



The Culture Chronicles

...of the Franklin Companies

September 2015

Something to Consider...

Finish well. This is a phrase that is found in many settings. At work, we can be encouraged to *finish well* as we lead teams and projects. In school, we encourage the children in our lives to *finish well*. Students are often reminded that diligent study and hard work will contribute to their future opportunities and success. In our families and our communities we are encouraged to *finish well*. We want to be known through our relationships and our character. We *finish well* by pouring into our children, contributing to our community and loving our neighbors.

These are all high-level examples of *finishing well*. What if we took seriously the concept of *finishing well* with the little things, as much as we focus on the big things? To illustrate this point, consider these *finishing well* responses that we could use in every day conversation with colleagues or our residents:

- Have I answered all of your questions?
- I appreciate your sharing your ideas with me.
- Do you need to tell me any other information on this topic before we work toward a solution?

We can also *finish well* as we encourage each other in our daily communication. Consider these comments of encouragement:

- Thank you for your attention to detail.
- Thank you for your patience as we worked through that issue.
- Your efforts today made a big difference to our team.

This framework of *finishing well* can be applied to our 2015 operating manta, **FOCUS**. As we act with **Freedom**; as we take **Ownership**; as we remain **Committed**; as we **Utilize** our resources; and as we act as **Shepherds**, we should look for the opportunities we have to *finish well*, each and every day. Take the time to treat each interaction as a step toward a larger goal and purpose. Do not simply move through a conversation quickly to move on to your next responsibility. Take the time necessary to clarify, encourage and affirm your colleagues and serve our residents. Before we know it, all of our "little finishes" will contribute to something much larger than we can imagine as Franklin Companies continues to redefine and lead our industry.

Freely Giving of Time in Order to Help a Colleague

Kareika Powell, Executive Director at Franklin Park DeSoto, recently took on the role of leading the Artisan at Rush Creek community in Arlington. This new responsibility included bringing some directed attention to some of areas of improvement at Artisan at Rush Creek. One such area included some required maintenance on the community's pool.

One day, Kareika was sharing her concerns about the required pool maintenance with **Edward Regino**, Lead Maintenance at Franklin Park DeSoto. Upon hearing her concerns, Edward immediately volunteered to take care of the issues that coming Saturday, on his day off! Kareika was incredibly grateful and could not help but share of Edward's generosity with other staff members. When **Walter McFail**, Porter at Franklin Park DeSoto, heard about what Edward was planning to do that Saturday, he immediately offered to join him! That Saturday, Edward and Walter not only volunteered their time on their day off, but they also completed a substantial amount of work during an incredibly hot Texas afternoon in August!

*Edward and Walter, thank you for your **FOCUS** on that hot day in August. Your willingness to volunteer your time to help Kareika is incredible! You not only took **Ownership** of the situation, but you served as **Shepherds** to both Kareika and the Artisan at Rush Creek community. Thank you!*

Looking Out for a Resident at Salado Creek

Mark Rodriguez, Assistant Maintenance at Salado Creek, was working on the grounds one hot afternoon when he noticed a resident standing outside her building. She was holding her newborn baby while her younger child stood beside her. The temperature outside was well over 100 degrees, and Mark walked over to ask if she needed assistance. It turned out that the pest control professionals were in her unit doing a routine treatment, and she was waiting outside for someone to pick her up.

Mark quickly made his way back to the leasing office where his car was parked and drove it back around to the resident's building. He kindly drove the resident and her very young children to the office where they could wait in an air conditioned space. He also supplied them with cold water to drink while they waited.

*Mark, thank you for being so observant! You took **Ownership** of that situation as you acted with **Freedom** to make a decision about the best course of action. Thank you also for caring enough about our residents to **Shepherd** them to a more comfortable area to wait during their time of need!*

Taking Time to Help a Resident in Lewisville

Barbara Davila is the Receptionist at Franklin Park Lewisville, and she is always available to assist the residents of that community. Mr. Teach is one resident for whom Barbara is a true **Shepherd**. Mr. Teach, whose wife is deceased, has had a difficult time since her death and his grief is not helped by the fact that he is hearing impaired. For him, Barbara is a life saver.

Barbara checks on Mr. Teach every day. She makes sure he eats and has his meals the way he likes them. She even reminds him to feed his cat and change the kitty litter! Barbara also assists Mr. Teach with the necessary administrative items that we all face on a daily basis. She makes calls to the cable company for him when there are issues, and she has even made calls to Social Security for him when there are delays or issues with his regular payments. One day while out driving, Mr. Teach unfortunately received a citation, and Barbara gently **Shepherded** him through that issue as well.

*Barbara, your efforts with Mr. Teach truly go above and beyond. We appreciate how you have come beside him as a trusted support even with the daily issues that come up. Your **FOCUS** is making a difference in his life, and we are grateful for your time and attention with Mr. Teach!*

Off the Clock Kindness

Janessa Lawrence is the Resident Services Coordinator at Artisan Ridge, and she serves that community with excellence. One day in August, Janessa found an opportunity to go out of her way to serve one of the community's residents.

As she was leaving work at the end of a long day, Janessa noticed that one of the resident's car doors was standing open with no one near the car. Janessa waited patiently to see if anyone was coming out to the car to leave. After some time, it was apparent that no one was coming to get into the car. Janessa took it upon herself to find out to whom the car belonged and to locate that resident. It turned out that the owner of the car was a single mother of four children who had recently returned, and in an overwhelmed state simply forgot to close the door and secure her car. The resident was very impressed and incredibly grateful for Janessa's help, particularly at the end of a long work day.

*Janessa, thank you for taking it upon yourself to look out for all of the residents at Artisan Ridge! Your efforts made a difference for that single mother. We appreciate your **FOCUS** and your **Commitment** to serve with excellence.*

Back to School in Style

Victor Zuniga, Resident Services Coordinator at Sutton Oaks, was able to persuade a local organization to donate several boxes of school supplies for the children of both Sutton Oaks and The Park at Sutton Oaks. The team was overwhelmed with the organization's generosity, but unfortunately, the supplies were delivered at the very last minute! The teams of both properties were scrambling to find a way to communicate to their residents that the supplies were available.

Mark Lopez, Business Office Manager at Sutton Oaks, came up with the idea of having a "Back to School Send Off" for the families. The plan was to have the supplies ready to go and hand them to the families as they left for school on the first day. **Luke Roberts**, Business Office Manager at The Park at Sutton Oaks, volunteered to help with the distribution. During their lunch break, Victor, Mark, and Luke worked to organize the supplies and set up distribution boxes that would be stationed at the front gates of both communities for the first day of school.

The morning of the first day of school was a wonderful time at both communities. The families were surprised and very thankful for the efforts that the team had taken to ensure that their children had a good start to the school year. One parent even posted a comment on the Sutton Oaks Facebook page that read, "Thank you for making my kids' first day even more wonderful!"

*Victor, Mark and Luke, thank you so much for the **FOCUS** you put into action as you came together as staff from two different communities. You exercised the **Freedom** to approach an organization. You took complete **Ownership** of the situation. You made a **Commitment** to "make it work." You **Utilized** your own personal time to get the supplies separated and put into packets. Then, you were true **Shepherds** by standing near the front gates and supporting our families on the first day of school. Thank you!*

