

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SKI RESORT GM

Rank has its privileges, and you can't deny the occasional urge to hit snooze and just show up when you feel like it. But then again, you also have a team to lead, and you know that your example speaks louder than any pep talk at a staff meeting. So you rise and shine for your morning routine before heading out to the hill by 7:00am. Lifts turn at 8:00am today, so you want to be there with about an hour to spare to make sure everything is in order and ready for another ski day. The busy Christmas week starts in a couple of days, so everything needs to be running smoothly.

You park with all of the other employees, leaving the closest spots for your guests. As you walk toward the Administration building, you glance over at the bottom of Lift 1, the main access lift out of the base area. What you see makes you simultaneously amused and frustrated: a sled-mounted ground gun is blowing snow right onto a chair, right here in plain sight in the base area. Your first instinct is to key that radio and read the snowmakers your riot act. But you think about it first, and devise a better plan that will send the message more clearly, *and* set an example.

You drop your briefcase in the office, then hike your way up to the wayward gun. An agitated lift mechanic is sizing up the damage, but stops short of calling it in when he sees you heading that direction. He's been working here for years, so he knows you'll "handle" things, and that he should keep his mouth shut for now.

As you approach the gun, you see that it's an old "Rat II" blowing at full bore, so you're smart enough to kill the air and water before you try to move it alone. When you shut off the gun, you switch to the snowmaking channel and make a radio call that ought to wake the snowmaking crew up in a hurry: "1-1 to Control." An audibly pensive voice—no doubt wondering why "the boss" is calling—comes back: "Go for Control." "Shutting down Base Area 12 to reposition away from Lift 1." "Control copies, killing Base Area 12. Do you need a hand out there?" "No, that's alright. Thank you." You maneuver the gun into a better position, then fire it back up, making the appropriate calls.

You walk by the Mountain Ops building on your way back to Admin. As it happens, snowmaking night crew is just on the way out. The night supervisor jogs over to you and thanks you for moving the gun, and makes a sincere and rather sheepish apology. Your reply is carefully

measured to convey a balance of gentle correction *and* encouragement: [you'll have to buy the book to find out what happens during the rest of your day as GM!]