

Leading by Example — Remember When?

From the Editors: In January of this year we at *Gear Technology* got hip to the fact—in un-hip, belated fashion—that we needed a Blog Site and someone to do the blogging. Lucky for us, we already had that someone right here—in plain sight. That someone was Charles D. Schultz, P.E.—current *Gear Technology* Technical Editor and a still-in-the-game, gear industry lifer with lengthy and rewarding tenures at Falk (Rexnord) Gear and other stops along the way. Add to that the countless hours Chuck has contributed (and continues to do so) over the years to the AGMA, serving with distinction on its various technical committees. Today, along with his *Gear Technology* contributions, Chuck runs his own consultancy—Beyta Gear Service. We think we found the right guy for the job. There's a lot of clutter out there in the blogosphere. (Non-blogging cur-

mudgeons will enjoy what for them may be the best characterization of blogging ever uttered. It reads like latter-day H.L. Mencken, but comes from the Elliott Gould character in the 2011 film *Contagion*: “Blogging is graffiti with punctuation.”)

A funny line, indeed—but it doesn't play here.

For proof, read Chuck's Blog from July 24 and you'll agree. It's one of a series of Blogs Chuck has been doing on leadership in the workplace, although in this instance he recalled a memorable boyhood Scouting experience to make an indelible impression. We liked it so much we thought it deserved as much exposure as we could bring to bear, so we're reprising it here as a Voices piece. (Chuck's Blog appears at geartechnology.com every Tuesday and Thursday.)

Leadership 101—Commitment

Much of what I believe about leadership I learned from the scouting program. I was a scout as a boy and when my children reached that age we enrolled them as scouts and took leadership training. The adult training programs are among the best I ever attended. Scouting gives you the opportunity to be a follower and a leader; you can learn a great deal about both in a single rainy weekend.

When NASA announced plans to go to the moon, the scouting movement saw a good way to interest boys in science. *Life* magazine published a big photo spread of astronauts in survival training and the next thing you knew, we were on a survival camp-out in homemade tents of thin plastic sheeting. Naturally, the sky opened up on us and we found ourselves in ankle deep mud wrapped in our tents and reflective survival blankets.

At least some of us did.

During the stormy night a few of our adult “leaders” extracted their sons from the quagmire and relocated them to regular tents or cabins. My old man, a World War II veteran, viewed the camp-out as a “character building” exercise and left his sons to sleep in the muck. In fact, he gave up his bunk in a cabin to join us in a plastic tent of his own construction that held up

“If You Would Lift Me Up,
You Must Be On Higher Ground.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

about as well as the kid-built ones. The “mudders” lost trust in the adult leaders who pulled their sons out of the mess and left them to get soaked. They respected my father for joining them. I know this because 25 years later they told me so at his funeral. Grown men remembered that soggy adventure like it was yesterday.

I have had the opportunity to work for both types of bosses over the years, and believe the first building block of a good leader is commitment. People want to know the boss is willing to sleep in the muck with them if that is what the mission requires. Giving the “team” an extensive task list for the weekend before leaving early on Friday simply doesn't work. Involvement is much different than commitment. A chicken is involved in a ham and egg breakfast. A pig is committed to it.

Charles D. Schultz



Chuck's favorite picture of his Dad—Vincent David Schultz, U.S. Navy Seaman 1st Class—taken April 10, 1946—his 21st birthday. His rite-of-passage was no party, however. Rather, here he is topside off Bikini Atoll awaiting the “A Bomb Tests” while trying to rack up enough “combat points” to earn passage home, which he did, later that year.