https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host



https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

Welcome to Brainfluence, where author and international keynote speaker Roger Dooley has weekly conversations with thought leaders and world class experts. Every episode shows you how to improve your business with advice based on science or data.

Roger's new book, *Friction,* is published by McGraw Hill and is now available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and bookstores everywhere. Dr Robert Cialdini described the book as, "Blinding insight," and Nobel winner Dr. Richard Claimer said, "Reading Friction will arm any manager with a mental can of WD40."

To learn more, go to RogerDooley.com/Friction, or just visit the book seller of your choice.

Now, here's Roger.

Roger Dooley: Welcome to Brainfluence. I'm Roger Dooley.

To say I'm excited to have today's guest on the show would be a huge understatement. Scott Adams is the creator of Dilbert, a comic strip that has exposed this absurd side of business for more than 30 years. Today this strip has an estimated 150 million readers across 65 countries.

To prove my fan credentials, I've had a little stuffed Dilbert sitting on my bookshelf for at least 15 years through at least four different offices. And 10 years ago I wrote a blog post, Neuromarketing, featuring a Dilbert cartoon in which Dilbert invents a device that scans brains and predicts buying intentions. At the time I commented that neuromarketing is going mainstream when it shows up in Dilbert. Much more recently in my book Friction, I feature a quote from Elon Musk

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

who said, "Pick common sense as your guide. If following a company rule is obviously ridiculous in a particular situation such that it would make for a great Dilbert cartoon, then the rule should change.

Roger Dooley: So those are my fandom credentials and I'll also point out that Scott just does not do Dilbert. He also publishes daily video streams on the Periscope app titled, Coffee with Scott Adams. And at the time that we're recording this he is just past the 800 episode mark. And what you might not know about Scott Adams also is that he thinks a lot about psychology and persuasion. Based on Donald Trump's messaging, he predicted Trump would win before the 2016 election. He later wrote a book on the topic, Win Bigly. Overall Scott has dozens of books in print including two number one New York Times Best Sellers. His most recent title is Loserthink: How Untrained Brains Are Ruining America.

Roger Dooley: Scott, welcome to the show.

Scott Adams: Thanks for having me.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. Scott something that amazes me is that you never seem to run out of material for Dilbert. The humor works because the business situations resonate with your readers. And you talk about terrible customer experience, complex and nonsensical procedures, crazy bureaucracy. Do you ever get frustrated that after years of you mocking the absurd way that we do business things really haven't gotten much better?

Scott Adams: No, because I found a way to monetize my own frustration. When I see things that are terribly inefficient or absurd, the first thing I think is, "Oh, I guess I don't have to think

The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley <a href="http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast">http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast</a>

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

too hard tomorrow about my comic". I managed to find a way to take the worst parts about being alive and turned it into money. That won't work for everybody but it works for me.

- Roger Dooley: Right. Well that's great. Well, I think that there are people who monetize solving problems of this sort. So there are some practitioners out there too. But it just seems like we've made so little progress over the years. But I guess at least you've got an endless source of new material.
- Scott Adams: That's right. So nothing really changes. As long as there are people being people and you have a hierarchy, people will act the same silly ways in pretty much every hierarchy. The only thing that changes is the buzzwords and the technology maybe. And sometimes you've got an open office and sometimes you've got a cubicle, but mostly that's cosmetic. People are people and they act the same everywhere.
- Roger Dooley: Yeah. One example that resonated with me actually appeared about 23 years ago in 1997 and featured a character named Mordac The Preventer, from the IT department as an illustration of how little things change. His job is to deny requests for work from other departments and basically inflict other pain on everyone else. And you haven't used Mordac as a character in a long time. But I can assure you that most of our listeners have their own real life Mordac in their organizations today. I guess that indicates it is true that you will never run out of material.
- Scott Adams: Well you just wrote my next comic because the great thing about having a comic that runs every day for 30 years is that I do get to repeat because people aren't going to remember the one I did 23 years ago. As long as I add something new to

The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley <a href="http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast">http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast</a>

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

it, different characters, slightly different situation. But you can take the same frustration which is in this case that the information services people are more problem than help. And you could generalize that to a lot of different jokes.

Roger Dooley: No doubt. Yeah. One thing that's surprised me, Scott, is the international popularity of Dilbert. I guess the humor works across cultures. Are there countries where it just doesn't resonate or are there some where it resonates even more because they're even more messed up and bureaucratic than we are here in the States?

