



## Small Biz Strategies

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There are few places in the world that command overwhelming awe from observers, but Crater Lake certainly does. It is a caldera lake positioned in the south central region of Oregon, located in the Northwest U.S. The lake is famous for its deep, rich blue color and water clarity.

The caldera (a Spanish term for caldron) is some four thousand feet deep. The lake was formed around 7,700 BC by the collapse of the volcano Mount Mazama. The crater is surrounded by a twenty-mile circle of cliffs, tinted in subtle shades and fringed with pine, hemlock and fir trees.

Crater Lake is the deepest lake in the United States, the second deepest lake in North America and the ninth deepest lake in the world. The caldera rim of Crater Lake ranges in elevation from 7,000 to 8,000 feet.

If you are adventurous you can walk the Cleetwood Trail to the boat tour landing. From this point you board a small craft (sits 20 to 30 people) to begin an amazing water tour of the crater. While on board I heard the captain giving constructive criticism to his first-mate on how to properly steer the vessel which would ensure the safety of their passengers. The captain spoke in such a positive tone that it got me to thinking about how all of us communicate to one another.

From time to time we find ourselves in a position of criticizing the actions of others, where giving constructive criticism to another is warranted. The question is, "How do we handle the situation in order to achieve our desired goals and expectations without offending those we are dealing with?" ANSWER: One must handle such an event delicately. The purpose of criticizing is not to lower a person's morale or self-esteem but to concentrate on developing the individual.

Always criticize actions and behaviors, not people. Evade comments such as "You have.., You are.., You've done..". Avoid making the criticism personal. Concentrate on turning the discussion into a winning situation for all the parties involved. Anticipate a rebuttal and be prepared to discuss. Always provide specific examples for the behavior or actions that are being criticized. Be firm, fair and to

# Seeing things more clearly: Giving constructive criticism

the point. Seek comments from the individual as to how they can change things to improve the situation. Compliment their thinking as much as possible.

When giving criticism:

- Control your tone of voice, rate of speech and pitch, and be mindful of your facial expressions and body language. Actions do speak louder than words.

- Set the tone of the discussion by establishing a positive atmosphere. For example, begin with an opening phrase such as, "You're a good worker however let me show you how you can achieve a higher performance rating by changing some work behaviors."

- Think of the words you are going to use when criticizing. How would you feel if someone said them to you? Be selective.

- Practice what you are going to say before you actually say it. Let the flow be natural and honest. Make note of your tone of voice.

- Keep your emotions and anger under check. There is no need to ever go off half-cocked.

- Never criticize in public, but always praise in public.

- Find a neutral location that is not intimidating.

- Speak in specific terms. Have justification for what is being said.

- Never address an individual in a condescending manner. Speak to the individual, not above, below or through the individual.

- Always leave ample physical space between you and the individual.

- Provide a "cooling off" period if needed.

- Avoid touching an individual during conversation.

- Always attempt to end the conversation on a positive note, a smile on everyone's face and a firm hand shake.

Questions for Dr. Clark? He can be reached at [mdclark@kih.net](mailto:mdclark@kih.net)

## For summer fun, Chicago's MLK Family Center is the place to go

By Diane Walker

Owned by the Chicago Park District, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park & Family Center is located at 1219 W. 76<sup>th</sup> St., in Chicago, Ill. The Park District hired United Skates of America to run the center's rink for them. According to General Manager Saletta Coleman, "Buildings were torn down in order to build the center and be there for the community."

### Grand opening in January 2003

The Chicago Parks District wanted to offer the community a variety of choices when it came to activities for area families. Their answer was the MLK, Jr. Park and Family Center. The facility is all-inclusive with a roller skating rink, a 12-lane bowling alley, eatery and a special event facility.

The roller rink floor is 80 feet wide and 160 feet long and is made out of hardwood maple flooring. The floor was made for a seamless ride with two sheets of plywood and three coats of finish.

In order to keep the skaters' groove going, there are mirrored disco lights and a fog machine. The DJ booth has the latest, state of the art stereo equipment to make sure the music never stops and the skaters can always have fun music to skate to.

### Making sure the community has summer fun

There are very few places to go in Chicago during the summer that are as affordable as this USA roller rink. "We

have a reasonable summer program where someone can pay between \$4 and \$10 to skate, bowl and have lunch for the whole day," said Coleman. "There is also a 50-cent admission for a Friday session and an afternoon session on Thursdays for just \$1."

The MLK Family Center's rink

also offers some daily summer special skates. On Mondays there is a Gospel Skate and DJ for just \$5 admission from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Wednesdays bring a \$2 admission skate session from 6:00

p.m. to 9:00 p.m. On Thursdays you can skate from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. for just \$1 admission per skater. Also on Thursdays is a late skate Ladies Night for those 18 and over, from 9:30 p.m. until 1:00 a.m. Ladies pay only \$3, while the men pay a \$6 admission. It includes unlimited bowling as well.

Fridays bring the 50-cent skate for all ages. The 'Teen Scene @ 76th' is on Saturday from 8:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m., and despite the name it is also for all ages. In addition to these special skates, there are many public skate sessions to fit into everyone's schedule and price range. Regardless of when you skate, you only pay \$3.00 for skate rental.

To boost summer profits, MLK

invites area campers to spend the day at their facility. There are many summer camps held through the park district that bring anywhere from 50 to 400 kids at a time to the rink. "We keep Mondays reserved for toddlers and daycare facilities. The little kids need to have the rink to themselves sometimes to have



Skaters pack the MLK Family Center in Chicago, Ill., during a Summer 2009 session.

some fun," said Coleman. Coleman also added that there are many church groups, camps from YMCA's and many other non-profits that schedule time to come into the rink for sessions.

USA also has an educational workshop that the rink offers year 'round through groups and schools that want it. Coleman explained that the workshop first shows how roller skates are made and then the group attending the workshop gets to skate. It is going over well and Coleman is hoping to incorporate the educational workshop into a summer camp next year.

To find out everything that the MLK, Jr. Park and Family Entertainment Center and its USA rink has to offer, go to their website at [www.mlkskating.com](http://www.mlkskating.com).