

March 2009



newsletter

Several months ago I wrote you of my concerns regarding the economy. I knew there would be many who would suffer hard times, including those who worked hard and did not deserve the hard realities of the situation. If you remember correctly, I stressed the importance of making young people look at starting a business in spite of the downturn. I used an example of a landscaping business, now I will introduce another opportunity using actual situations.

The first situation regards a family janitorial business.

The man who started the business has several sons whom inherited a cleaning job from the father. The sons were not as industrious as the father, but the owner of the office building was very loyal to the father and continued to defend the poor work of the sons. Recently the tenants of the building gave the building owner an ultimatum to change cleaning services or else.

The owner agreed to look at the situation by getting the sign-in sheet from the security entity in charge of monitoring the traffic in and out of the building. This was possible as every tenant and the janitor had their own code. The owner was sure it would prove that the tenants were unjustly accusing the janitors of not spending the proper amount of time in the building. Upon receiving the sign in- sign out sheets from the security folks, the owner was shocked to find the janitors spend very little time (eight hours over three months) in the building. The hourly rate, based on the amount of time in the building amounted to \$120 per hour.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

I checked out some other janitorial companies and was able to cut my expense in half.

The lessons here are many, but the newly hired janitor benefited from the complacency of the former janitor and the owner got a better deal. While it was one of the hardest things I have ever done, I made a business decision that was in my best interest. It also made me realize while my heart was in the right place, my brain was not.

A MUCH HAPPIER SITUATION

On a much happier note, I remember a young woman whom I mentored. She had a contract to clean an office building for three years of high school and then her younger sister got the job for another several years until she graduated.

It is not uncommon to be paid \$40 per hour for this work if one can land an account and do a good job. It is a business any high school person can start with little money. There are many opportunities for this work in every community.