

Build a Good House

Marty Logan was a skilled and loyal carpenter who worked almost two decades for a successful contractor. One day, the contractor called Logan into his office and said, "I'm putting you in charge of the next house we build. I want you to order all the materials and oversee the job from the ground up."

Logan accepted the assignment enthusiastically. He studied the blueprints and double-checked every measurement and specification. As he worked, a thought crept into his mind: "Hey, I'm in charge here, so I can cut a few corners if I want to. I can use less expensive materials, sub-contract cheaper labor, then pocket the extra money. Who will ever know? I've worked hard for almost 20 years. I deserve a little 'bonus.'"

So, Logan ordered second-grade lumber and inexpensive concrete. He put in cheap wiring and hired unskilled minimum-wage workers. When the home was finished, the contractor came to give it a quick once-over.

"Looks like a fine job, as usual, Marty," he said. "And now I have a surprise for you. You've been such a faithful carpenter for me all these years that I've decided to give you this house as a reward!"

The lesson for us? Build well today. Directly or indirectly, you will have to live with the character and reputation you construct.

--Beecher Hunter