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# Life Lessons Learned Along The Way: Always "Come Across!"

By Harvey R. Heller

I have used this space to tell stories about who I am and to introduce you to our group. My stories aren't about me, but about those who have had a profound impact on me. This month's installment is about Mark.

For years, I have attended a quarterly business course for a full and exhausting day. It was and continues to be of great benefit to me. The curriculum includes lots of writing about various issues designed to bring focus to the theme of the session. While some of these exercises were forgettable, the vast majority resonated with me; meaning they had my attention and I didn't nod out! It's been the same throughout my life: if something clicks, I'm "all in" and completely focused.

Among these various exercises was one entitled "The Class Act Model." It was designed to help us focus on our values and how we see others who have successfully translated their value system into a set of ideals that we admired. Some chose religious figures, others chose celebrities, political icons or crusaders for social change. I chose "Da Boss."

In early 1978, I joined the origins of this firm. There were 2 partners and yours truly. Early on, I referred to Mark Hauser as "Da Boss" due to a joking response he gave me to a question I raised about why he enjoyed the finer things in life... *"If you want to be da boss, you've got to come across!"* I should also note that Mark is very old school and hates these articles! That said, when it came to writing about someone I admired as being a "Class Act Model," I didn't think of a religious leader, a celebrity or an icon of social change; I immediately thought of Mark.

From my perspective, Mark is a brilliant business advisor and deal maker who in equal shares, cares deeply about being an excellent lawyer, an example to the family he cherishes and a member of the community who has made a difference in the lives of people in need. He is the voice of reason in every matter that is

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brought to his attention, always available with sound advice that immediately gets to the heart of a matter. He “comes across” in every way.

I’ve been lucky for the past 36+ years. Mark and I eat lunch together several times each week. I make it a point of stopping by his office (on another floor) if I haven’t seen him. It provides a wonderful break during busy days. If there was a fan club, I would be the president. I’ve been able to soak him in and learn a lot from a true renaissance lawyer. He always understands the big picture and no matter what the issue, brings the perfect focus. As I continue to strive toward excellence (it’s like yoga, one must keep practicing!) my class act model is Mark Hauser. I’ll always be who I am, yet lucky enough to have a friend and partner to reflect off of like Mark; he “comes across!” I am a better lawyer because of “Da Boss.”

Mark has, among other things, taught all of us to be forthright; to bring focused thought and to create resolution strategies that are designed to achieve the client’s desired result by the most direct means available. Everyone should be lucky enough to have such a resource.

Our **second** article this month comes from my partner, Rick Mitchell. Rick balances a lot on his plate, and always comes across. His article on **severance packages and tax withholding issues** is important and worth your time.