

March 2007

On a monthly basis, I will be addressing you with a concern that I feel has merit. At the bottom of this page is my contact information. If you feel aggrieved or amused, or want to express agreement or disagreement, let me know your thoughts.

What You Permit, You Promote

It is a simple little saying, but most of us would quickly argue that I, as a manager or supervisor, am not promoting something by simply ignoring the occurrence. We'd want to just turn our heads and believe it didn't happen. Still others would support the position that your or my acquiescence signifies our tolerance of a behavior.

The bald-faced fact, however, is that behavior will repeat itself if it is counted, rewarded, or allowed. We know that what we measure in our lives, both personal and professional, becomes our goals or objectives. When we reward or when we punish, we modify behavior. Even when we allow a behavior without correction, we promote the recurrence of that behavior. I guess the little saying has some basis in the science of human behavior.

So the question for us is: "What do we permit in ourselves and in others that we are embarrassed to be promoting?" Are we doing our share in the responsibility of promoting a better profession? Are we permitting something or some behavior that gives the appearance to others that because we tolerate that action, we are promoting it?

I know people who will say, "I'm not getting involved. I'm neutral – I'm not promoting something just because I won't stop it." To them I'd ask, "What do you stand for?" Someone once said, "If you don't stand for something – you stand for nothing."

Last November, the topic was shared responsibility. Back then, the quote was– "keep your eyes and ears open about the emerging concept of shared responsibility." Well,

March 2007

from my vantage point, it is growing in Texas. As it grows, be careful what you permit, because many may mistake your permission as an act of promotion.