

LCCC controversy Prez continues descent

I've always been one to believe that having an employee's respect is more important than having their love. It goes without saying that if you don't have their trust, there is no way you're going to have their respect. Love can be bought, respect can't. Nor trust.

The current president of LCCC apparently has no prior management experience. And, often in a job like he holds, he doesn't need much. If he has an outstanding staff under him, he can be the titular head and do nothing more than attend lunches, lobby for the school and hand out degrees at graduation.

But, this guy is one who wants his finger in everything and things are blowing up in his face. The recent survey of LCCC employees should have been a real eye-opener for the Board of Trustees. Except, those members are often just trying to pad a resume or have something to brag about at the Country Club and the last thing they want to do is get involved in the direction of LCCC.

We can assume the survey was done by a reputable firm and, if anything, it would have been selected to skew the results in favor of leadership, not against it.

Still, nearly three and a half times as many employees said morale and job satisfaction were low. Results were almost as bad when asked about "trust

among faculty, staff and administrators."

Employees did respond favorably on issues having to do with instruction, helping students, LCCC's mission, etc. What these mixed results indicate is that employees respect the institution but not its leadership. That, of course, is easily correctable. Make the necessary change.

LCCC president Darrel Hammon showed he doesn't understand leadership with comments he made to Becky Orr of the WTE. He morphed employees' responses about "feeling good about helping students succeed," into their personal job satisfaction being low as disconnected. Any wonder LCCC is floundering?

He also indicated he wanted to talk to employees about the whys to their responses. That is another example of his paranoia. The answers are the answers. He hopes to intimidate employees, employees who depend on him for their jobs, to change their responses. Then he can tell the media that the employees, some with PhD's (real ones, not the one from Preston University) didn't understand the questions and they've retracted their answers. What a piece of work!

He also told Becky that "morale is self-induced" and that budget cuts have "created uneasiness." No, Gump, it's you. Those "cut" did not answer the survey. Imagine what *they* would have said.

Personal cell phone use while driving

I probably use my cell phone in the car more than most. Likely more than almost everyone else. I have no office and spend a lot of my day away from a land line. I drive a lot, particularly in town, and the cell phone has added to my productivity immeasurably. And to your reading pleasure. Or displeasure. Your call.

Nonetheless, I do not oppose the cell phone ban. And I will abide by it.

I usually oppose further government intervention into our lives but there are some areas in which rules and controls are necessary. We have few absolute rights and driving with a cell phone to the ear is not among them.

Before the smoking ban was approved, I wrote that my wife and I, lifelong non-smokers, could navigate just fine among restaurants and we'd pick and choose those to patronize based on the encroachment of smoke from someone else's cigarette. What bothered me most about the smoking sections in restaurants was seeing parents (or guardians) with young children, even infants, sitting in areas with heavy smoke - much of it from the parent.

Honestly, it is nice to now be able to choose any restaurant in town to eat without concern for it being too "smoky." Without the ban, we'd just find another place to eat. I did, and still do, oppose a smoking ban on bars, private clubs and fraternal organizations. If one has to pay

dues to belong, it should be up to the club whether they want to ban smoking or not. I particularly loathe the imposition of the ban on veterans at the American Legion and VFW Clubs. And, if you have to be 21 to enter, it should be the owner's call.

If the cell phone ban sticks, it will inconvenience me. But, I *will* abide by the ban. While I've been driving for a very long time, many of the kids I see on cell phones in traffic haven't. Many young mothers have babies in car seats in the back seat and Mom is talking on a cell phone. I have seen school bus drivers on cell phones. And, I've seen many drivers with their left arm out of the window, holding a cigarette in that hand so the smoke will go into the air, with a cell phone to their ear on the right side. Too often, the vehicles are those "tanks." How do they steer? Their knees, apparently.

I only support a ban as a primary offense. If it is a secondary offense, I will not lay my cell phone down. It is too valuable a tool in what I do to risk missing something critical if the worst that can happen is a citation if I get into an accident or otherwise violate traffic laws - which I don't plan to do. If I can lay down my phone, when it is more important in what I do than it is to 90-95% of other drivers, they can, too. Do I want a bunch of 90 IQ elected officials telling me I have to do that? Hell no. But I do want them to tell the young girls with babies in the back seat that they have to. It's a trade-off.



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