

Ten Mottos for the Successful Park Ranger Rangers' In-Service, Sept to Oct 1984

1. It is my duty to help every visitor to have a pleasant experience and care more for the environment as a result of **his** visit to my park.
2. *I must assume that every visitor is likely to write afterwards to the General Manager to tell of **his** impressions about me and my park.*
3. I must manage my park on the **"minimum damage" principle**.
4. *It is the final 5% of finish and attention to detail which makes the difference between merely doing a job and doing an excellent job.*
5. The people I lead are potentially more capable than I am and it is my duty to bring them to realise their potential.
6. *I must always give credit where credit is due.*
7. Employees may say that they want an easy job. In fact they don't. Most employees really want an important job.
8. *I respect the expertise of specialists, even if they are not as practical or down to earth as I am.*
9. **I accept myself and my own style of operation. However, I do not accept my present level of knowledge.**
10. **My potential is unlimited. My future is full of opportunity and is in my hands.**

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With the benefit of 38 years' hindsight:

The "his" references now seem quaint. Item 3 was a subtle strike against the principle of "multiple use", then fashionable in forestry circles, where it was used to justify logging in unspoiled forests. Item 9 was an attempt to improve confidence amongst lowly-ranked outdoor staff while at the same time encouraging them to aspire to personal development.

Item 10 is more problematic. It was written in an era of greater optimism about the competence and professionalism of public authorities. With the benefit of hindsight, item 10 now seems plain wrong. Noting rising inequality in society, the destruction of vocational education through outsourcing and downsizing of TAFE and the widespread recruitment of content-free senior managers with imperatives to slash budgets, it would be more truthful to write that parks staff – and staff anywhere – are commonly quite handicapped in realising their personal potential because of systemic factors entirely outside their personal control.

Geoff Edwards
3 January 2023