

Little incident narrative essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This little incident happened two years ago and, to the external spectator, could have seemed unremarkable and trite. Yet, to me, it was an outstanding example of cooperation in the workplace, mutual help and supportive friendship. The little episode reshaped my understanding of work ethics and helped me become a better friend, able to realize the needs of others and come to the rescue at the time of need.

In one company, I had the good luck to get into the department where all people were young, approximately my age. We were seven in total, a perfect match for developing good working relationships without getting bored with each other. In a few months, we turned into friendly group that enjoyed each other's company very much, viewed colleagues as close friends with whom one could share romance stories, family problems and discuss all kinds of issues. We would often go out together after work to continue with conversations we did not have time for during working hours.

Our friendship, in my current understanding, was greatly encouraged by the fact that we all had a poor relationship with our boss. A woman in her thirties, she was facing a managerial role for the first time in our department, confronted with a group of inexperienced, even if enthusiastic subordinates.

I can fairly well understand her harsh criticism now - seeing what we were doing, and how inexperienced we were, she was appalled by the task she had to accomplish that was hampered by our lack of expertise. Yet what could we do? Striving to meet stringent deadlines, working at home to improve our knowledge, we felt like hares trapped in a cage at times

because the load was overwhelming and we often felt that strive as we may, we were not delivering the quality our boss was expecting.

At one time, we decided to visit a concert of a local rock group we all enjoyed. I bought the tickets for all in the department (excluding the boss, to be sure). The day of the concert, we were discussing how we will get there, what to put on for the concert, and whether we will have enough time to get dressed and have dinner before the concert. The expectation of a good evening was up in the air, and this made the work seem less grueling and more enjoyable.

Suddenly, we heard an “ Ah!” cry from one of the computers. We all turned: the girl sitting in front of it was looking safe and uninjured.

“ I lost it all!”, she cried out with despair in her voice.

Then we realized what had happened: she had lost all the work she did today. This was a very important piece, important for the whole department, one that had to be ready by tomorrow. We were all doing different pieces, each about 50 pages long, that had to come together in a unified whole at the end of the day. This day, Kate (this was the girl’s name) was already doing the final proofreading of the document in order to be ready for tomorrow. She made a mistake when she was trying to save an archived file - as it happened, she plainly lost all the changes she made on the day.

This was a pathetic moment indeed. Looking at the monitor, she simply started crying with despair and grief over her lost work. We could see what was happening. We, too, had been tired from straining the whole day to

meet the appointed deadline, were suffering from the squeaky pain in the eyes, and our backs ached from sitting in the chair all day long. But in our case we at least had the satisfaction of having our work done almost done or ending completion, and for this evening we could forget about the boss, her assignments and all this stuff that is of so little relevance when you are twenty-something and eager to have a good day.

Kate, however, would have to sit here for hours and hours, trying again to put her work in order so that she could be in time for tomorrow's morning. Would she go home? Maybe even sleep in the office? Anyway, the concert was for her out of the question because not delivering the work, given our department head's character was the direct way to dismissal.

I do not know what swept upon me, but I had an idea. Normally, I am not the charismatic leader who leads the group, but this time I blotted out:

“ We will do it. All together”.

Persuasion was unnecessary. The picture of Kate toiling in the office while we were enjoying the evening did not fit into our minds. What took one person eight hours occupied a little over an hour when done by seven. During this hour, everybody worked in silence, driven by the desire to finish as soon as possible, and if this happens, offer the colleague to help so that we eked out some time for the concert because, after all, we still wanted to get there.

Surprisingly, we did and could see about half of it. Surely there was no time for changing clothes, and we were perhaps the only group of people who came to the rock event in business suits. We knew we looked strange, but at

this point nobody cared, partly because we were too tired to pay attention to stares, partly because we were exhilarated to be through with work. In any case, this was one of the most memorable friendly evenings in my life, and we finished it in the local night club, happy that we could share the experience.

This little incident always stands out in my memory as an example of what true friendship and cooperation can accomplish. Kate often shared with us that this case gave her renewed strength to overcome challenges in her work. For each of us, this memory stimulated conviction that in times of need, we can always turn to friends to help us. Never leaving anybody behind since then became my motto, something I am willing to follow for the rest of my life. And it was then that I discovered that I do have leadership ability, especially when it comes to matters that I believe to be important.