

August 25, 2019

“OLD SCHOOL MANAGEMENT” – FOLLOWED BY APOLOGIES

Last gasp before classes begin...

We come down to the start of the REAL reason for people being here with some remaining challenges and I made my first major mistake. Just about all the guys are moved in and the “pre-school” partying has been pretty intense... Saturday night was no different. But when I came down this morning, I noticed that boxes from the kitchen were empty and some of the supplies were gone, including the beverage dispensers, a box emptied of 6 frying pans, and some other items. I immediately leapt to a confusion... partyers had made off with our stuff.

I don't like to lose my cool and it does not happen very often. It was somewhat more common when I was running IT Infrastructure projects while at Kforce. Every so often I would be standing at my cubicle having a loud and intense discussion with a vendor or contractor about something that was a potential disaster... and when I was finally done I would look around the office and see 20 or so people looking at me and probably a bit terrified. I know I can be loud but generally I'm not “scary”... they were just not used to “old school” management (read “screaming”).

But that was where I was Sunday morning. I was certain that people had just walked off with items that we needed to get the kitchen and food service running. I said some things that were out of line... I used the word “thieves” more than I think I ever have. Even while working with some of the guys to clean up from the party, I was fuming and spewing about how bad things were. And I was wrong.

I finally contacted Chef Jackie and found out that she had been in and took a bunch of stuff to the Sammie House (our temporary off-site kitchen) for cleaning and to get ready for the week. There was no reason to be upset and I wasted a perfectly good “mad”... good thing I don't have blood pressure issues. I spent the rest of the day apologizing to the guys, including at the House meeting that evening.

Here's what bothers me. I don't like being wrong... who does? But in this case, I allowed my fear and bias to overwhelm me. I have heard so many stories about damages and things disappearing and I immediately went to the worst case without checking for alternatives. The guys in this House deserved better. They have been responsible and responsive. I have yet to ask anyone to do something that didn't get done, maybe not as quickly as I wanted, but it got done. This was all on me... good lesson... I have to do a better job to manage my own expectations.

The House meeting was for the live-in guys. I finally got to give my “older but not as good-looking brother” speech, I told them how much I appreciated their performance so far, and we talked about the contest for keeping the common areas clean. Logan did a good job running the meeting and Ian explained where the cleaning supplies we had purchased would be kept.

Classes start Monday... moving right along, Fozzie Bear!