

Filling Holes

By MICHAEL JOSEPHSON



You may have heard the story about two fellows hard at work alongside a road. One diligently dug holes while the other waited a short interval and then filled them up.

It all seemed rather foolish, and eventually the workers were confronted by a supervisor who demanded an explanation. The fellow who dug the holes asked what the problem was. He said he had been doing the same job for more than ten years. His cohort quickly chimed in that

he had been filling the holes for the same period.

Upon further questioning, they admitted it made more sense in the past when a third fellow worked with them. His job had been to put a new tree into the hole. But when he retired he was never replaced, so the two just kept on working as before.

“Why didn’t you tell somebody?” the supervisor sputtered. “My gosh, you signed Phil’s retirement letter. We figured you knew.”

The kinds of unproductive, inefficient and even counter-productive practices that go on in most workplaces defy logic and reveal a great deal about character. You see, the ethical principle of responsibility includes a moral duty to produce and demand quality. Yet basically good people in virtually every workplace regularly engage in or witness some process or practice that is unhelpful, wasteful or even harmful to the ultimate goals of the organization.

While management is ultimately to blame, people of character shouldn’t passively demean the value of their work by becoming part of anything second-rate or stupid. It may take tact and timing, maybe even some courage, but it’s our duty to be a force for excellence. The benefit is that the quality of our lives improves dramatically when we take pride in our work. ■

Reprinted with permission from You Don’t Have To Be Sick To Get Better with permission of the Josephson Institute of Ethics. ©2004 www.josephsoninstitute.org



Kill the Spill

For connecting and disconnecting hoses and pipelines quickly and without spillage.

- Easy to handle
- Economical
- Safe and reliable
- Time saver



The Right Connection™

Dixon Valve & Coupling Company, Inc.
800 High Street, Chestertown, MD 21620 USA
800.355.1991 • 410.778.2000 • Fax: 410.778.4702
www.dixonvalve.com

©2005 Dixon Valve & Coupling Company