

## Fun Is Good Vignette

**Melissa McCants,**  
Director of Sports Marketing,  
College of Charleston



*I called it “Cow Bingo.” The idea was to mark off a large athletic field into squares, raffle 300 spaces for \$100 apiece, and bring in a cow. Wherever the “chip” fell determined the winner.*

This was the type of Fun Is Good idea that Mike would have rubber-stamped quickly during my time working for his Charleston RiverDogs baseball team. But the folks at the College of Charleston, mirroring the conservative attitudes of the surrounding community, were not as receptive.

For 3 years, I took the idea to my boss; for 3 years he turned it down. He worried that we'd offend donors or athletic department sponsors or that it would be beneath the dignity of the college to have a cow soiling school property.

To his credit, he finally gave in the following year. Between raffle tickets and event sponsorship, we netted \$30,000 for our scholarship fund once the \$10,000 prize had been awarded.

The contest was a huge success, even though the cow took forever to get down to business. In the meantime, we awarded prizes—such as gallons of “Holy Cow” ice cream—to the owners of squares the cow visited for at least 15 minutes. Besides Cow Bingo, there was an all-you-can-eat oyster roast. We charged \$25 admission.

Because of the positive feedback, my boss insisted we make Cow Bingo an annual event, which is ironic considering I might have gotten in trouble had the contest flopped or we received a negative response. I suppose that's a risk you take in implementing Fun Is Good.

I give him credit for giving me the green light. Admittedly, it took persistence on my part, but that's what it takes sometimes to bring about a change in attitudes in workplaces accustomed to doing things a certain way.

Maybe you're wondering if Fun Is Good could work with your company or be applied to your career. I had my doubts at first. Even though the College of Charleston is a neighbor of the Charleston RiverDogs, it was light years away in some respects. Perhaps your workplace is stodgy, with little progressive thinking.

When I was struggling with bringing Fun Is Good to my new employer, I asked Mike what I should do. “If you believe in your idea, put your full effort into it, and are willing to take responsibility for it should it fail, you have nothing to worry about,” he said.

That's good advice—not just for Cow Bingo, but for career planning as well. I'm in collegiate sports marketing not because it has a tremendous financial upside but because I have the opportunity to have fun at my job.

In my field, I have the chance to show people a great time. If they can walk away from Cow Bingo or a similar event happy, then I've done my job, and I take great pride in that.

For me, Fun Is Good means that no matter what your age,

there's still that kid deep down inside looking to get out. I've been guided by that notion, that with a little determination and chutzpah, anything is possible.

Maybe things won't always work out, though I'm willing to take that risk as long as I believe in the idea and put my full effort behind it.

If I've done that, then I'm comfortable letting the chips fall where they may.

## **Chapter 7 Summary and Exercises (The Business of Laughter)**

- Creative ideas and promotions are the lifeblood of any successful organization.
- Good ideas come from everyone, not just the chiefs.
- Employees who don't have their ideas heard should look elsewhere for work.
- Any company can benefit from off-the-wall promotion.
- Hold employee contests for ideas.
- What three promotions could help your company?
- How can your career or business benefit from "random" acts of kindness?
- Give credit to those who deserve it. If you signed off on an idea, take the blame if it fails.