

PUZZLE  
SOLUTION

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# THIS AMERICAN GRUB

## How Hot Dogs and Hamburgers Became National Treasures

If your plans for this Independence Day involve firing up the barbecue, you'll probably be cooking two American classics: hot dogs and hamburgers. Come the Fourth of July, families will be grilling up burgers and dogs from sea to shining sea, but it wasn't always this way. The story of how beef patties and sausages became culinary symbols of our nation will give you plenty of food for thought.

### THE HOT DOG

It was German immigrants who brought the "frankfurter" and the "wienerwurst" to American soil in the 1800s. There is much debate over who first decided to place one of these franks in a bun, but by the opening of the 20th century, hot dog stands had popped up all over the Eastern Seaboard. We do know the identity of the man who took the hot dog's popularity to a national level: Nathan Handwerker.

A Jewish immigrant from Poland, Nathan sliced buns for a hot dog stand on Coney Island.

After scraping together enough money, he quit his job and opened a stand of his own, undercutting his former employer's prices by half. Not only did Nathan's hot dogs outsell the competition, the Great Depression made them the perfect food for a nation suddenly living on a tight budget. By the 1930s, hot dogs had become so unquestionably American that Franklin Roosevelt famously served them to King George VI during his royal visit in 1939.

### THE BURGER

Like the hot dog, the exact origin of the beef patty's eventual "sandwiching" is lost to history. Once again, it was German immigrants who brought their recipes for "Hamburg steak" with them across the Atlantic, but reports vary as to who first sold the meat patty inside a bun.

Multiple diners and fairgrounds across America claim to be the home of the first hamburger. All of these claims date to the turn of the 20th century, a time when our nation was faced with



feeding a growing working class quickly and cheaply. By the 1950s, the burger had become a symbol of the American everyman.

Both the hot dog and hamburger embody the history of our nation. Immigrant traditions merged with blue-collar needs to create two uniquely American foods. It's fitting that we celebrate America's birthday with the grub that has grown along with it.

# A TOAST!

## The Art of Communicating, Listening, and Public Speaking

In 2002, an elementary school in Katy, Texas, began experiencing symptoms of a mold problem. My name was referred by a friend of a friend, and I went out there to take a look. Sure enough, some water damage had created serious mold growth that needed to be addressed immediately. The mold was discovered around spring break, and the superintendent decided to extend the vacation another week while the district determined what to do.

Understandably, the parents of the students were not happy to hear about their kids spending time in a school with mold. The superintendent asked me if I would help him address concerns parents might have about the situation in a public forum at one of the district's high school auditoriums. I agreed to answer a few questions. At the presentation, the superintendent introduced me to the audience, and then completely disappeared, leaving me to address 800 confused, angry, and emotional parents. Being required to deliver an impromptu presentation and answer questions from angry parents alone wasn't what I planned on doing that evening. But, believe it or not, I had actually trained for this exact situation, thanks to my time with Toastmasters International.

I know many people who have been or are currently members of Toastmasters, but if you've never heard of this group before, then the quick explanation is that Toastmasters is an educational organization dedicated to helping people from all walks of life improve their communication, public speaking, and leadership skills. I joined Toastmasters in 1992, and in just a few years, I realized that if I'd joined a decade earlier, not only would I have been much further along in terms of public speaking, but my business would be further ahead, too!



***"Being a Toastmaster means learning how to organize your thoughts, speak and write without rambling, communicate clearly, listen to others, and think on your feet."***

A big part of Toastmasters is getting up and giving speeches, but that's just one tool. Being a Toastmaster means learning how to organize your thoughts, speak and write without rambling, communicate clearly,

listen to others, and think on your feet. All of these things came in handy when I stood in that auditorium, explaining to parents that their children were not in danger and that the mold was being dealt with. After about 30 minutes, the superintendent reappeared, ended the meeting, and everything was fine. The parents were reassured, the school district was happy, and after the mold was dealt with, the kids were able to go back to school with no problem.

I firmly believe that without my Toastmasters training, that presentation could have gone a lot worse. There are few people who can naturally handle themselves under pressure, explain their thoughts eloquently, and reassure an angry crowd of concerned parents. A few years later, I was asked to help address the public and community leaders when another school district suffered a mold problem. This time, I was in front of parents, as well as the press, pastors, and one very rude United States Representative. It was a high-

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## ... Cover article continued

profile (and high-stress) situation, but my ability to communicate clearly helped everything go smoothly and reduced problems for my client.

I've been a Toastmaster for over two decades, though there was a brief period of time when I wasn't a member. Another unusual incident involving a client soon convinced me to rejoin.

I was called into a commercial building where a client was complaining about an odor coming from the carpets. Considering the carpets had been put in 18 months before, I thought this was strange. I ran some tests and determined there was a chemical compound in the air that shouldn't have been there, but I couldn't tell if it was emanating from the carpet, the carpet backing, or the glue that held the carpets to the floor.

When I gave the building owner my report, he said, "Travis, if this was your building, what would you do?"

I thought about it and said, "If it were my building, I would make sure it was all removed, and that the contractor who put it down took responsibility for whatever mistake was made."