Scott Adams: Well, Dilbert tends to work best wherever there's a large English speaking population. So in order of popularity, it's the US, Canada, Australia. I think you're about to eye Great Britain. And then you end up with say Germany for example, because there are a lot of the business people speak English. But when you get to say Japan and China, you have such a different cultural situation that it doesn't work the same way there except for the expats and English speaking people. But in Japan for example, what I heard was that people would not be so ready to criticize their own management, partly socially and partly because would it would be really bad for your career. Whereas in the United States and other countries we're sort of famously rebellious. And criticizing the hand that feeds us is pretty much built into our DNA over here. Dilbert works well where you can count on people to celebrate the stupidity of their boss in a semi-public way that doesn't work everywhere.

Roger Dooley: I can definitely imagine some environments where criticizing bureaucracy or criticizing your boss would not be all that well received.

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

Scott Adams: Right. So you got to call your shots.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. Scott, when did you get interested in persuasion

and psychology?

Scott Adams: Well, it started when I was a kid actually because my mother, we used to tell the story of being hypnotized by our family doctor when she gave birth to my younger sister. And the way she told the story, and I have no way to know how much of this is true and how much is false memory or anything else. But the way she told the story is that she was aware of the birth. She was awake in the sense that she could see it and react and stuff. But that she didn't feel pain which was the whole point of the hypnosis. Now, I signed up for a hypnosis class in my 20s because to me that seemed like some kind of a weird superpower and I didn't know how far that went. Is it limited to some people who can make pain go away? There were much bigger claims.

Scott Adams: I took the class and that started me. I became a hypnotist.

But it started me on a lifelong interest in persuasion in general which turns out to be super useful on top of whatever other skill you have. In my case I write. If you are a writer being persuasive is terribly essential to what you do. But if you were in sales or marketing or you could think of dozens of other jobs where you have to persuade people. It's a good thing to add to anything. I've always been interested. I call myself a student of persuasion, not an expert. But other people call me an expert because they see me around a lot.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, well, I think skills in persuasion or influence or just sort of human psychology serve all of us pretty well regardless of our role. I mean everybody has to interact with other people

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

and often we have to try and get other people to do stuff. Whether we're trying to get a coworker to do something, our boss, or somebody that works for us, that's a valuable skill. So undoubtedly serves us all well.

Roger Dooley: Your new book, Loserthink, describes how people think in ways that really don't serve them or others well. Some might be called cognitive biases others might be called, I don't know, cognitive errors. I'm not sure if that's a term or if I just invented it. But one of the ones that you point out in there is mind reading and explain how that is a bad thing.

Scott Adams: Well, you can see this on display if you're watching any American politics. You'll see people say, "Well you did X, but what you were really thinking or your real motive or your super secret intention was this". And they make their decisions based on what a stranger believes about the inner thoughts of somebody else. And as crazy as that sounds it is so widespread that you don't even notice it anymore. It's so ordinary that we barely notice. I started calling it out in my book, Loserthink. And at least the people who have read that book are starting to notice it everywhere. Especially in let's say the impeachment proceedings. You see both sides saying, "Well, what you really meant to do". And of course there's no evidence for that. It's just purely mind reading or the illusion of mind reading.

Scott Adams: That's probably the biggest problem that humans have communicating, which goes back to the fact that it's impossible to communicate anything important anyway, without trust. If you don't think you can trust the person who is telling you something you automatically jump to mind reading. Say, "Well,

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

why are you saying this? Is there something in this for you?" Trust is the first thing you got to get right.

- Roger Dooley: I guess a Malcolm Gladwell's latest book, Talking to Strangers, has kind of that same thing pointing out that humans are really bad at understanding what's going on in someone else's mind. And this has led to some really bad and occasionally fatal misunderstandings.
- Scott Adams: Well, it's not just that. It's not that we're bad at it. It's that we're bad at it, but we think we're good at it. So it's the worst possible combination. If we were bad at it and we knew we were bad at it we wouldn't really have much of a problem. It's the thinking we're good at it that makes it all go south.
- Roger Dooley: Yeah. I think it's maybe related too to a tendency for people to make leaps about other's beliefs given one statement. I know this is an actual example from a real conversation I heard and one person said something positive, vaguely positive about Trump. I forget what it was. Maybe I prefer Trump to Clinton or Trump has accomplished a few things while he's been in office, something pretty innocuous like that. And the second person replied, "So you deny the Holocaust happened". A complete non-sequitur. But I think that may be a crazy example. But it's that type of thinking is pretty common. You assume that because somebody agrees with a person or with a statement or even some part of a philosophy that everything else goes with that. And of course that's rarely true.
- Scott Adams: That example hits a little close to home because if you, I think it's still true, if you were to Google my name you would see people saying that I'm a Holocaust denier. Now, of course I'm not. But the internet doesn't know the difference. And that

