

## DO YOU TAKE YOURSELF TOO SERIOUSLY?

So you get up and you're running late for work and you get dressed run down the steps, get in the car, and get to your job. You are the manager and you are checking everyone's uniforms. Oh, my God Sally where is your smile? Joe you forgot your belt. Oh, My Goodness don't you guys care about yourselves enough to check your appearance? Then a small voice in the back says, Kim you have one black and one blue shoe on. Well now I'm done. As a manager I have failed or have I? Well as much as I would like to say I made this up I didn't. This happened to me one day at one of the greatest places I ever worked. I am proud to boast that I started college my Senior Year of High School, I got my Bachelor's in 1988 (only 3 years after High School), and then getting my Master's in 2003 I learned so much from the first job I got while in College and for ten years after. Hoss's Steak and Sea House was my first job sorta outside of College. I started in April in there Management training class and was a full fledged manager by July. Hoss's not only taught me the fundamentals of business (to this day my husband and I still talk about the great foundation they gave us) they taught me not to take myself too seriously.

Bill Campbell is the owner of Hoss's Steak and Sea House and one of the best leaders there is. Why was he such a great leader? He didn't take himself too seriously. In 1993 I was transferred to Chambersburg, PA because my husband opened the first Hoss's outside of Pennsylvania. Not only did Hoss's show us around the town but they made sure that there was a position available for me. In October it was decided to expand the seating in the Chambersburg store and we would be shutting down for a week. This was a perfect opportunity for me to get back home for a visit. Well the Friday we closed we ran out of food before closing. People were really going to miss us. The Friday we opened it was planned for 4pm and by 3pm there was a line. Also, it was my Dining Room Manager's weekend off and my Assistant Manager had a small mishap and was out for a few days. I was back to the restaurant days before we were to open and I couldn't imagine how we are going to pull this off. It's 4pm and the electricity isn't really were it needs to be and the dish machine wasn't working right but we're on and ready to go. Well we muddled through for a while but about 6:30 it's was getting tougher and I heard the rumblings that Bill was in the restaurant. Oh my God, the owner is here to buy a cow from the local 4 H and he's checking out the restaurant, I thought. Well I'd been with Hoss's for over 5 years but the owner still in the restaurant sent chills up my back. The shift is going downhill but I'm holding it together and it happens... the dish machine dies. Crap. Meals slow down and Bill walks to the kitchen. "Kim what's up?" says Bill. "Oh, a few bugs we'll get through." Me. "Kim, show me around", says Bill. After the dish machine we head to the electrical room. Within 30 minutes I

had a call from every electrician in our company and they would be on their way within the night. Bill never forget his role in the company. He was there to serve his customer, if that customer was the one walking through the door to order a meal or the one who managed his business. This was one of the biggest life lessons I had. Oh, did I mention he did dishes with me that evening.

About a year later I had a woman tell me about a time she saw a guy walk into Hoss's prep room and had jeans on and fixed the stove. That was Bill. Bill has never took himself too seriously and always remembered where he came from.

Once you take yourself too seriously you forget what makes you successful. You must never forget that you are still on the front line and you get dressed just like everyone else. Don't ever think you are better than anyone. And don't ever think you are better than your employees. Here I am with 2 different colored shoes, what should I do. I laugh at myself. If I don't laugh at myself I will never gain the respect of the others. Don't forget guys we are all on the same level. Once you take yourself too seriously you lose respect. Don't put yourself in that position.

Thanks Bill for 10 great years of my life and some of the best education I ever received. Oh and I use it all still now. Also, thanks for the opportunity to meet my wonderful husband.

Kim Popella