Poland, village by village, finding the people who, at the time, were children "old enough to be brave and young enough to be foolish." Most of them would have hidden behind a tree or barn and watched out of curiosity, haunted by what they saw, often too afraid to speak about it. In each village, Lippman's team starts by asking, "Where are your Jews resting?"

Lippman was told one out of every nine villages would provide an answer. "A lot of people won't say anything," he says. "There's a lot of mystery to a lot of this...these Poles were traumatized, too. There were 13-year-olds witnessing this, and it was pretty horrific."

Each grave and village has its own narrative, its own story. Eyewitnesses, priests, rabbis, villagers, and even schoolchildren take part in these memorial services to ensure that it's a true learning experience for all involved. But the project can't go on forever; the Poles who remember aren't getting any younger, and without them, much will be lost.

"Time is running out. They're in their early 90s, so we're being very aggressive about it," Lippman says.

It's a far cry from where Lippman's job has taken him as CEO and founder of Genesis10. Based in New York, Genesis10 is a professional technology services firm that provides staffing, workforce optimization, and domestic outsourcing solutions. It operates as

a hybrid service model, whereas most technology companies focus on hardware, software, or services. Genesis10 is in the services space, but its focus is as a search firm as well as providing IT people on a temporary basis. The company is the second-largest domestic IT outsourcer by location.

Big corporations generally use a lot of contingent labor. As Lippman describes it, Genesis10 "brings the third leg to the stool." Its model provides a lower cost alternative to doing the work on-site, which is important when working in a big city, where both labor and real estate are expensive. While some companies may have IT work done offshore in India or on-site, Genesis10 provides that work at its own locations throughout the United States, in low-cost areas that are rich in talent. Lippman says similar-sized competitors will either have offshore locations or partnerships where they give business to offshore firms. He, too, could have gone offshore and been successful doing so.

"Primarily, I didn't do it because I want to be a good American, I want to be a patriotic American, and I do want to provide jobs for Americans. There's a lot of ways to make money, but I want to feel good about how I make money, and I want to give back."

There are two types of people Genesis10 specifically aims to boost in the workforce: veterans and recent college graduates.

# "I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES."

Those who enroll in the Veterans Program are put through a reverse boot camp, where they're trained on how to adjust and be successful in the corporate world. They learn everything from how to create a résumé and promote themselves to the importance of networking, all of which is vastly different from the military, where their uniform was their résumé and it's much less common to mingle between ranks.

A similar program is in place for new graduates, who often come out of college with student loan debt, but without much direction. "Typically with college hire programs, young people come in, they may have a lot of energy and enthusiasm, but they don't really know what to do," Lippman says. "Our boot camp puts them on first base." The G10 Associates Program features a customized selection, training, and mentoring process.

"There are a lot of people making money in finance and other ways and I respect that—I could not do that. I want to make a difference in people's lives. I'm not religious, but in the Jewish religion, the highest form of being a good person is called *tzedakah*," For Lippman, that translates into providing someone with a livelihood.

But for all the highs that go along with providing someone with an opportunity come the lows of seeing opportunity taken away.

Cut to another somber scene—the morning of November 9, 2016. The day after the presidential election, Lippman—a fundraiser for Hillary Clinton—was somewhat "stunned." But speaking with him later that afternoon, under the tiredness and disappointment, one can hear the man who is no stranger to finding success from the depths of apparent defeat. After all, he made his late father's indebted company successful enough to sell for a profit without having any previous business background. He went on to found Triad Data Inc., and although it was successful initially, the 1991 recession hit hard and once again he was forced to find a way to turn the company around. He succeeded and sold the business, assuming a senior position under the new regime. When the company tanked under the new management, Lippman started over yet again—this time with a team of 12 former employees—and hasn't looked back.

This thirst for regeneration speaks to what he does outside of the business sphere, which is changing people's lives in a different way.

Thirteen years ago, he was in Cambodia with his family and encountered an orphanage outside of Siem Reap, the closest city to the world-famous temples of Angkor. When the orphanage lost its funding and Lippman heard the children were going to be out on the street, he decided to step in and fund it himself.

It's more than just providing the money needed: He is personally responsible for every one of the kids that goes through the

orphanage, from their schooling to their clothing to their meals. Lippman was happy to do so, but when he realized the orphans return to abject poverty once they turn 18, he started to focus on his area of expertise: job skills. The children, who don't have anyone to coach or mentor them, now learn English and computer skills that will help them become more attractive employees. He's put five orphans through college and assumes they're just the beginning.

"You really change people's lives in a way that is hard anywhere else. People give money to charities, but unfortunately, you never know how wisely or efficiently the money is spent," he says. "I knew that as a businessman, I would manage [the orphanage] with good outcomes and on a human level, with a bit of sensitivity."

He and his wife have always involved their three children in their charitable work, be it in Cambodia, Poland, or elsewhere. Part of it, he explains, is because sometimes kids grow up in a bubble in Manhattan. "I wanted them to realize how fortunate and privileged they were."

But he also wants them to feel the same sense of responsibility to help others that he does.

"You want to build a career so you can have a good life, enjoy what you're doing, raise a family, have children, and all that certainly consumes—for good reason—most people. But I always felt that making money was only useful to the point that I could do something to help others with it."

Whether it comes to making a decision about who is going to be hired, what candidate is going to be backed, or which causes are going to be supported, Lippman says there's something about the decision-making process that can't be quantified, and most people underestimate the importance of emotion in decision making.

"You know when you know," Lippman says, quoting his grandmother. "People don't realize how much emotional dynamics influence people...there's always an emotional component."

Lippman knows the work he's doing professionally and personally is worthwhile. After all, if he didn't do it, who would? **LM**