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

came from the fact that years ago I once said, "that official number of the people who died in the Holocaust? I'm suspicious that you can be accurate," which is different from saying there is or is not a Holocaust. If you're off by 10 people that doesn't really change things, right? Still, the Holocaust. So I just sort of off offhand, I said, "You should always doubt the accuracy of official numbers". But obviously that has nothing to do with whether the Holocaust happened or didn't happen. But it's easy for people to say, "Well, if he's doubting the number he's really thinking he doubts the whole thing". And that's just crazy.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. Well, I guess maybe in your book you talk about climate change. And that might be kind of a related belief because I'm sure when the world of Twitter, where everybody gets to express themselves in under 300 characters, soundbites, there's not very much nuance. And I would guess that some folks would claim that you are a climate change, a hoax believer. That climate change is a hoax and it's completely false. And I'm guessing that is a mischaracterization of your beliefs. Correct?

Scott Adams: Yeah. As you say, nuance always gets lost on social media. The way I look at the topic is I think different then anybody else. So whether you're pro or con you're probably not quite looking at it this way and maybe you should. And that is to divide the topic into three parts. One is the basic science, the chemistry, the physics. And I say probably the scientists are good at that. Meaning that it's in a domain which you would expect that years and years and thousands of scientists testing and retesting, they probably have a really good handle that if you add a certain gas to a certain situation it can raise the temperature or not. That part's probably pretty credible.

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

Scott Adams: The second part is the predictions, their projections that they make. Now as soon as you get into multi-decade predictions you're in a very sketchy territory. But still I would say it might be still directionally correct that temperatures will be rising. But here again like in my prior example, you have to be real careful about how, let's say how confident they seem to be. Because if you have a situation where hundreds of people are making different models with different assumptions, which is the case with climate science models, and all of the ones that we keep we're able to hind cast, meaning that if you ran them backwards through time they would seem to match what we experienced historically.

Scott Adams: Now, the hard part is whether they continue to predict.

And if you've got hundreds of them next year you say, "Okay, how many of my hundreds we're close enough"? And you throw away a few that were not close. Then next year you do the same. But in that time a few new ones have been introduced. So if as long as you're continually introducing new models you have a situation where you can convince yourself that they're predicting. But all you have is a lot of models that go in the same direction and some are going to be closer than others.

Scott Adams: You get a false sense of whether you're predicting or whether you're just weeding out the things that didn't work. And of course you end up with the things that worked. But not necessarily because they were right. Could be necessarily because out of hundreds of models somebody who was going to be closer than everybody else. So that part you have to take with a grain of salt. But it's probably still generally true that temperatures are going to go up. In other words, if I were to put a credibility on that it wouldn't be 100%, but it'd be 75% maybe. This is just me personally talking. I think the basic science,

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

probably greater than 90% chance, is correct. The prediction models are probably in the right direction, probably a 75% chance.

Scott Adams: But then there's a third part. And this is the part that really matters. And people don't like to talk about it, which is the economic part, because the economic part that follows from the other prediction models is the part that tells you what to do and how hard to do it and when to start. Because if you don't get the economics right, you don't know, does it make sense to wait? Have we developed such good prediction models that fewer people are going to die from hurricanes even if we have more of them? You've got this weird situation where people are predicting economics over 80 years, literally. And it's absurd because there's nothing that can be predicted economically over 80 years. Nothing. There's not a single thing that would be in that category where that wasn't just craziness.

Scott Adams: And the example I like to use is that we've got a number of companies, startup companies, who can suck CO2 right out of the air. In some cases turning it into things like jet fuel. And so where's that going to be in 10 years? We already have that technology, it already works. But they're just trying to make it more efficient so it's more economical. In 10 years that might be really be working and we might be done. In other words, well, we just need X number of these machines plus we need to plant a trillion trees and that's going well. You can't really predict 80 years out for economics. There are too many technological changes. Yeah, we could have fusion technology. We could have generation four nuclear in 20 years that's replacing all of our fossil fuels.

