

## **Junior Achievement – New Mexico Business Hall of Fame - 11-29-07**

### **Ed Lujan**

#### **Giving back more than he expects to get**

It's an attitude and philosophy that will always serve everybody well, no matter what they do, but perhaps is too often forgotten or discarded when a family or a nation finds itself far more comfortable than it or its previous generations ever imagined.

Ed Lujan has never forgotten it. The 75-year-old leader of the Manuel Lujan Agencies preaches it to everyone: "Do more than what you are being paid for. It doesn't matter if it's for a paycheck, or if it's regarding your personal and family life."

Ed Lujan got his start by doing much, much more than he was ever paid to do.

"My father [Manuel Lujan Sr., who founded Manuel Lujan Agencies in 1926] always believed that, in the summers, we should have no idle time." Ed Lujan says. "I was 12 and was job hunting and stopped at Montgomery Ward; it was a catalog center where people picked up the merchandise they had ordered from the catalog. I lied about my age, and they hired me for two hours a day to wash the windows.

"They had these huge windows, and my job was to be a janitor and sweet the floors. But they wanted those windows sparkling clean every day, and they paid 40 cents an hour."

NO matter how many splattered bugs, fingerprints and nose smudges he got off those windows, Lujan finished long before his two hours were up. He had time to notice there was no coordinated system for dealing with the goods that the truckers dropped off – all of the stuff was loaded into big bins, and the clerks had to rummage through those bins whenever a customer came to pick up an order.

So 12-year-old Lujan devised a system where goods were put into bins based on an alphabetized system of customers' last names. It made everybody's job easier, and it made customers happier because they no longer had to wait while clerks rummaged through countless bins looking for orders.

Lujan went on to be a farmer, school teacher, campaign manager for his brother, Manuel Lujan Jr., who served 20 years in Congress, and head of the Lujan Agencies.

He is adamant about many things in business, but he knows that, even in times of prosperity, there is one formula that will bring success: Do more than you are ever paid to do.

Lujan believes, as his dad did, that a deal has to be a "win" for all parties. The Lujan Agencies won't do a deal unless it is good for all three parties: the client, the agency and the solution provider. If a company needs fire insurance, for example, but won't embark on a safety training program, Lujan Agencies won't get insurance for them.

"That wouldn't be good for the solution provider, because it could mean a big, and unnecessary, claim for them in the future," he says. "If it's good for just two of the three, we won't do it."

Quick Facts:

**First job:** Washing windows at Montgomery Ward in Santa Fe

**Greatest achievement:** Summed up in a plaque I got from the National Hispanic Cultural Center. It says, "Giving Back." I'm more proud of that than almost anything I've got. My family, three boys, a girl, and my wife of 54 years, Virginia.

**Toughest lesson:** Not everything goes the way you want it to, but you have to keep on doing whatever you believe is right.

**Three words to describe me:** Work. Giving back.

**Inspiration:** My father.

**Words to live by:** I don't care what you do, there is no way of fooling yourself.

**Advice for young business people:** Do more than what you are being paid for, whether it's in your job or in your personal life. You get paid in different ways.