

## What Radio's All About

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groups and Motown and Stax and Cadence and Elvis from the waist up and hearing "I Want To Hold Your Hand" for the very first time.

Stories about lovesick teenagers dedicating songs back and forth to each other. About children turning on the radio before they're even awake, feverishly hoping to hear those magic words: "No school, snow day."

About loneliness and a solitary voice reaching out to you. About making a complete stranger laugh or reflect or remember. About baseball games from far away on car radios. About someone driving across town or across country with only you and your radio brethren for company.

Tell them stories about Larry Lujack, John Records Landecker, Robert W. Wolfman Jack, Gary Owens, Dr. Don, Kenny Everett (ask someone from the UK about Kenny), and those crazy young jocks who brought American-style radio to Europe in the 1960s by taking to the seas in honest-to-God pirate radio ships (imagine broadcasting under the worst possible conditions; now imagine doing it while seasick).

Stories about bad news and everything immediately turning on the radio.

About sad news and where you were when you heard it. About practical jokes and misunderstandings and mild or wild revenge.

About getting fired, packing up the U-Haul, and being scared all over again. Getting angry, getting older, and "the good old days." Static-y voices criss-crossing in the night. Fifteen-hour airshifts, flaky jocks, disappearing engineers.

Stories about legendary radio people you almost met in an elevator at a convention; the major-market PD who did you a favor; the request line caller you can't forget. Practical jokes on the news guy, disappearing stationery, and a bedroom full of promo records that one day will be worth something. Staying up late talking radio, swapping tapes, "borrowing" ideas, "embellishing" your ratings, deepening your voice, losing your voice, losing your place, losing your keys, losing your cool.

Wire service copy paper, 15-inch reels, pin-controlled automation.

Caffeine addictions, junk food, and whatever the station could trade for: Old

friends, borrowed headphones, uncontrollable sleep-deprived laughter. Razor blades, splicing tape, grease pencils. Draping the tape edit over your shoulders until it was safe to throw away. Cue tones, cue sheets, in cue, out of breath.

Slip-cueing, back-announcing, and hitting the post. Egos, rivals, and friendships. Imagination, excitement, Orson Welles, Jack Benny, Ma Perkins, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Arthur Godfrey, and Don McNeil's Breakfast Club.

Losing jobs, gaining weight, changing names. "How do they do that?" and "Listen to this!" Storz, McClendon, Drake ... and Chuck Blore's Color Radio. Play-by-play and blow-by-blow.

Sports scores, election returns, and No. 1 on the charts this week. 7-7-7, First Ticket, Hooper, Pulse, and, "You don't look anything like you sound!"

"What am I doing with my life?" seven-day workweeks, and, "I can't believe I get paid for this!" Slow-starting turntables, the nickel on the tone-arm, the cart machine sticking.

Tell them stories about hotlines, hot shots, skimmers, phantom cume, time checks, time warping, ratings, feelings, winning, showing off. T-shirts, coffee mugs, and iridescent Frisbees. *Billboard* and Claude Hall and *Cashbox* and *Record World* and *R&R* and Bill Gavin's green pages. Floods, tornado watches, power outages, and school-lunch menus. Lost dogs, lost accounts, lost tempers.

Jiving, shouting, rhyming, and whispering. Hiccup remedies, lemon 'n' honey, and good old-fashioned adrenaline to save the day. Embarrassment, elation, and delight. Hi-Low, Name It And Claim It, and Dollar-A-Holler. Playlists, station surveys, and Good Guys. Q, Zoo, and Boss. Bob

& Ray and Mike & Elaine and The Monitor Beacon.

Jingles, stickers, Chickenman, and The Oidar Wavelength. Silly stunts, intense rivalries ... passion. B-Sides, label colors, and songwriter credits. Favorite songs, favorite artists, favorite moments.

Newspaper wars, live remotes, and meter readings. Shouts, stingers, sweepers, staggers, stabs. Make-goods, live tags, rip 'n' read, and backtiming to the news. Allan Freed. Dan Ingram, and Cousin Bruce.