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

- Scott Adams: So that's the part that I think you should have deep skepticism in. But it's okay to be scared because it's the fear that makes people act and it's the acting on it that that makes us safe. In other words, people are going to have to do something different if the temperature really is going up every year. We're going to have to do something different and a little fear is a good way to get that kick started.
- Roger Dooley: Yeah. I don't want to spend too much time on that but I think it's a great example, Scott, of a sort of thinking about thinking. How do you look at a problem? Are you looking at it in a nuanced way? And some people may have different opinions but I think what we all want to avoid are the knee jerk opinions one way or the other. That unfortunately seems to happen on both sides of the argument.
- Roger Dooley: Anyway, continuing the thinking, thinking here, being an engineer by education, I liked the chapter about thinking like an engineer. And one aspect you talked about is one variable thinking or single variable thinking and that most issues or problems have multiple variables. But a common error is just to think about one aspect of it. You use the example of many pundits offering the big reason why Hillary lost the 2016 election. And unfortunately all the pundits had mostly different reasons. But everybody was ready to attribute it to the one thing that they thought was decisive.
- Roger Dooley: And I've seen that same thing happening in business where, especially in popular business magazines, they interview an entrepreneur that's achieved a lot of success. And so many times both the article and then the individual themselves attribute that company's success to one thing that they did really well. They hired all remote employees and were

The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley <a href="http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast">http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast</a>

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

able to build a great workforce or they had the most brilliant package design. When I think in reality just about every business success depends on a whole lot of things including timing and luck. But it's so easy to make a case for this is the one thing that really mattered. And so I take it you see that happening in business too?

Scott Adams: Yeah. And the theme of Loserthink is that people who have experience in different domains learn even if they don't know they're learning it, they learn different ways to think. And you wouldn't know you were lacking a certain window onto reality if you just hadn't been experienced in that domain. As you said, you have a background in engineering. So it leaps out at you as obvious that everything is really a system with lots of variables. And if you were to change really any one of many variables, if they were different, everything would fall apart. So you see that as obvious. But if you're an artist and somebody says, "The reason that Steve Jobs succeeded is because his passion". Well, you're an artist. So you say, "Well, that makes sense because he does seem passionate. That probably makes a difference. Yeah, it's the passion."

Scott Adams: Just your engineering experience allows you to look at these things and say, "No, there are a thousand variables here and you could move any one of these if it moved enough and Hillary doesn't get elected or does and that business either succeeds or doesn't based on all of those variables". Yeah, like you say, it's obvious to you. It's obvious to me. I worked with engineers for years and the background in economics and business school as well. I'm used to the multiple variable world. And so when I hear stuff like that, yes, that entrepreneur, he succeeded because of X. It just makes me crazy.

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

Roger Dooley: Yeah. Well it makes for more compelling content though. I mean, an article that really chronicles all the reasons and even of course, can't even name some of the reasons probably just wouldn't be all that readable.

Scott Adams: Right.

Roger Dooley: We're probably going to be subjected to that for years to come. Scott, one nugget in Loserthink that our listeners can learn from, I think is how you evolved from being a cartoonist into a political pundit focused on persuasion. Explain though what the takeaway in your book is on that.

Scott Adams: Well, in terms of technique I tell people that one of the most valuable things they can learn to do is to really kill their own ego. In other words, to learn how to suffer embarrassment without any ill effects. Now, I've done that by embarrassing myself in public so many times that I just don't even feel it anymore. And experience really matters there because the first few times you get deeply embarrassed. Let's say you're in your twenties and you really messed up. You say to yourself, "My life is over, tomorrow is going to be terrible, look what I've done." But then you wake up the next day and your breakfast stays exactly the same as the day before and you hardly even notice. Nobody cares. That's another thing you learn. Other people don't care so much about whatever embarrassed you. And then you just go on. So by the time you reach my age you realize that none of that matters. It's just stuff that's happening in other people's heads and has no impact on you. And frankly they don't even care about you that much.

