

# The Relationship Issue

As I reflect on 2022, I will remember two situations that were based on two things: Relationships and emotions.

When the late, great Walt Disney developed his concepts of entertainment, he operated under the simple focus:  
**Emotions Trump Everything.**

Any time you can make an emotional connection with anyone, that bond is stronger than a slightly lower price from a stranger. That customer develops a sense of loyalty to you because of how you have created a bond.

**Example #1:** When a local car dealer sponsors your child's sports team and sells SUVs at the same price as their competition, you will buy from that dealer. You might even be willing to pay a slight bit more.

**Example #2:** When a company supports a cause important to you (American Cancer Society and you have lost a close friend or relative to cancer; or perhaps your daughter is selling Girl Scout Cookies), you feel an affinity to them, and you will buy from them.

**With Christmas just a few more days away, Rebecca and I join with Doc the puppy and Snowball the kitten to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas. And remember to prepare for tomorrow's bitter cold.**



## Smart Relationship: Mike Leach and Multiple Layers

Here is the relationship chain:

- The Fort Worth Business Press's then-editor **Bob Francis** is my good friend
- I am a good friend of **Carey Hobbs** from Waco
- Carey was a close friend of football coach **Mike Leach**
- Bob knew of that friendship with Carey and Coach Leach
- **Bryan Horton**, the managing partner of Eventide Waters, is my friend and client
- **Steve Lineweaver** is my good friend



Bob Francis called me in August of 2010 to invite Mike Leach to speak at the Fort Worth Business Press Power Attorneys Luncheon. Bob knew that Coach Leach, who had been fired by Texas Tech, was an attorney, and he was confident that the coach would be a most entertaining speaker.

I called Carey, who connected Coach Leach with Bob, who finalized the arrangements.

Knowing that Bryan Horton – a Texas Tech alumnus – was the volunteer coach of the six-man football team at Community Christian School in Mineral Wells, and that the team was in the state playoffs, I asked if Bryan could bring his team to Fort Worth for a practice session if we could convince Coach Leach to meet with them.



Bryan immediately agreed, so I asked Carey, and he said that as long as the session would not make Coach Leach late for his flight at DFW Airport, that would be great.

Sensing that the schedule might be tight, Coach Leach committed to a five-minute meet-and-greet. I called my friend Steve Lineweaver, then head coach at Euless Trinity High School, and he agreed to open the field for the practice session for a couple of hours.

On the day of the event in November 2010, Coach Leach was hilarious at the podium of the Power Attorneys Luncheon, regaling stories about attorneys, football, and any other topic that crossed his mind.

He actually talked longer than expected, which concerned me about being able to visit the Community Christian Warriors team.

Carey brought Coach Leach to the workout, and he stayed more than the promised five minutes. Coach Leach stayed for over an HOUR because he and the boys were having so much fun.

As a parting gift, Coach Leach drew up a very complicated play, which the team called "The Pirate" in honor of his fascination with seafaring mercenaries.

That Friday night in the state quarterfinals playoff, with the game on the line, Bryan Horton called for "The Pirate" play, which won the game and sent the team to the state semifinals.

**Relationships DO matter:**

- I made the call out of my friendship to Bob Francis
- Carey Hobbs set everything up because of his friendship with me
- Coach Leach agreed due to his friendship with Carey
- I called Bryan Horton based on our friendship
- Steve Lineweaver helped because of our friendship

Coach Leach passed away Monday, December 12, from a massive heart attack. I will always remember his kindness and generosity with his time to help those young men.

When asked why he stopped to visit with the team, he told NBC 5 Sports, "It's not very likely that any six-man football players would get an interview with a college football coach at the highest level, so it's my honor to meet with them, encourage them, and hopefully inspire them."

**As you reflect on 2022, please write down and save the list of relationships that you strengthened in this past year. Also, write down what YOU did to serve others.**

**My late father, Earle Fletcher, always said, "Son, it's important to constantly make deposits in the favor bank. Others will always remember you when you do the first favor!"**

MIKE  
LEACH  
1961-2022





# Smart Relationships: Perryman & Diet Coke

It pays to pay attention. In this case, it REALLY paid off!

I've known renowned economist **Dr. Ray Perryman** since our daughters grew up playing together in Waco. I noticed back then that he loved Diet Coke.

He has always appreciated that every time that I have engaged him as a keynote speaker, I have always placed bottles or cans of Diet Coke at his table.

After confirming Ray as the keynote speaker for the April 1 **Northeast Leadership Forum (NLF)** Award Banquet, I reached out to my friend **Ish Arebalos**, Director of Public Affairs and Communications for **Coca-Cola Bottling Southwest** and asked if Ish might have some Diet Coke swag to give to Ray.

When Ish agreed to bring Diet Coke products, headphones, shirts, and more, I asked him to be my guest out of appreciation for his generosity.

Before Ray spoke, our NLF Chairman, **Shelby Bruhn**, shared about our scholarship program with \$44,000 being awarded. Since we had auctioned two **Drew Pearson** Hall of Fame footballs the previous year when Drew keynoted, and auctioned one remaining football that day, Ray agreed to auction off five of his books on economics – which raised \$3,500 (yes, \$700 each for books on the economy!).

Ish was so moved by the spirit of generosity that he announced that Coca-Cola Southwest would give a new Dell Laptop to each of the 22 scholarship recipients.

Here's the relationship/emotion chain:

- Ray made himself available to speak because of our friendship
- I made sure to have the Diet Coke at his table
- I called my friend Ish about possibly providing some Diet Coke memorabilia for Ray
- I appreciated Ish's cooperation, so I invited him to the luncheon as my guest
- Ish was caught up in the EMOTION of the moment with the scholarship program awards and auction of Ray's books, which led to his very generous gift.

**The quality of relationships that you develop and nurture will determine your level of success – both as a human being and in business.**



*We wish you a  
Merry Christmas!  
Rebecca, Snowball, Doc and John*