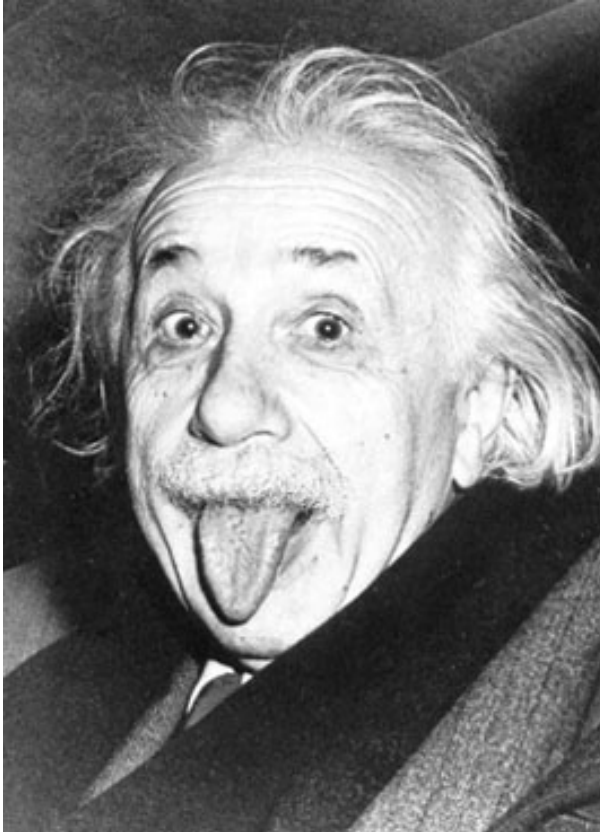


## Pure Insanity

Written by {ga=jerryroche}

Monday, October 17 2011 6:47 AM - Last Updated Monday, October 17 2011 10:07 AM

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Here we go again.

“Shurmur is in way over his head.” “The offense stinks.” “The special teams suck.” “Colt is not the answer.” “We want Mangini back!”

Insanity, Albert Einstein once said, is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. That qualifies many Browns fans—maybe even you—as insane.

You bitched when Chris Palmer was head coach. You bitched when Butch Davis was head coach. You bitched when Romeo Crennel and Eric Mangini were head coach. So Lerner fired ‘em all, Palmer after just two years, Davis after three, Crennel after four, and Mangini after just two.

You bitched about Tim Couch. You bitched about Jake Delhomme. You bitched about Brady Quinn and Charlie Frye and Jeff Garcia. So the Browns fired ‘em all.

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And what do we have to show for it? Eleven out of 12 losing seasons, working on No. 13. Ergo, running so many head coaches, so many quarterbacks, so many offensive and defensive schemes through Berea in 12 short years can easily be considered pure insanity.

Given the possible exception of Romeo (who WAS in way over his head), Randy Lerner and the fans simply have not afforded their coaching choices time enough to save the team and the organization from itself. That's no way to run a business, and Lerner's impatience has been exacerbated by the impatience of the fans.

Now, today, many are already screaming for a new head coach after just five games—two of which the Browns have actually won!

Insane.

The great majority of you who want to oust Shurmur and demote McCoy say you've run out of patience, citing the team's record since coming back to the NFL in 1999. "We've been patient long enough!" you say. But that's just it: you've been patient with the team, but—like the owner—you've been anything BUT patient with the coaching and quarterbacking.

Patience is suffering through three or four losing seasons with the same head coach, hoping that he will be able to resurrect the team in his fifth or sixth or even seventh season. That's not an approach that Browns fans are known for.

How about injecting a little sanity in the proceedings? How about more patience with this management, this batch of coaches and players?

Pat Shurmur is a rookie head coach and Colt McCoy a near-rookie QB, but team president Mike Holmgren and general manager Tom Heckert are proven winners with excellent track records—and they're the ones who chose Shurmur and McCoy. By all measure, they know what they are doing. So how about giving them, at the very least, three or four seasons to see if

they can bring a title to the south shore of Lake Woebegone, er, Lake Erie?

The great Chuck Noll needed six seasons as a head coach to sculpt the Pittsburgh Steelers into a Super Bowl champion. The great Bill Belichick needed seven seasons as a head coach (five with the Browns) before he took the New England Patriots to a Super Bowl championship.

And you want to get rid of Shurmer after five games?

Same with the quarterback situation. McCoy has exactly 13 games—not even one full NFL season—under his belt. He is still young, still developing, still figuring out defenses, still trying to catch up to the speed of the NFL game. Just because Cam Newton can step in and put up ungodly numbers in his rookie year, Browns fans expect their quarterback to do the same. But very few NFL QBs are successful their first year in the league—from Tom Brady, Drew Brees and Aaron Rodgers all the way back to Johnny Unitas and Len Dawson.

It's more than evident that Holmgren and Shurmur have made some mistakes already this season, Holmgren for not signing fullback Peyton Hillis to a new contract and Shurmur for inexplicably not involving the team's top offensive threats in the offense. That's the point. There will be some mistakes along the way. Nobody's perfect. (Good grief, do you remember the basket case that Belichick was during his tenure here?)

Any philosopher, theologian or businessman will tell you that the key to success is not starting anew every two or three years. They will tell you that the key to success is building a strong base of operations, taking your lumps, learning from them, staying the course, and building the organization. It's true in life, and it's true in sports.

So let's give stability a chance. Let's see if Shurmur can grow into his role. Let's see if, over the course of the next two or three years, Heckert and Holmgren can supply the new head coach with the players to build a contender. And let's at least give Colt the rest of the season to prove himself, before we start talking about Matt Barkley or Robert Griffin III.

Let's give sanity a chance.