Scott Adams: Back to your point. When I started live streaming on Periscope, it's a product that Twitter makes that lets you go live,

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

just hold up your mobile device and hit a couple of buttons and you're live to the world. And I started doing that in talking about some political stuff when the 2016 election was happening. And I enjoyed it but the audience was just brutal. People telling me I'm too old and ugly for a video type of product, that I'm boring, my lighting was wrong, my technology wasn't working, didn't like my topics. They hated me personally. They were mad because of something I said that maybe I didn't even say. It was this incredibly abusive environment which didn't bother me even a little, not even a little. But it's only because I have practice.

Scott Adams: I recommend and now the Periscopes have often 100,000 viewers and they tend to be really persuasive. I get repeated and picked up on a lot of different outlets. Yesterday for example, Rush Limbaugh talked at length about some stuff I was doing. I've penetrated the political world with the Periscopes and Twitter. And I was only able to do that because I could penetrate that really embarrassing phase where you're terrible at everything and you're not adding value. You just hope that you will someday. None of that ever bothered me. And so now that good place where there's some respect for what I'm doing. I figured out the technology and the lighting and pushed the camera further away so that people don't have to look at my big pumpkin size head and you just carry on.

Scott Adams: So success, I've noted, can often be stopped by people who don't want to make a mistake. And you have to learn to make the mistake because the mistake's going to teach you something and it's going to toughen you up. And if you're not making a lot of mistakes and you're not getting tough enough that's going to bite you later.

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

Roger Dooley: Well, it kind of relates to something you said elsewhere in the book and you say that two of your favorite sentences are, and I think this is a huge takeaway for our listeners. And that is that one, I don't know how to do that. And two, but I can figure it out. And I think that if you go through life with that attitude, that yes, this is something that's strange and new to me and I don't really know how to do it. But I'm capable of figuring it out because I see other people have figured it out. So it must be possible. You're going to accomplish a lot more than... I encounter so many people that have that attitude. I don't know how to do that. I should need somebody to teach me or I need to get some formal training when often it is possible to figure it out.

Scott Adams: Yeah. Or at least find somebody who can explain it to you and all that. I came up with that thinking right after college because I had one in college, a friend in particular, who whenever we didn't know how to do something, whether it was, I don't know, signing up for classes. It didn't matter what it was he would figure it out. And I thought well he just keeps doing that. I guess that's the thing, if you don't know how to do stuff you don't not do it. You go figure it out. And now we have the internet so you have no excuse at this point. If you can't find a tutorial on it you can certainly find a person who can explain it to you. That's one of the most important things in life is if you don't know how to do it you can figure it out.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. I just saw, I think it's a new book. I have not read the book or even seen it. But I heard about it on a podcast or saw it in an article and it was, the title of the book was Everything Is Figureoutable. That seems to sort of encapsulate that philosophy.

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

Scott Adams: Right? Yeah. I can't tell you how powerful that is because if you were to do an interview of 100 people who aren't getting what they want out of life, they'll tell you there's something that they want to do, they don't know how. And then you say, "What are you doing about it? How are you researching that?" And often it's like, well not. There's an air gap there. It's like, well, maybe you should spend five minutes a day just Googling and making a phone call and chip away at it. That's another piece of advice is the micro steps. If there's something that you want to do and it just seems too big and you can't get off the couch. Figure out what is the smallest thing that you can do. Maybe you just find a phone number and write it down for the next time. So whatever is the smallest step go ahead and do it. It adds up over time.

Roger Dooley: Yep. That's advice that I've heard too from productivity gurus like David Allen who says, "Don't put an item on your calendar like start writing a book or something because you're just never going to get started. Instead it might be something really simple. Come up with three title ideas or write one paragraph that defines the concept, write 100 words of the first chapter. Just something that is attainable and isn't going to seem like an overwhelming obstacle. It makes a huge amount of sense.

Scott Adams: Yeah. I've written a number of books now. And every time I start a book, and you're thinking I've got to write 300 pages or whatever, it's going to be, it's such a daunting, incredibly impossible mountain, that if you think about the whole thing you just get stunned into inactivity. But like you said, if you just think, "I'm going to try and bang out a page, I won't even proofread it and I don't commit to keeping it. I'm just going to

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

bang out a page and see what happens". And I find that that works really well for me.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. And even I probably chose a bad example because obviously most people wouldn't put I'll start writing a book on their calendar. But even much smaller tasks, write chapter one, could be pretty huge for a lot of people or create a table of contents could be an obstacle if you're not really sure what it's about. So just break it down into the smallest possible element that you can start making progress on.

