

Facilitator — December 2012/January 2013



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CRFP Spotlight

Steve Garver

What other restaurant companies have you worked for prior to your current position? Prior to coming to Ignite Restaurants, I spent five years at Taco Bell. I also spent many years in the bowling industry that required some level of bar and snack bar food service work.

After spending so much time in restaurants, do you cook? If so, what is your best dish? Yes, I like to cook on the weekends. To be clear, I am a much better cook than my wife, and she would tell you that with a big smile on her face.

I like to grill anything but my specialty dish is pesto pasta with grilled hot Italian sausage and feta cheese. Root beer pulled pork is also a family favorite and quite easy to make.

What was your first car? My first auto was a 1961 two-door Chevy Impala with a six cylinder and two-tone green paint. I bought this car in 1970 for \$1,200 cash. That is a lot of bag-boy tips.

What is your all-time favorite movie?

“Alien.” I will never forget how that made me jump out of my seat like nothing since. I also love anything from Mel Brooks.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it? A few years back during the Nashville, Tenn., flood, we had a restaurant that had the flood waters come into the store—but only about 2 inches. Since the water did not go above the cove base tile, we thought it safe to clean up and re-open. A month later, the smell of mold became prevalent, and we had to close the restaurant and do a complete remediation of the interior, taking the walls down to the studs. Working with a focused general contractor, this project was completed in a timely manner.

If you weren't a restaurant facility professional, what you would be? I would probably be working in the HVAC/controls service field. I spent 35 years working in the bowling business with Brunswick Corp. During this time, I executed most of the HVAC service and major repair and maintenance projects in the company's southeastern locations. I gained an extensive technical background during this period. There was also a large focus on energy management at Brunswick, and they continually updated systems to maximize savings. These systems were installed and monitored by the service department, so I was always involved in energy management in a very hands-on way.

What was your very first job? While still in high school, I was a bag boy at a Winn Dixie grocery store in Melbourne, Fla.

What is the best advice you ever received?

Never compare yourself to anyone else. You will always compare their best attributes to your worst.

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? My hands-on background gave me a solid base to build on. The study resources were then the critical part to passing the exam. These resources gave me important insight to areas I had no experience with. I do not believe you could pass the exam without devoting significant time studying. Of course anything worth having requires commitment and sacrifice.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? Yes; this designation gives one a great sense of accomplishment and achievement. If you consider the infant stage our organization is in, years from now those who achieved this designation in the first years will be noted as pioneers. It also is a great item to have on your resume.

What has been the most significant change in the restaurant industry, and how has it affected your job? The economy has changed the way almost all companies are doing business. Whether you were affected by a layoff or work for a company that has reduced margins just to get work and keep the doors open, all are affected.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? I like to fish, golf, do yard work and hang out with friends. My family has a large group of close friends who we have known since our kids were infants and the wives were in a babysitting co-op together. This group has grown and the kids have grown up through the years. We all go on vacations, celebrate each other's birthdays and anniversaries together, and find any reason whatsoever to get together and party. I also enjoy fine

cigars; the Rocky Patel Vintage 1990 Torpedo is my favorite.

What's the one thing most people would be surprised to learn about you? I like to grow orchids. In Florida we have the near-perfect environment for them. A lot of people think they are hard to grow, but in Florida you can just hang them outside under a shady tree, water once a week and they flourish.

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