

There are some things about the work place that I feel are not given as much importance to as they should be. It is a bit of an intangible but none the less important. I refer to levity, the odd amusing bits. This does not mean rolling about the floor laughing either, just little touches to perhaps cause a smile or two. I tried to contribute in varying ways to this.

At one point it was decided “up above” that the building needed a mugshot board. This was a large display board with photos of everyone in the building, it was in the form of a sort of pictorial organisation chart. The photos were all nicely standardised and it was set up on a wall in the other end of the building. That was our end of the building and a bit removed from the main entrance. Now it did occur to me that the photos were about the same size a number of photos that were in the paper on a daily basis and it also occurred to me that no one really looked at this board either. So as an experiment I took a suitable sized clipping from the paper and stuck it over the top of a photo on the board. Nothing happened so after a week I added another. Replacing our building residents with famous or newsworthy folks. After a half dozen ordinary substitutions went unnoticed I became bolder and substituted increasingly less likely photos to the board. Bin Laden got a guernsey as did a nice head shot of someone swathed in bandages. One did notice small clusters of people forming at times around the board and pointing at the board and chuckling etc. No one ever took any photos down or corrected the board but it was providing a popular diversion.

This was up to the point that someone higher up in the system noticed numbers of people looking at the board. Why the hell are they looking at a dull photo board he no doubt wondered. A closer inspection showed why. This did create a problem. This had to stop but it had clearly been going on for a while. The problem of how to stop it without indicating this had not been noticed was the sort of problem folks in charge have. Get out more and you find things out much earlier than other wise. Rather quickly the board was relocated from where it was to the other end of the building and also installed in a rather large cabinet with sliding glass front and a lock on it. All the photos reverted to original, nothing was said and my news paper clippings were never seen again.

I had been dealt with and my foolishness was to be no more. So they thought. The front of the cabinet was 2 sliding sheets of glass, there was about a 5 cm. overlap in the middle and the glass was locked. All was secured nicely. However if you has a curved piece of spring plastic and tied a string to one end and pulled up the string tight you could uncurl the plastic and make it straight. If you had a suitable photo substitute with double sided tape on its back, then you could fix the photo with a small bit of blue tack to the back of the piece of plastic. Have you got the picture so far? Now with care the picture could be slid between the gap in the glass panes. Once the picture was in the desired spot, releasing the string caused the plastic to resume its curve and thus place your photo in the desired spot. Over the top of the dull uninteresting official photo. It wasn't easy but it could be done and surprisingly neatly too. I placed a few pictures there, not many as one was restricted to about 1/3 of the board and it was a much slower procedure than the other one was and much more visible too. It was important to be undetected. Now I believe if Sports Bet was running a book on who was doing this sort of thing I would have been \$1.05. Most folks knew who was doing it but however it was important to me not to be seen doing it.

The tampering did not go unnoticed however and the person responsible was admonished for this. It was however the person responsible for the display that was admonished. He truthfully denied being responsible for it and truthfully knew nothing about it. He had not given the key to anyone and he had no idea how the photos could have gotten there. That is not to say he had no idea who had done it, and they didn't ask that question, he just didn't know how I did it. He did ask me not to do it any more as he was getting the blame for it. Ceasing this line of endeavour was the least I could do for him. I did at least generate some interest in a display.

Other one of the areas was with the signs. There are some things one should be cautious about with signs. They sometimes have odd effects. I also had Corel draw, a software program that was ideally suited to producing nicely printed little signs. It was handy for doing labels for boxes and A4 sized shipping addresses for freight etc. I am not sure why I thought it would make nice

signs for the building but this did occur to me one day. It was quite some time ago that our building was fitted out, at least on the main entrance doors, with card readers. The Northern entrance was not the main entrance but was the way I usually came in. A combination of Corel and some nice white cardboard produced a nice little sign for the door. The front office got a paper sheet lamina for so I was able to encase my little signs in plastic, this made them look more professional than ever. I did a bunch of these over the years starting with this.

I stuck this to the door with double sided tape and thought no more of it. I was amused to hear that later on when there was a key check within the building one of the office girls was observed looking under the mat for the key.

If the swipe card
malfunctions there
is a key under
the doormat

Later when the card readers became more common and considering most doors didn't have a door mat any way I went on to my best effort ; the Visa card etc. The cards, were placed by the readers as one would place a genuine card. They did look the part. The main entrance ones had a short life, the other entrances ones seem to last forever. Some of the Defence travel card ones said as a final line "Which is more than most places do."