Roger Dooley: Scott, I was about two thirds of the way through the book when I almost fell out of my seat because I got to a section titled Friction. And I've been researching and writing about the topic for years. And I hadn't realized that you were thinking along really, very similar lines and even use the exact wording that I use multiple times in my speeches and workshops, friction changes behavior. Once I recovered from my shock I looked and I did discover through a little bit of Googling that you have written about this topic occasionally before. But explain how friction fits your Loserthink concept.

Scott Adams: Well, first of all it's not a coincidence that you have an engineering background, can write on a topic like friction. But again, an artist might say, "A wall won't work, a border wall won't work because some people will just get a ladder. They'll climb over it". And that's one of the most widespread complaints about a border wall. And I don't want to get into the politics of it or even give you my opinion on any of that stuff. I'm just talking about the concept. The concept is, and the border people will tell you that, is they just want to slow them down because if you can slow them down then you send out the patrol car. You catch them before they got over the wall or at least you make

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

them go to a place that is easier to get across the border and that's where you put your other resources to pick them up.

Scott Adams: So friction works basically every time, all the time. It just doesn't solve a problem. It just moves you closer to a better situation. And most people think in the yes, no binary way. Does a wall work, yes or no? And people will pick a side and both sides are ridiculous. It's not that a wall works, it's that it creates friction and it's the friction that gives you more options for getting what you want.

Roger Dooley: It seems like we painted ourselves into a corner in this country at least. Maybe some other countries too because they've gotten so polarized where even the wall is a good example where, okay, either we're going to build this gigantic impermeable wall or that's a horrible idea. That's never going to work. There's not any middle ground or practical solution. It seems like it's almost impossible to pass bipartisan legislation these days because almost everything, not everything but almost everything, turns into a fight for political dominance and an effort to make the other side look bad. Do you have any hope for the future?

Scott Adams: In small ways, yes. Actually using the same example, early on in the fight about whether the border wall with Mexico would get funded or how it would get funded. I started yelling at the top of my social media lungs that what to put where because it was as if the politicians were saying, "We don't need a wall or walls don't work or whatever". But everybody still trusted the experts. Nobody was saying, "Well, the people who work there don't know if they need a wall or not." Nobody was saying that.

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

Scott Adams: And recently there was a breakthrough in which some money got allocated and it was bipartisan and they both said yes and the breakthrough was exactly that. The breakthrough was they decided instead of fighting with each other, Republican versus Democrat, they would both say, "Maybe we should just let the engineers figure out what goes where because there might be places where a wall makes sense. Places where using drones and patrol cars makes more sense." And as soon as they came to that common sense system, let the experts decide where it goes, then it was just a matter of allocating money.

Scott Adams: And it turns out they were willing to get a starter budget going and now there's progress. So you can see work arounds for all of this stuff. And that was one. I call it the high ground maneuver. The high ground in that case was to say the experts are the only ones who know what should go where. As soon as you hear that you stop, you abandon your old dumb argument where you're just arguing politically, whether it should or should not be a wall. And you pretty much... Everybody as soon as they hear that says, "Oh yeah, that makes sense. Why are we even talking about this? Let's have the engineers tell us what they need and how much it costs."

Roger Dooley: Well, common sense prevailing sounds like a great positive place to wrap up. Today we are speaking with Scott Adams, creator of Dilbert, author of dozens of books including his latest Loserthink: How Untrained Brains Are Ruining America. Scott, how can people find you?

Scott Adams: On Twitter, I'm at ScottAdamSays, all one word. And if you want to read the comic it's at dilbert.com

https://www.rogerdooley.com/scott-adams-loserthink

Roger Dooley: Great. Well, we will link to those places and to any other resources we mentioned on the show notes page at rogerdooley.com/podcast. And we'll have a text version of our conversation there too. Scott, thanks so much for being on the show.

Scott Adams: Thank you for having me. This was fun.

Thank you for tuning into this episode of Brainfluence. To find more episodes like this one, and to access all of Roger's online writing and resources, the best starting point is RogerDooley.com.

And remember, Roger's new book, *Friction*, is now available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and book sellers everywhere. Bestselling author Dan Pink calls it, "An important read," and Wharton Professor Dr. Joana Berger said, "You'll understand Friction's power and how to harness it."

For more information or for links to Amazon and other sellers, go to RogerDooley.com/Friction.