Further investigation proved the contractor did in fact make a mistake. We learned that the glue that project called for would show blue fibers when held under red light, but the glue holding down the carpet had no such characteristics. The contractor ultimately admitted he didn't use the glue he was supposed to, taking responsibility for the problem and removing any liability from my client.

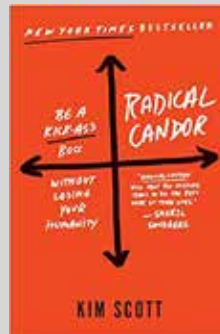
Would I have been able to articulate my thoughts so clearly without Toastmaster training? No, probably not. Being a member of Toastmasters International has given me a unique ability to effectively speak on behalf of my clients, address concerned occupants or parents in a way that won't cause them to become more alarmed, and help ensure the best possible outcome while I'm doing my job. It's an invaluable skill and one I'm proud to possess.

*Travis West*



# How 'Radical Candor' Can Guide Your Team to Success

## Leadership Expert Kim Scott's Fantastic New Book



At the outset of our careers, when we're learning to jockey for a position in the workforce and master the concepts that will carry us to success, many of us immediately begin to absorb the wrong kind of thinking. In the midst of youth, when our egos are paper-thin and we haven't yet fully developed our personalities, business culture comes along and tells us to "be professional!"

"For an awful lot of people, that gets translated to mean 'leave your emotions, leave your true identity, leave everything that is best about you ... and come to work like some kind of robot,'" said Kim Scott, bestselling author of "Radical Candor: Be a Kickass Boss Without Losing Your Humanity," at a recent Qualtrics X4 event. But to be the best possible asset to your team, she argues that you need to genuinely care about others — you need to "be able to bring your whole self to work and to create the kind of environment in which everyone around you can do the same."

This ability to "Care Personally," writes Scott in her book, is the first key principle leaders need to understand in order to succeed as bosses. Though movies about Wall Street may suggest otherwise, it's difficult to succeed in today's collaborative business world without genuinely investing yourself in meaningful relationships.

But, as Scott is eager to point out, love alone won't push your team to new heights. You also need to "Challenge Directly" — to be honest with those who depend on you by letting them know when they're leaving their potential untapped or shirking their responsibilities. This "brutal honesty" doesn't have to be brutal at all; instead, it should be direct, clear, and compassionate.

At the intersection of "Care Personally" and "Challenge Directly" lies the concept of "Radical Candor," a framework that allows bosses to build two things: an empowered culture of honest feedback around the office and a team that works well together and is eager to achieve fantastic results.

If you're interested in learning how to be a more effective leader but are uncomfortable with the manipulative strategies espoused in so much of business culture, you can't do better than Kim Scott's book. It's chock-full of actionable advice on how to start treating your team not only as employees, but as *people*, with all the emotions, aspirations, challenges, and potential that they bring.

# Brunch Gone Wrong

## An Unexpected Source of CO in Your Building

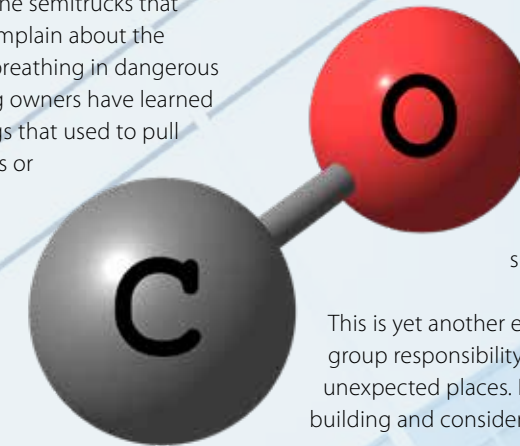
Between 2010 and 2015, 2,244 people died from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning. With symptoms like confusion, dizziness, headaches, nausea, and shortness of breath, CO poisoning is a threat in both residential and commercial buildings. We always look for signs of CO during inspection. Fortunately, these days we rarely find it.



If your building has a large conference or meeting room, you've likely had tenants contract for hot breakfast or lunch for attendees. To keep the meal warm, big metal warming dishes with Sterno burners are often the go-to. While cheaper and more efficient than an electric hot plate, experience has taught us that when Sterno is being used, carbon monoxide will occur.

About a decade ago, when outside air was pulled in from a loading dock, a common source of CO in commercial buildings came from the semitrucks that were allowed to idle in the dock. People would complain about the diesel odor, but they didn't realize they were also breathing in dangerous amounts of carbon monoxide. Since then, building owners have learned not to let trucks idle at loading docks, and buildings that used to pull air from the docks have turned off outdoor air units or routed the intake elsewhere.

These changes are important to the health and safety of building tenants, but they haven't put an end to carbon monoxide being present in commercial buildings entirely. Often, when we walk through a building and find evidence of CO, it is present in the strangest places.



A few Sterno burners warming buffet food aren't likely to lead to CO poisoning throughout your whole building, but someone lingering near the food can experience the symptoms of CO poisoning, like headaches or dizziness. Sterno burners should only be operated for the minimum amount of time required to keep dishes warm and should not be allowed to burn endlessly without supervision.

This is yet another example of how indoor air quality is a group responsibility and how problems can arise in the most unexpected places. Keep an eye on what is brought into your building and consider having a carbon monoxide detector available.

## Have a Laugh With Travis



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