

Facilitator — October/November 2013



CRFP Spotlight

Phil Walton

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

I have worked in construction, traveling the country remodeling Applebee's, Bob's Big Boy, Ponderosa, Howard Johnson Restaurants and Marriott Restaurants.

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

My wife is a great cook and has worked under several executive chefs, so I don't venture into the kitchen much. I can do a great job at the grill with chicken and steak.

What was your first car?

A 1963 Dodge Dart old slant six manual transmission. "Three on the tree," as they used to say.

What is your all-time favorite movie?

"Young Frankenstein." What a classic.

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 Howard Johnson Restaurant in April during spring break in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., the crew was drilling the concrete sub floor for a new drain location when they drilled directly through the center of a 600-pair phone line conduit and basically shut down the phone system in this 20-story hotel. We had temporary communications set up in 12 hours and had to x-ray the floor to determine where we had to relocate the drain.

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

I would be a paramedic.

What was your very first job?

I delivered papers as a young teenager, but my first job I made money doing was a stock boy at the Trevoze Family Shoe Store in Pennsylvania.

What is the best advice you ever received?

Something to live by: "Life is short; eat dessert first." Professionally: "Say what you will do and do what you say."

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

Working 13 years in construction remodeling restaurants before becoming a facilities manager was the best training anyone can receive. They don't teach this stuff in any school (except at RFMA).

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why?

I would recommend it to enhance your understanding of all you know about facilities and where you can expand your knowledge to be successful.

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

Computers and cell phones have changed the way we all do business. And this communication level has made this industry grow faster than I ever imagined. Everything from placing reservations to ordering your meal can all be done without ever talking to

another human being. Instant communication has changed the communication level for all facilities professionals, and now there are no excuses like “I couldn’t find a phone.” George Jetson would be proud.

What do you do for fun in your spare time?

I am a wood worker and build furniture. I have built jewelry boxes and a rocking horse for my grandchildren. Then after the power tools are off I drink wine and check out the car.

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

I was an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) and a volunteer fire fighter in Pennsylvania back in the 70s and 80s.