



What's a Caterer to Do.... Part 2

It's only been 5 days since our first formal communication was distributed..but life as we know it has changed in a very big way in less than a week as I'm sure yours has. We've been instructed to reduce our work force by 75%. That, undoubtedly is the toughest thing that we've ever done in 35 years of doing business. Truly, our staff can receive more money from unemployment than they can working a 40 hour minimum wage job. Apparently, the appropriate verbage is no longer "laid off" or "unemployed", but the politically correct, polite term is "furloughed". Not sure what's the difference...either one means no work, less earnings!

As I've mentioned before, real caterers are a resilient breed. We can make a lot happen with a little. We can go deep and figure things out. We band together and take on unsurmountable challenges. The problem here is we are dealing with lots of unknowns. If we knew that life as we knew it would return in two weeks, we could pace ourselves, plan our time, prepare for that...but, alas, we have no idea when it will be "business as usual", and nobody else does either.

I'm the president of this small business with 12-25 staff depending on the time of year. I am the first to admit that I have no concrete plan, I am not sure how to proceed, and it breaks my heart to have to "furlough" long time, dedicated, hard-working staff. My best effort is to maintain as much optimism as I can muster and limp along with whatever business we can attract, to stay alive with just a couple of staff on the job. Sure, we have expert professionals to turn to for advice and counseling. The problem is we're all in the same boat. None of us has experienced anything like this in our lifetime. There is no roadmap, there is no master plan, there is no crystal ball.

In an effort to be politically neutral, which is where I tread as a business owner, I have to say God Bless our leaders, the experts, the medical community, the scientists, because you know what? They have no roadmap, master plan or crystal ball either. We're all doing our best with what we have to work with. Eliminating judgement and criticism would be a powerful tool as we move forward in unity.

In the meantime, take those volunteer opportunities. You'll find our staff, furloughed or not, making a difference in the community. Let's get out there and assist with delivering food to those who need it, let's run errands for those that can't, let's place a phone call to those who are isolated, let's drop a card to those who are alone, let's take that minimum wage job at Meals on Wheels, let's sew those face masks to help protect those on the front line and most of all let's stand united and search for ways to make a difference. United we stand, divided we fall!

My husband likes to err on the side of humor and comedy so he travels the internet

looking for mood boosters and laugh inducers. I love this one...**"Remember Last Week? We thought we were going to have a bad week because of the time change, the full moon and Friday the 13th? We didn't have a clue!"**.....How about this...**"It's Lent and we're supposed to give up something, but this is ridiculous."**

I'll sign off for now because it's time for lunch...yes, caterers have to eat too! I asked Dave, "What are we having?" and he answered "crackers and cheese". I'm thinking that doesn't really qualify as lunch, not in a caterer's world, so I said "I'll slice up an apple too." As we started to eat, I decided we were only missing one thing. You guessed it, THE WINE! Have a drink with us and stay tuned! Better days ahead.

