

Upcoming Events

Persuasive Techniques for Marketing and Selling A/E/C Services: How Good Communications Can Win Work

Sponsored by Illinois ACEC.

Tuesday, May 22, Naperville, IL

Register by: Monday, May 14

Registration forms available at:
www.longview-group.com

Persuasive Powerful Proposals

May 4, 2007, Seattle, WA

June 1, 2007, New York City, NY

June 6, 2007, Chicago, IL

A/E/C Essentials: An Introduction to the Design and Construction Industry

Co sponsored by The Society for Marketing Professional Services. (SMPS).

May 3, 2007, Seattle, WA

May 31, 2007, New York City, NY

June 5, 2007, Chicago, IL

More information about seminars can be found at:
www.longview-group.com/seminars.html

Paul “Bear” Bryant

At a TD Club meeting many years before his death, Coach Paul “Bear” Bryant told the following story, which was typical of the way he operated.



“I had just been named the new head coach at Alabama and was off in my old car down in South Alabama recruiting a prospect who was supposed to have been a pretty good player, and I was 'havin' trouble finding the place.

Getting hungry, I spied an old cinder block building with a small sign out front that simply said ‘Restaurant.’ I pull up, go in, and every head in the place turns to stare at me. Seems I'm the only white ‘fella’ in the place. But the food smelled good so I skip a table and go up to a cement bar and sit. A big man in a tee shirt and cap comes over and says, “What do you need?” I told him I needed lunch and what did they have today? He says, “You probably won't like it here. Today we're having chitlins, collard greens, and black eyed peas with cornbread.

I'll bet you don't even know what chitlins are, do you?” I looked him square in the eye and said, “I'm from Arkansas. I've probably eaten a mile of them. Sounds like I'm in the right place.”

They all smiled as he left to serve me up a big plate. When he comes back he says, “You ain't from around here, then?” And I explain I'm the new football coach up in Tuscaloosa at the University and I'm here to find whatever that boy's name was and he says, yeah, I've heard of him, he's supposed to be pretty good. And he gives me directions to the school so I can meet the young man and his coach.

As I'm paying up to leave, I remember my manners and leave a tip, not too big to be flashy, but a good one and he told me lunch was on him, but I told him for a lunch that good, I felt I should pay. The big man asked me if I had a photograph or something he could hang up to show I'd been there. I was so new ... I didn't have any yet. It really wasn't that big a thing back then to be asked for, but I took a napkin and wrote his name and address on it and told him I'd get him one. I met the kid I was 'lookin' for later that afternoon and I don't remember his name, but do remember I didn't think much of him when I met him. I had wasted a day, or so I thought.

When I got back to Tuscaloosa late that night, I took that napkin from my shirt pocket and put it under my keys so I wouldn't forget it. Heck, back then I was excited that anybody would want a picture of me. And the next day we found a picture and I wrote on it, "Thanks for the best lunch I've ever had", Paul Bear Bryant.

Now let's go a whole 'buncha' years down the road. I'm back down in that part of the country scouting an offensive lineman we sure needed. He's got two friends going to Auburn and he tells me he's got his heart set on Auburn too, so I leave empty handed.

Two days later, I'm in my office in Tuscaloosa and the phone rings. It's this kid who just turned me down, and he says, "Coach, do you still want me at Alabama?" And I said, "Yes, I sure do." And he says, o.k., he'll come.

And I say, "Well, son, what changed your mind?" And he said, "When my grandpa found out that I had a chance to play for you and said no, he pitched a fit and told me I wasn't going nowhere but Alabama, and wasn't playing for nobody but you. He thinks a lot of you and has ever since y'all met."

Well, I didn't know his granddad from Adam's housecat so I asked him who his granddaddy was and he said, "You probably don't remember him, but you ate in his

"... I learned that the lessons my mama taught me were always right. It don't cost nuthin' to be nice. It don't cost 'nuthin' to do the right thing most of the time, and it costs a lot to lose your good name by breakin' your word to someone."

restaurant your first year at Alabama and you sent him a picture that he's had hung in that place ever since. That picture's his pride and joy and he still tells everybody about the day that Bear Bryant came in and had chitlins with him.

My grandpa said that when you left there, he never expected you to remember him or to send him that picture, but you kept your word to him and to Grandpa, that's everything. He said you could teach me more than football and I had to play for a man like you, so I guess I'm coming to Alabama." I was floored. But I learned that the lessons my mama taught me were always right. It don't cost nuthin' to be nice. It don't cost 'nuthin' to do the right thing most of the time, and it costs a lot to lose your good name by breakin' your word to someone.

When I went back to sign that boy, I looked up his Grandpa and he's still running that

place, but it looks a lot better now. He didn't have chitlins that day, but he had some ribs that 'woulda' made Dreamland proud. I made sure I posed for a lot of pictures; and don't think I didn't leave some new ones for him, too, along with a signed football. I made it clear to all my assistants to keep this story and these lessons in mind when they're out on the road. And if you remember anything else from me, remember this - It really doesn't cost anything to be nice, and the rewards can be unimaginable."

Coach Bryant was in the presence of these few gentlemen for only minutes, and he defined himself for life, to these gentlemen, as a nice man.

Regardless of our profession, we do define ourselves by how we treat others and how we behave in the presence of others. Most of the time, we have only minutes or seconds to leave a lasting impression. We can be rude, crude, arrogant, cantankerous -- or we can be nice. Nice is always a better choice.

I like what Stephen Grellet, French/American religious leader (1773-1855) said: "I expect to pass through the world but once. Any good therefore that I can do, or any kindness I can show to any creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Many thanks to Charlie Farrell, Director of the University of South Carolina, Moore School of Business, Executive Leadership Program for this memorable piece.

The Leadership Challenge:

Be nice, especially to those who try, but come up short, to those who never got the lucky break, or to those who were dealt a bad hand.



It is especially troublesome to see someone get beat up over things they can't control, like the clerk in the store, conscientiously working hard in that second job to make ends meet, simply following company policy that we deem to be totally unreasonable. Be kind. It doesn't cost a nickel more.

WHAT IS THE LONGVIEW GROUP, LLC?

Seeking more efficiency and effectiveness in your professional service business? The Longview Group, LLC provides you INSIGHTS through training, on-the-job coaching, expert counsel, and extra-hands services.