

# 6

## R-E-S-P-E-C-T



**Chicago Bears great, Jim McMahon and I. In 1985, Jim gave Pete Rozelle more notoriety by wearing a headband with “Rozelle” written on it.**

Sounds simple, but so many people fail at it. Treat everyone with respect; maybe if you grew up doing as many low level jobs as I did, it would be easier to relate. I had the good fortune to collect aluminum cans for recycling money, got lucky to gather up soda bottles for deposit money (if you aren't sure what that is, ask someone with gray hair to explain it to you), shoveled driveways clear of snow in winters, mowed lawns in summers, and finally was a year around paper boy. I did all of this until I was old enough to lie about my age to be a busboy and bus tables at age 14 at an upscale Italian restaurant.

My busboy career lasted from 14-17 at various restaurants. Working these jobs taught me how to answer others with, "yes, sir and yes, ma'am," answering with respect to everyone. Always being a can-do guy, I would do virtually anything asked of me: cook, run food to tables, wash dishes. My managers at various restaurants knew if they called me the answer was "yes." I would do any job that somebody didn't show up for. I would usually be fair on dollars per hour, but knowing they could give away vouchers for free dinner for two people (comped meals) that was always part of my negotiation. As a young guy, that dinner for two was a great date night. When most guys my age were taking their dates to McDonalds or Burger King, my date and I were going to TGI Fridays, when Fridays was the place!

Back to the point, folks doing lower level or lower-paying jobs need your kind words more than most people. It's free and easy to give respect, a smile and a kind word. Who knows what their hopes and dreams are and maybe your kind words can put a pep in their step. Simply telling someone they are great at what they do is huge to the person. Looking or asking someone their name, remembering it and calling them by it is so powerful! You are never too rich or too poor to give away kind words. Nothing drives me crazier than someone looking down or acting above another person.

I was visiting my friend Chris who manages the car wash I go to, and he made a comment one day about how nice I always am. I said to him why wouldn't I be nice? He said so many people

were rude and looked and spoke down to him. That's nuts. Why act above anyone, especially a nice guy like Chris. If you are blessed and lucky enough to be living a good or fortunate life, be thankful! Give respect to everyone around you; you don't know what challenges they might be going through. I have always thought that the receptionist or secretary has way more power than most people think.

I recently read the biography of the late, great Pete Rozelle, former commissioner of the NFL in the early years 1960-1989. What a great man and apparently a world-class listener and problem-solver. When he was planning to retire, Mr. Rozelle was in the process of looking for his replacement. It got down to two candidates, and one of them was constantly disrespectful to Mr. Rozelle's right-hand person, Thelma. Mr. Rozelle was known as a selfless person and was concerned that if this candidate wasn't pleasant to everyone, then maybe he wasn't the correct choice to represent the highest office in the NFL. You never know what information gets back to people. The candidate that chose not to be respectful to everyone never became commissioner of the NFL. Mr. Rozelle helped the NFL owners choose the more respectful Paul Tagliabue. Partly because of his respect for others, he held that office from 1989-2006. I have seen many times people not get opportunities because a comment here or information surfacing that was negative from their past tilts the opportunity to someone else.

Since very few people have sit down with a prolific active serial killer and tried to sell them on their point of view, I felt compelled to tell my story in this chapter.

In 1988, I was a young salesman working for Blue Grass Electronics selling Glass Break Detectors. We were fortunate as a company to have the opportunity to sell glass break detectors to ADT, the largest security company. Thanks to both Lance Dean and Ben Cornett, we were on the approved to sell list at ADT. Living in Chicago, I was responsible for a large Midwest territory that included both Kansas City and Wichita, Kansas. I was calling on the Kansas City office where I had some friendships. I asked for advice on how to get the Wichita office on board? I had

struggled to get the Wichita office up and selling because they had a tough service manager who thought glass break detectors false-alarmed too much. In reality, he was the one who had to go fix the problems so his concern was valid.

The KC team said, “Don't try to sell Dennis.” They further added, “Ask him his opinions and if you just let him stay in charge and talk, you have a shot of converting him over.” Isn't that the same advice people give to survive a kidnapper or a killer? Basically the advice was even though he was difficult personality treat him with respect. I did just as advised and Dennis came around and ADT Wichita started to use our BGE9100 dual technology glass break detectors. I remember that sales call very well, because he was a tough cookie and as a young sales guy I was trying a new technique—like giving a fighting fish a lot of line before you try to reel him in.

Fast forward 16 years. I was watching TV in 2005 and news was breaking that the BTK killer in Wichita, Kansas, had been arrested after a 21-year run. I was 90 percent sure I recognized the guy on TV, but he had a really common look, balding guy with a mustache, and who should recognize a serial killer? I had not been in Wichita, Kansas in over a decade. In addition, an old friend named Tim Rader had just moved to Dallas to run product development at Brinks Security. I thought maybe I'm wrong and recognized the last name Rader, and not the face. When you are young, you remember tough defining moments and the converting of the service manager in Wichita always stuck with me.

Googling someone was fairly new at the time, so I jumped out of bed and Googled Dennis Rader and there it was...Dennis Rader worked at ADT from 1974-1988! It still gives me chills writing it now. Sometimes treating everyone with respect could literally come down to life or death.