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All the cookies and milk you want...

By Paperitalo Staff

I write this on Friday afternoon, November 4th while seated in my aunt's room in a hospice in Florida. For those of you who do not live in the US or are not familiar with the word "hospice," this is the last stop facility before many flowers are bought in your name and great words are said over you. I use this as a place of reflection and the focal point this week, not out of disrespect or cavalierly, but with the idea that there is a good counterpoint lesson regarding our daily professional lives.

This is a wonderful facility, where great attention is paid to the comfort of the patients and their families. As I write, my aunt, sleeping soundly, is covered with a handmade blanket and there are several others in the room--all made and donated by volunteers. I can smell cookies baking in the kitchen, and everyone, including us visiting family members, is given all they want to eat. Doctors check on patients, but no one is scolded for being overweight, too high cholesterol readings or anything else. When you arrive here, those days are over.

I was struck by the similarities between this experience and our careers and our industry. Many of us, both individually and as companies, seem to figuratively want all the cookies and milk to eat every day. Yet, that is not the way life or business works. When we get to the point of cookies and milk, all we want, every day, the game is over.

Sometimes the tensions I write about here strike some of you wrong, and I make no apologies for that. For those of us who are vibrant must keep probing, searching and striving for the best and most efficient industry we can build. I hold to these beliefs: education is superior to and the opposite of ignorance-strive for education. Likewise, efficiency is superior to and opposite of cronyism and favoritism, strive for efficiency. Most of my efforts here and elsewhere are striving for education and efficiency in our great industry worldwide. Don't come to me whining over favoritisms destroyed, at the individual or company level.

Back to this place. When the end comes, they close the door and hang an angel on the doorknob. I have seen them do that twice on this one hall just today. And here, they are efficient – in about three hours, the room is sterilized, organized and ready for someone else.

Be safe and we will talk next week. ##