

Many years ago, before the Muppets were on TV, I got a call from one of our best customers. He was not happy because he claimed a humidifier we had sold him for a new high-rise building wasn't working and was quite direct about what my future would be like if I didn't get over there right away and sort it out.

I jumped in my car and went over there immediately. It was on the opposite end of Saskatoon from the customer, so it took me 10 minutes to get there. (This was in the late 70's). On the way, I was already thinking about what could be the problem. This was in the early days of electrode tank humidifiers and they were tricky to get set up properly.

When I arrived, the elevators were out of service and I had to take the stairs to get to the penthouse mechanical room. Imagine the cornucopia of emotions when I located the humidifier and realized that *they hadn't bought it from us*. I'm sure that any of you with years in the supply industry have had a similar experience.

This was pre-cellphone days, so I didn't have the option of immediately calling the customer to discuss this turn of events. On the drive back to the office, I had a few minutes (about 10, to be more precise) to think about how to handle the situation.

My boss at the time had ordered some oddball items from a novelty company, including weird greeting cards. I remember that one of them was on the topic of 'The Right to Arm Bears', and another one contained detailed instructions on 'How to Tell Your Ass from a Hole in the Ground'. I'd been waiting for a chance to use the latter one and decided that it was perfect for the occasion.

As soon as I was back at my desk, I wrote a note in the card saying that I'd been to the site and discovered they hadn't bought the humidifier from us. I had the card delivered by a fast courier.

When he got the card, he called me. He had a good sense of humour and said he should have checked where they'd bought it before calling me. I agreed, of course, but he then pointed out that *I hadn't checked either* and asked if I wanted the card back for my own use.

One more teachable moment.