

Do it Well. Make it Fun.

Ron Culberson, MSW, CSP

You cannot deal with the most serious things in this world unless you understand the most amusing.

- Sir Winston Churchill



Ron Culberson is a speaker, author, and humorist. His mission is to help staff and managers tap into the power doing a great job *and* making the processes in life and work more fun. He offers:

- Hilarious Presentations
- Presentation Skills Training and Coaching
- Humor writing for speakers, executives, and politicians

Have Character, Don't Be One

This article is an excerpt from a chapter of Ron's upcoming book, "Do it Well, Make it Fun" due to be released in the spring of 2012.

In his standup routine, Steve Martin said that the phrase "I forgot" comes in handy in a variety of situations. For instance, he said, "if you get arrested for armed robbery, you can simply tell the judge 'I forgot armed robbery was illegal.'"

I love that routine. But it's a bit too close to home these days. It seems that our elected officials, corporate CEO's, and Hollywood stars have forgotten that bad values were not in their best interest.

Have you ever wondered where our values come from?

They come from our surroundings. They come from our parents. They come from our teachers. They come from television, peers, and faith – and sometimes, unfortunately, in that order. But if parents, teachers, television, peers, and faith do not instill the proper values in us, we don't live up to our greatest potential.

Now I'm not trying to be some-holier-than-though, my-values-are-better-than-yours ethical giant. I've made some very bad decisions in my life. And I would love to delete those experiences from my hard drive. But I try not obsess about them. Instead, I work very hard at trying to live a value-driven life in spite of my shortcomings in the past. By doing so, I sleep better, I have a positive effect on others, and ultimately, I serve less time in prison.

My values came from my family and the part of the country where I grew up. My formative years were spent in the small town of Emory, Virginia. To be truthful, it wasn't really a town. It was smaller, just a wide spot in the road. Basically, it was a community. There were only 280 of us and many of those were associated with Emory and Henry College, a small Methodist college in the

Appalachian Mountains.

In Emory, everybody knew everyone. And since my father was the Vice President of the college, and a life-long Rotarian, we were celebrities - that is, in a small Appalachian community kind of way. So at age 18, when I bought my first Playboy magazine (not good values, by the way), partly for the great in-depth articles and partly because I now legally could, I cased the store several times making sure I didn't see anyone I knew. Ultimately, my mother knew about my purchase long before I even got a glance at the centerfold. That's how word of mouth, or word of mothers, works in small *almost* towns.

But from the perspective of creating solid values, small towns are the best teachers. So whether I liked my mother knowing everything or not, it helped me to make better choices.

When it comes to Doing Things Well, our values create the foundation for everything we do. What's your foundation like? And where does it come from? In the second article this month, you'll see a wonderful college course that's teaching young people the value of, well, values.

Just Plain Fun(ny)

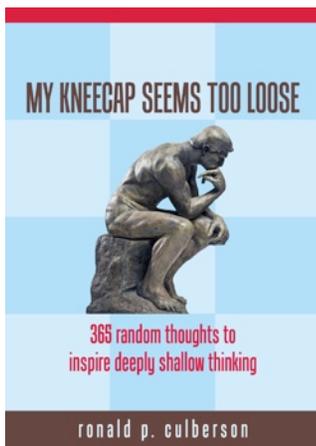
Yet another example of not doing things so well.

Old Navy created a line of college T-shirts that said, "Lets Go" followed by the school name. Problem is, they left out the apostrophe in let's.

That's just not write.

Give us your example of Do it Well, Make it Fun

Send your story of excellence combined with humor to Info@RonCulberson.com and receive a complimentary, autographed copy of one of Ron's books. Please put "Story for a Book" in the subject line.



Ron's New Book

Positive Results

Anyone who has ever visited Monticello knows what a remarkable man Thomas Jefferson was. Here are a few of his accomplishments:

- At age 9, studied Latin, Greek, and French
- At 23, started his own law practice
- At 33, wrote the Declaration of Independence
- At 36, elected Governor of Virginia
- At 57, elected President of the U.S.
- At 81, created THE University of Virginia

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Ron's Column

*No animals were harmed during the creation of this new website.

Making the Grade in Civility

Leslie Morton is no stranger to manners. For a number of years, while living in Texas, she has taught manners and etiquette. She admits that the focus of her work came natural as southern women are finicky about manners.

When she moved to Northern Virginia, she was talking about table manners to a colleague who encouraged her to explore the idea of creating a curriculum at a local community college. Leslie had never developed a curriculum before but she knew the topic well enough to put together an impressive idea for a college class on Civility and Professionalism. While this would have been mandatory training 100 years ago, it's a surprisingly new idea today. Schools are more concerned with science, technology, and humanities than whether you put your fork on the right or left side of the plate. And in case you're wondering, left is right.

Leslie then proposed the curriculum to George Mason University where, ironically, their slogan is "Where innovation is tradition." They bought it. And her first class that fall had 17 eager students who wanted to learn about civility in a seemingly uncivil world. The spring semester class doubled in size. She had developed a popular class that was the first in the Nation. In fact, early in 2011, *USA Today* featured her class.

Leslie defines "civility" as extreme politeness. It's holding the door open for someone and saying a simple "thank you" when someone does the same for you. She is so committed to changing the way people think and act, she'll become the civility police if necessary. If she holds the door for someone and they don't acknowledge her, she'll be quick to say, "You're welcome!" Just in her head of course since saying it out loud would not be civil.

The idea of "professionalism," on the other hand, are the rules by which we conduct ourself. They're the values that lead us on the high road to do the right thing. Professionalism doesn't include lying, cheating, or stealing - not even the little white lies, cheats, or steals.

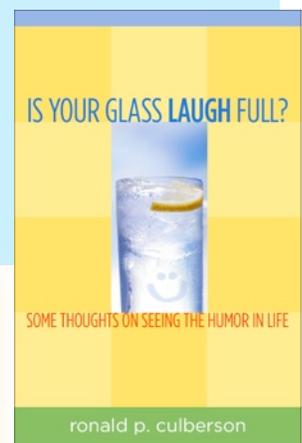
Leslie feels that these concepts of civility and professionalism are more than just good ideas. She believes that living by higher standards leads to a higher quality of life. We become more positive and have greater control over our everyday experiences when we practice civil and professional behavior.

And don't think for a minute that this is a stuffy rule-laden class. Her students constantly praise the class as a fun place where they not only learn valuable life skills but that the instructor actually listens to them and responds respectfully. Leslie admits that her personality drives the structure and flow of the class. She wants it to be fun for her students and for her. Thus she is an amazing example of combining the principles of **Do it Well, Make it Fun**.

One of her students asked her, "Why are you always smiling."
I bet Leslie would believe that it's just the civil thing to do.

Check out our blog at
www.FUNsulting.com/rons-blog

There is no labor a person does that is undignified, if they do it right. -Bill Cosby



Ron's Book