

Facilitator — June/July 2011



Change Language: Choose

CRFP Spotlight

What other restaurant companies have you worked for prior to your current position?

Working for a large company like Yum! Brands affords me the opportunity to wear many different hats within the same company, and even move between sister brands.

I started with Taco Bell in 1990, working in restaurant operations before moving into facilities management. Then I was a construction manager before moving to facilities management for Long John Silver's and was later a real estate manager before moving back to Taco Bell facility management in 2008. Prior to joining Taco Bell in 1990, I worked for five years in restaurant operations at Burger King.

After spending so much time in restaurants, do you cook? If so, what is your best dish?

I love to cook, and I love to eat even more! I like to cook with a lot of spice. My best dishes are traditional Mexican or Asian-inspired dishes cooked with a lot of chili, garlic, peppers and cumin. My favorite dish to cook is a traditional Mexican pork stew called "posole."

What was your first car?

My first car was a 1973 Chevy Vega coupe in "puke" green. Man, I loved that car. It wasn't a great car; in fact, it was a piece of junk, but it was all mine — bought and paid for with my own money.

What is your all-time favorite movie?

"Star Wars" in 1977 was my most memorable movie experience and it will always be my all-time favorite movie. It was the first movie I ever took a date to (never mind I was only 11 years old). I saw the movie seven times and waited in line for several hours each time. I still love that movie.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it?

While remodeling a restaurant, we discovered a previously unknown storm sewer main running 25 feet below grade. It was at the rear of a building where I was installing a bump-out for a new cooler. The issue was discovered on a Thursday and the restaurant had to re-open on Monday. I made the costly decision to hire an excavation crew and expedite municipal approval to relocate the sewer main and complete the job at a tremendous cost over the weekend. I still have trouble sitting down when I think of the money I spent to get the restaurant open on time.

If you weren't a restaurant facility professional, what you would be?

I really enjoy the outdoors and would love to turn my hobby into a career. If I was independently wealthy, I would work with youth groups full time. I am a big fan of the Boy Scouts of America and volunteered my time as a Scout Master for many years.

Now that my boys are in college, I am working with my daughter to impart a love of the outdoors. When I retire, I would like to open a hiking guide business, leading groups into the wilderness.

What was your very first job?

Does a lemonade stand count? I have worked for as long as I can remember. My family had a gift shop and candy store so I learned the value of hard work at a very early age. My first W-2 job was when I was 14 years old, working at San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium as a soda hawker for Padres baseball games. Man, that was hard work! I had to lug this huge metal tray filled with full cups of soda up and down the stairs in the nosebleed section of the cheap seats, screaming "Get your iced-cold Coke here!" I made a whole dime for every soda I sold.

What is the best advice you ever received?

"I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is to try and please everyone."

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP?

I look at facilities not just from a technical standpoint but also as a business leader. The CRFP means you are a well-rounded business professional whose area of expertise happens to be restaurant facilities management.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues?

I absolutely recommend it to all my colleagues! Achieving my CRFP was a validation of my professional competency. It gave me the confidence to be more comfortable in my own skin. I still don't know everything there is to know about being a facility professional, but the CRFP means I know enough to "join the club" with other facility professionals.

What has been the most significant change in the restaurant industry and how has it affected your job?

The economic pressures over the past several years have forced facility professionals to look closer at ways to improve productivity and efficiencies. Advances in technology have been the key enabler to getting more out of our maintenance dollars and are the key to the future in the industry. I have had to maintain a vigilant approach to keep current with new technologies. I read several trade journals each month and attend several trade shows per year to ensure I stay current and aware of the changes in the industry.

What do you do for fun in your spare time?

I enjoy traveling to beautiful places with my wife and children. I have been to almost every major national park in the United States, and I really love camping and hiking.

This summer I am taking the family on a road trip to Alaska. On the weekends I enjoy going to the beach or mountains. During the week when I have spare time, I enjoy playing a variety of musical instruments. Playing music and getting plenty of exercise are a big part of my stress management program.

What's the one thing most people would be surprised to learn about you?

I grew up speaking Spanish as my first language. My mother was born and raised in Mexico and immigrated to the United States when she was 18 years old. Most people are surprised when I start speaking Spanish. I guess my last name throws people off from my Mexican heritage.

[VIEW ALL ARTICLES](#)