Keep on Learning [1]

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Like many of you, our team recently got back from the Catersource convention in Las Vegas. I enjoy attending each year for a number of reasons. There are always new ideas and products on the tradeshow floor, the educational sessions are fantastic, and the parties that caterers throw for each other are really impressive! Perhaps most importantly though, I enjoy talking with caterers from across the nation about their successes and challenges.

We have been fortunate to have become a well respected caterer and after a couple of conversations on day one with other caterers, I was basking in our success stories and sharing tidbits that I thought they might find valuable. That evening, during our recap of the day with my team, I was having a hard time coming up with something new that I learned. Disappointed with myself at that point, I was reminded of the saying, “be interested, not interesting.” I love to learn new things, but I was missing opportunities to learn from colleagues, underestimating their potential value, and trying to impress them. I wasn’t asking meaningful questions that might give me insight into who they are or a piece of information that might help me personally or professionally. As we achieve certain levels of success it’s easy to overlook these opportunities, but I’ve found the most successful people, never stop looking everywhere for opportunities to learn something new (even if it’s what NOT to do in certain situations).
At Catersource we are fortunate to have a chance to learn from one another at the conference but we also have an opportunity continue this learning throughout the year. This can be done in a variety of ways, phone calls, social media, emails, and even trips to visit others in our industry. I have already had two phone calls with people I met in Vegas to expand on conversations we started and I am looking forward to visiting a fellow caterer in May to tour their operations and learn how they approach their events and business decisions.

Beyond the catering community, think about all the opportunities you have to learn from someone in your daily conversations. Are you taking advantage of the potential nuggets of information that could inspire your next great idea? Are you looking to learn something, to be curious, and ask follow up questions? Or are you thinking about what to say next that will make you sound interesting?

Cheers to ongoing education, getting better every day and focusing on being interested, not interesting!

**TOPICS**

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