

Executive Woody's Remarks
AECOM Leadership Event
Knoxville Convention Center
July 29, 2015

I appreciate the invitation to the AECOM Leadership Event. I would like to personally thank Ken Reuter for the invitation. As you have heard from the Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank and the Oak Ridge City Mayor Warren Gooch, they have already said what I was going to say about UCOR, DOE EM and the work progress being made at ETP, so I am going to change my talk and share what I learned while fishing.

Ashley Hartman emailed me about three weeks ago extending an invitation for this event and I asked Ashley if you wanted my philosophy of life. A few days later, she calls and says I needed to share only a few words on the subject I spoke about at a DOE meeting four to six weeks ago. Well, I had already forgot my comments then and now, since Mayor Frank and Mayor Gooch have told you all about Oak Ridge, I'm left with sharing my philosophy.

Ken and Leo, you may never invite me back, but I'm going to expand my bio by checking off sharing my leadership philosophy with one of the world's largest engineering and construction companies with over 100,000 employees. So here it goes.

"Everything I've Learned about Leadership, I Learned Catfishing"

This is the title of a book I am writing that will be out in August, but I'm just not sure which year.

I was raised commercial catfishing. My dad had fished all his life and when my older brother and I were about 9 and 10 we began fishing with dad. Here are a few things we learned.

Each morning we had a staff meeting. Just like in business, we received our instructions. Mom called it breakfast but we also received the daily instruction. What we learned was the importance of communication. Understanding what we needed to know and do. I'm pleased with UCOR's communication with elected officials. In the absence of information, we generally speculate the worst. Thanks for keeping us informed.

Another lesson we learned in the commercial fishing business is that our customer wants and needs change. When we started fishing, we sold a lot of fish live. Then years passed and we would have to clean the fish- "dress them out" but the bones were left in. Then a few more years passed, and we began filleting the fish. I told dad a couple of years back- dad's now 80- that before long we would be cooking the fish. He said, son, that already started. I do more fish frying now than ever before. We must change our operations as our customers' needs and wants change.

Probably every community AECOM works in is different- their needs, desires, and wants. As leaders, you must find, identify and meet your customers needs. The customer is DOE, elected officials and your employees, among others. I'm an elected official who desires to be informed. UCOR does a good job with what can be shared. I sit in a Sunday School classroom with two UCOR employees, and they speak well of UCOR.

Third, even in fishing we had vision of what and how we wanted things to look like at the end of the day. We worked to that end goal.

I truly appreciate UCOR and DOE having a vision, a plan and programs in order to work toward that goal. The goal being having the ability to move from one demolition job to the next thus continue the work and employment of our citizens.

DOE's three plants are all within the city of Oak Ridge, but covering two counties. It's a tough job keeping all the leaders informed but I appreciate what you do.

Lastly, we learned from fishing that the fish rots at the head first. Leadership is important and you have good leadership in Oak Ridge UCOR.

In closing, I leave you with one final leadership lesson from fishing- "Don't get lost in the fog!"