

## Why the Boy Scout?

We had a visitor to the factory this past week who was intrigued with our Glenair Guiding Principles. Regular readers of *QwikConnect* will know that we take these principles seriously, as they have been instrumental to our now sixty-plus years of success in the high-reliability interconnect industry. Anyway, this visitor, a customer, was keenly interested in our first and foremost principle to “protect the reputation of the organization”; in particular why we had chosen a Boy Scout to illustrate the point in the poster on the wall. I explained that Norman Rockwell’s Boy Scout was, in our view, the perfect symbol to convey the dedication and duty we expect at Glenair when it comes to ethical behavior in the workplace. I went on to say that in our “quaint” way of doing things, we prefer not to burden folks with a long list of rules. Instead—much like the scouts—we strive to communicate the values and principles we hold dear and trust our colleagues to join us in their application.

Well, you should have seen him smile. A life-long scout, he was visibly proud to see the organization’s reach had extended into our company culture in such a meaningful way. And truth be told, our walking tour of the factory paused at that poster for a solid half hour as we talked about leadership, citizenship, duty, and other scouting principles that we both agreed are relevant in today’s business world. On the topic of leadership, we discussed how effective leadership begins with “follow ship”—or the practice of giving everything you have as a regular team member that ultimately prepares you for the role of leading teams yourself. And as is natural for a supplier and customer, we talked a bit about customer service. Specifically, we agreed that the Boy Scout Law (which he of course knew by heart: trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, etc.) would make a great foundation for outstanding customer service in any organization that took the task seriously.

An observation about Glenair bears on this point: every group in our organization has a customer service aspect to its work. From inside sales, to field application engineering, quality, production, inventory-control—you name it—we all have internal and external customers. At the risk of beating the same old drum, I’m proud of our team when it comes to treating all of our many customers with honest, friendly service. Sure, sometimes we slip on a banana peel (despite our best efforts) and come up short in the customer’s eyes. But it has certainly been my experience that we all do a pretty good job of *protecting the reputation of the organization* when it comes to ethical and reliable service to our customers, colleagues, and suppliers. As Teddy Roosevelt once said, “The most important single ingredient in the formula for success is the knack of getting along with people.” I couldn’t agree more.

*Chris Toomey*



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