THIS SWIPECARD READER
WILL ACCEPT VISA CARD

A \$20 CHARGE APPLIES

THIS SWIPECARD READER
WILL ACCEPT THE
DEFENCE TRAVEL CARD

A \$20 CHARGE APPLIES

The traces of nuts one was a response to the way that warning seemed at one point to be cropping up on everything. These usually went on the main entrances to buildings.

May contain traces of nuts.

Our building also has name tags, these were engraved plastic arrangement that slipped into an aluminium holder. Something mounted outside each office and lab. A lengthy process was involved in getting new ones so rather than have a blank spot for the new arrivals, my skills were utilised to produce temporary paper replacements. Some serious others not.

A Anonymous

Howzia bin Ladley

Pheasant Plucker

Always happy to assist I provided these on request. Most of these label signs had provision for a half height label too. It was usually reserved for a title or something. It did seem a bit wasted. One of our section guys was not infrequently referred to as “The Tall Guy”. It was obvious that a second label to this effect was a good thing, and it looked nice. It occurred to me that nearby was the shortest member of our little section who as a consequence and logically received a label “The Tall Guy”. Those familiar with Boolean logic [and that was most of DSTO] could see the point of that. Those not, the over-strike means a negation, the NOT TALL GUY. Not exactly LMAO but amusing at least at DSTO. A bit of further thought found other examples close hand and so rather quickly we had the entire set of possibilities all in close proximity with “The Tall Guy” and “The Tall Guy”.

I regret that I resisted the temptation to put “Le Grand Fromage” on anyone's door. It is best to know the people and how they will react, most wear the labels with pride. We did have “Curry puffs R Us” and “Competitions R Us”. Both of which reflected, favourably I think, on the recipients. A few area requested their own funny labels, always happy to oblige there. I just accept the risk that the label may be funnier than something I may have thought of.

I passed a door one day that was not to be used as a general exit door. A small sign told me this door was alarmed. There was a door in close proximity, it soon had a sign saying this door was calm. Other door, the world was informed, was while not alarmed, was easily startled. One likes to push this as far as the number of doors allow.



THIS DOOR WHILE
NOT ALARMED DOES
NOT WORK WELL
WITH PEOPLE.

I had one day cause to be annoyed by an inappropriately parked vehicle, probably parked somewhere where we wanted to park our van. I generated an official looking Infringement notice. I must say having received an official one, mine still looks much better. A number of possible

offences were detailed and all the issuer had to do was fill in a couple of details and tick a box. My best hit with this was getting a SAPOL vehicle. Now that had come onto the area for some reason and was actually parked in a no parking zone. However in the interest of self preservation, and not pretending to be official some of the listed offences were, not usual. Somewhere on my homepage, this notice can be found, so go seek. I did not want to be accused of issuing false documents and so had to ensure that closer inspection would reveal this was a joke. A stern but incomprehensible warning finished off the note and it was signed by Phil O'Dendron. More of Phil later.

In a vaguely similar vein, other "official" documents were produced at times. The official means of advising of policy was thro DEFGRAMS. I produced a number of somewhat similar arrangements but considered that I was dealing with matters of little consequence or matters that management had not considered and as I figured that no one was listening, I was generating DEAFGRAMS. I dealt with the issues I felt were important and in a fashion that I thought appropriate. All the DEAFGRAMS were signed off by Phil, he was alive and well even tho he had lost his email account. There were also a couple of odd event notification that also appeared on the division notice board over the years as well. 30 Feb was a clue to the obtuse that maybe it wasn't as official as it looked. Phil's signature was always the other clue.

Actually, more of Phil now. Where did he come from and how did he rise to where he is today. The Northern and the lesser used entrance of our building had a large pot with a Philodenron in it. Now do you recall the door labels? An update was being done and a note went around the building, seeking names for which new door signs would be issued. JP added Phil O'Dendron to the list and thought no more of it. Until the office girl came around distributing the new labels and wanting to know where Mr O'Dendron was. These name labels apparently were not as cheap as one might have thought so JP passed on that one. Someone else broke the news to the office girl. Later on JP managed to create an email account for Phil and Phil was responsible for some amusing emails and ones that expressed some generally held concerns within the division that were being ignored. Until the powers that be discovered it and put a stop to it. Phil suffered an executive execution. A short sighted approach I believe. Tho management tends to assume if one can stifle dissent then all are happy. No no no. Beatings will continue until morale improves is not as far removed from the thinking of some as one imagines.

I do feel seriously that the behaviour talked of above does make a positive contribution to the work place. Someone being a bit foolish does make the workplace a better place to be. Should it be officially encouraged tho? I do wonder a bit about that one. I suspect it must maintain its slightly subversive flavour other wise it doesn't work. I can't see management hiring a contractor to make funny signs.