Why do we make everything so complicated?

The Last Word

by **BizTimes Staff**

April 03, 2017, 1:00 AM

Edward Schaefer

President and chief executive officer

First Federal Bank

134 Wisconsin Ave., Waukesha

Industry: Banking

Employees: 42

www.firstfederalwisconsin.com

Edward Schaefer is the president and chief executive officer of Waukesha-based First Federal Bank. He advises keeping things

"We can make things in life and business as simple or complicated as we want. Having worked my way up through the ranks from a teller to president and CEO, I have experienced many business management styles over the last 30 years.

"I have seen managers who lead in a simple, straightforward manner and those who complicate every aspect of the business. My experience shows that clear and concise leadership has always driven the best financial results. It also creates a positive work environment, where the team is engaged and enjoys coming to work every day.

"There is a reason that the 'KISS' principle and sayings like, 'It's not rocket science,' permeate business literature. It seems too many leaders complicate their businesses, to their own detriment.

"Here are a few examples of things that can make business more complicated:

"*The six-month budgeting process.* Simplify budgeting by giving your team the desired end result and let them work backward to achieve a budget. You create buy-in and a stronger team environment.

https://www.biztimes.com/2017/magazines/biztimes-milwaukee/current-issue/why-do-we-make-everything-so-complicated/

"*The annual incentive plan with too many goals*. Uncomplicate goal-setting by giving your direct reports no more than five clear and concise goals. You will be surprised by their performance.

"'*I don't know what I want, but I'll know it when I see it.*' Replace this demotivating approach to solving your business problems. You need to clearly outline the objectives and results that need to be achieved.

"Business and leadership naturally come with complexity. You need to model the restraint it takes to turn away from the desire to make things more complex than they need to be.

"We should all step back, take a breath and ask ourselves, 'Is there a simpler way to complete this task or to reach our goal?'

"Uncomplicate your business and success will follow."