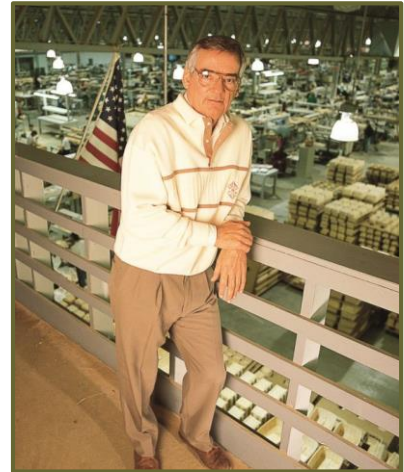


Despite the Start, Go Forward

Dave Longaberger graduated from high school at age 20. He repeated first grade and three-peated fifth grade.

He finally was able to achieve reading ability at the eighth-grade level. He stuttered and had epilepsy.

By 1996, however, the company he founded, The Longaberger Company, sold more than \$525 million in handmade baskets, pottery, fabric and other home-décor items through 36,000 independent sales consultants nationwide. Longaberger died in 1999. Bad economic times and changing tastes in home décor combined to send sales, which peaked in 2000 at \$1 billion, to about \$100 million in 2012.



How did Longaberger achieve what he did?

Well, Longaberger had a lot of positives going for him. He possessed an entrepreneurial spirit. As a child, he worked so many jobs, his family called him “the 25-cent millionaire.”

He gained many important lessons from his jobs. As a 17-year-old in a grocery store, he learned that the way to please the boss was to figure out what the boss wanted and get it done. Next, he studied people and learned about them from every job.

Examples: Work could be fun and he did a better job when he enjoyed his work. The more the people he dealt with liked him, the more likely they were to continue doing business with him.

In the Army, he learned about uniformity, control, consistency and Central Headquarters. He also learned how to become a risk taker and not a gambler. To illustrate, he opened a tiny restaurant on a shoestring. On opening day, he had \$135 that he used to buy the first day’s breakfast fixings. After breakfast, he had enough money to buy supplies for lunch, and then he used the money he made from lunch to buy dinner preparations. That’s starting a business on bare bones!

Later, Longaberger bought a grocery store and ran it very profitably. All the time, he was preparing for bigger and better things. His optimism, patience and hard work enabled him to overcome many difficulties.

We can boil down Dave Longaberger’s series of successes to two basic principles: (1) building positive, enduring relationships, and (2) practicing excellent customer service.

And those are the building blocks for Life Care and Century Park.

– Beecher Hunter