

# Turbo Leadership Systems™

# The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

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## Slip Sliding Away



Larry W. Dennis, Sr.  
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Systems®

***When you  
see someone  
slip, helping  
them up  
could save  
their life.***

**J**im, Director of Produce for a food distribution company, told Session 2B of the Leadership Development Lab:

"It was spring of 1956 and I was 23 years old and had just finished an 11-week sales training course for the company. I was so eager to be in sales that I actually finished the training in 6 weeks by doing the warehouse portion on swing shift and the balance on days. The final part of the sales training was relief sales. I was to relieve the regular sales associate during his 2-week vacation and this was my first day. My first call was a prison camp near Cougar, Washington. It was necessary for this call to be very early in the morning to allow me time to finish all the other calls.

"I lived in Portland, so it took an hour and a half to get there in those days. I got up at 4:00 A.M. so there would be ample time. (It wasn't hard because I was too excited to sleep anyway.)

"Donned in my best and only hand-me down doublebreasted suit and my "English brogue," I headed for my first call as a salesman. I pulled into a parking area at the prison camp just after daylight. It was literally pouring rain and had been for days. The structure that I was looking at was the mess hall where they fed all of the prisoners in the work camp. It had a wide covered porch across the front and it was full of big "toughs," smoking and drinking coffee. The 'head cook' (a guy named Bo) was the person I was supposed to see to write an order. There was one big guy in white with a big apron on the porch, which was in fact Bo. There was water pouring off the porch roof and it must have made these guys look bigger and meaner. I was not just intimidated, I was scared to death. I wanted to drive off, but I was a salesman on my first call and this was it!

"Invoice book and sales tools in hand, I got out of the car. There was a boardwalk about 3 feet wide leading to the building with mud and standing water on both sides. Throwing my shoulders back, I confidently started up the plank walk. About half way in, I slipped, forgetting that I had metal cleats on the heels of my brogues! Down I went on my left side in the muck, my left foot up




to about my knee and my left arm nearly to the shoulder. Even part of my face was in the mud. I was holding my books up out of the mud with my right hand. My "galley" was laughing and shouting things like 'Who is that kid in the mud?' and 'Nice suit,' etc.

"I just wanted to crawl out of the mud back to my car, slide in and drive off, being humiliated to the core. About then, the guy named Bo started down the walk toward me, walked up to me lying in the mud and said, 'Who are you, son?' I said, 'I am your produce salesman here for your order.' With that, he turned to the galley, who had not budged and were still laughing and told them to shut up and come give me a hand into the building.

"Two big guys came out and lifted me up by my armpits (minus one shoe) and carried me, one on each side, into the building where there was a big barrel-type stove. Bo handed me a set of white cooks clothes and showed me where to change and clean up. I went back out and he was sitting at a table close to the stove. He said, 'Son, after what you have been through, let's fill up your truck!' When we were about finished, one of his helpers came out with my suit and shoes all cleaned up and dry. I changed, thanked Bo from the bottom of my heart and went on my way. If it had not been for a guy named Bo, I probably would not have even stayed in the food business, which I have been in for nearly 43 years, and surely not in sales. What Bo did has affected me all of my life.

"The lesson I learned from this experience is to never quit or give up. What I do or say can have a profound affect on others for a lifetime. The action I call you to take is seize the opportunity to help others at any and all times. The benefit you will gain is the importance of high ideals. You'll feel good about yourself."

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