

---

**"Appreciation can make a day, even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary." » Margaret Cousins**

---

## Not That Customers Notice

I have a running joke with bankers about one of the unique challenges of working with them.

Bank IT security can be second-to-none in making life challenging for outside parties.

Now, I totally understand why this is. But I've lost count of how many times I've had financial institutions' systems block email attachments, file uploads, etc. that bankers have asked me to send.

Live events can be interesting as well.

Most bank-issued computers would rather self-destruct like in a *Mission Impossible* episode than allow a non-bank-issued flash drive be read.

For that reason, I always show up with a Plan B and C. At a recent event, however, it looked like I'd need a Plan D.

Thankfully, a young employee of the hotel was willing to figure one out with me.

When I arrived, I learned that the bank had been having access issues with their laptop all morning.

That, I was prepared for.

I wasn't as prepared for the hotel's projector system to then be uncooperative with my personal laptop.

We were unable to get things sorted out before the large meeting began, and there would be no break before I was to be introduced.

I had 50 minutes – with no access to the projector system – to solve what was shaping up to be a real problem.

## What the World Needs Now...

As my recent travel schedule has intensified, I've had more personal discussions with frontline personnel than any period over the past two years.

A high percentage will readily and gladly go into detail about their staffing challenges with just a nudge.

I've ended up in conversations with folks that made me feel like I was sent "from corporate" to solicit their feedback.

Whether these workers are therapeutically venting or simply seeking empathy, folks have been more than willing to open up.

Last week, I chatted with a young man at a coffee shop in an airport who was the only employee on duty. He is a co-manager who had been on the job since 1:00 AM.

It was 2:00 PM when I walked up. He had worked the previous 13 hours alone and had already clocked in 70+ hours that week.

I said, "You're an inspiration, dude. It's motivating to see young people who have your work ethic. This world needs people like you more than ever."

He paused mid-task and said, "Thanks. I needed that. I wish you ran this place!"

Believe me, he hadn't surmised in our conversation that I knew anything about running anything. But simply hearing someone acknowledge his beyond-the-call efforts noticeably impacted him.

On another trip, I spent 30 minutes in an off-and-on conversation with an older gentleman who was the bartender/waiter/busser at my hotel.

Walking in not long before the kitchen closed, I asked him, "What's the easiest entrée to fix? Because I'm guessing there's only one tired person back there."

I was given the number of the hotel's "IT guy," Courtland. He was a nice young man who came as soon as I called.

I could tell as I explained the issues at hand that he had never dealt with this particular type of problem before.

After I explained why his first two (completely logical) ideas would not work in our case, he said, "Okay. I know we can figure something out."

I didn't know if he was simply wishful thinking, but I felt better knowing I had someone hustling to help.

As I began contemplating how I'd adjust my presentation on the fly, he came up with the idea of loading my presentation onto his old laptop.

He knew it was compatible and could be hooked up in only a few seconds while I was being introduced.

As Courtland ran off to execute Plan D, I reflected on how often the personal extra effort of even one "behind-the-scenes" team member is the difference between public success and public failure.

Most operations have folks who – when they do their jobs well – go unnoticed by customers.

Make sure that they don't go unnoticed by you this week.

He laughed hard and said, "Have you been back there? You nailed it."

He later told me he couldn't remember the last time his workweek was shorter than 60 hours.

I repeated the line, "This world needs people like you more than ever." He smiled and shook my hand like a long-lost friend.

In so many cases at so many businesses these days, individuals are carrying workloads no one signed up for.

I'm as convinced as ever, however, that the best folks out there take pride in carrying heavy workloads.

Sure, folks wear down.

However, hard work doesn't wear them down as quickly as feeling ignored or unappreciated does.

Strive during these times to ensure the exceptional folks on your teams, as well as hard workers you encounter out and about, know they are appreciated.

The world needs them now more than ever.

---

**"Work ethic is important because, unlike intelligence, athleticism, charisma, or any other natural attribute, it's a choice."**

» **Mike Rowe**



**FSI'S 35<sup>TH</sup>  
RETAIL  
BANKING  
CONFERENCE**

May 3-5, 2023 • Hotel Valencia Riverwalk • San Antonio, TX

Financial Supermarkets, Inc. • [fsi@supermarketbank.com](mailto:fsi@supermarketbank.com)

383 Clarkesville Street • PO Box 1450 • Cornelia, GA 30531 • (800) 992-4978

[Click Here to Unsubscribe](#)