Beat the Bomb. Lucky Bucks, and Battle Of The Bands. Pinning the needle, pegging the meter, riding gain.

Feedback, wrapping the capstan, and, "Hold on a sec, I gotta go on the air..." Sign on, sign off, warming up the filament and *compression, compression, compression!*

Gates board with rotary pots. Automax and Volumemax. Intros, outros, ramps, talk-ups. False endings, records popping and skipping, carts jamming. "Philosophical differences" and late-night resume photocopy sessions. Tight board, good pipes, will relocate. The big break, bad luck, skip waves, skipping town with the air-staff's paychecks.

Cueing past the splice, heavy phones, and cue burn. Solid Gold, Hot Nine At Nine, Hot 100, WABC, KHJ, KLIF, WOWO, WLS, and making it to the big markets.

Friday night countdowns, Saturday swap shops, Sunday drag racing commercials, twin spins, double plays, triple shots, and instant replays. Romantic entanglements, broken hearts, big dreams, small wins, and "Garbage Mouth Leaves Cleveland."

"NO ONE is to touch these carts! And that means YOU!"

"Were you listening when...?"

"What'd ya think?"

"You should have been there."

Then explain to that new jock: Now you are there... *what are you gonna do with it?*

Drawings by Bobby Ocean

## THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

By Dick Kazan

### How To Cut Employee Absenteeism In Half

You're expected to run an efficient, highly productive operation, but that's hard to do when some employees regularly miss work. Their actions cause you to juggle assignments and calm a staff irritated by having to assume other people's responsibilities. Here's how to cut this problem in half.

- When you recruit, listen carefully to the candidate's priorities. Ask about their interests. If you hear about a hobby that requires extensive involvement, it's likely that your objectives are going to receive secondary consideration.

Years ago, I interviewed a man who had the potential of becoming a great salesperson. His sales results were good, but not remarkable, and yet he seemed to have so much talent. As I questioned him, it became apparent that he and his wife had made a virtual avocation of travel, and that work was only the financial means to that end. He'd already scheduled a couple of trips, and I knew that once he hit his goals (not mine), he was gone. I wished him well, knowing that this wasn't the right opportunity for either of us.

- Be family friendly. In the past, employers seldom considered families. Today, it's important that you do so, because many employees emphasize being involved parents. If you want them present and focused, you've got to accommodate their needs at home with flexible scheduling.

As a CEO, I did this, and quickly had another problem: the resentment of employees who felt they were doing too much of the work assigned to those people receiving family accommodation. We resolved this issue through dialogue and clearly defined tasks, with people held accountable for their commitments.

- Enforce your drug policy. You do nobody any favors if you ignore a drug problem or accept excuses about how an employee intends to deal with it. We had a capable secretary whose quality of work steadily declined. She then began to regularly call in sick or arrive late due to "a family emergency." One afternoon, some employees brought me to her office area, where she was passed out drunk across her desk, liquor bottle lying next to her. We found more of her stash in an adjacent open file drawer. I called her husband and then drove her home. When she returned to work a couple of days later, she denied that a problem existed and refused my offer of help, so I terminated her employment. I felt sorry for her, but it was inappropriate, under those circumstances, to ask other employees to assume her responsibilities.

- Paid sick days. What a silly concept this is. We, like many companies, had a "use 'em or lose 'em" policy. You can guess what happened. They not only used 'em, but virtually everyone did so at the same time, near the end of the year. There were times when I felt lonelier than the Maytag repairman. A smarter way to approach this is to pay employees for sick days not taken or let them carry those days over.

Practice these four concepts and you'll cut your employee absenteeism in half and run a far more productive organization. If you'd like to share your experience with this or other business issues, you're welcome to contact me at the e-mail address shown below.

Dick Kazan is a successful entrepreneur who founded one of the largest computer leasing corporations in the United States. He created and hosts *The Road To Success*, the first radio talk show to offer on-air business consulting to business owners and employees. E-mail your comments or questions to him at [rkazan@ix.netcom.com](mailto:rkazan@ix.netcom.com).

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