

# Speaking from Experience

**H**ave you ever noticed how ridiculously easy it is to find people who love to complain in this industry? Why is that? I wonder if it's the nature of this beast or if we are all simply pre-programmed to complain. Perhaps there's something in the DNA of truckers that compels us to look at the dark side of everything we see first. I don't think that any of these ideas are correct. I think that as is usually the case, most whiners believe in the "squeaky wheel gets the grease" theory. It's probably a fairly reasonable guess that 20% of drivers do 80% of the whining and these losers will continue their rant until you join their club. Whiners need validation by consensus and will be relentless in their victim stories until they get agreement from those around them. Don't let it happen; this is one club you don't need to belong to.

Trucking has been very good to the last couple of Haight generations and I know there are many of you who can say the same about your own families. I have no reason to complain and am always cautious when I am close to one of these types to not allow myself to get caught up in their negative world. Would I change some of the things I've done in the past? Of course I would – wouldn't most of us? However, one thing I've learned is that regret for the past is a waste of spirit and over my time the good stuff has far outweighed the bad.

When you think of what's at the core of what we do, trucking is really a very respectable job. We keep North America functioning. The old worn out slogan "If You Got It A Truck Brought It" still stands tall and is as true today as it ever was. I guess that's why it's never been replaced. We keep everything in tune and functioning like a well-oiled machine and we do it very well. This is an honorable profession and I believe this more so now than at any other point in my lifetime.



So here's the common rant... there's no money in this game... no respect from the public or the shippers... my company takes advantage of its drivers... no one is fair to us... etc., etc., etc., So why keep on trucking? In what other profession would you get the opportunity to see first hand what's happening in all corners of the country without getting bogged down in its minutia? I remember many times creeping through towns at 4 am. and wondering if I was seeing more of the locals' surroundings than they do in their 9 to 5 existences.

I always felt a little sorry for that person who was stuck on the dock riding a tow motor for eight hours a day...loading and unloading trailers bound for destinations they would never see. Now that's a trap! Was I envious that they got to go home

every night to their families or go out after work for a few drinks with their buddies? Of course I was, but I certainly wasn't envious of being glued to a tow motor all day. I left those docks thinking that an hour or two at that place was plenty for me; I couldn't imagine eight hours a day... five days a week for 30-plus years. Not this cowboy!

Those people will never experience the golden moments that come along once in awhile for most drivers. I've had more than a few and I remember one in particular that happened on a trip to Sacramento. I was quite young at the time and had been trucking for about three years. I was in Nevada on I-80 when I woke up one morning before dawn... I had an egg, got cleaned up and was down the road before the sun broke through. The next hour was as close to perfection as any driver can imagine. I came over a high plane and could see the road straight ahead of me for miles without another car or truck in sight. My drivers' side window was down and my arm was hanging out and the temperature was perfect as a bright red sun broke through the morning over my shoulder, casting daylight onto the road and the rock cut around me. The country tune playing softly on the stereo still let me hear the rhythmic sound of the engine as it powered me effortlessly through the desert. At that moment in time all was right with the world.

This is one of many memories that stand out for me in my ten years of driving. Memories that people in other

jobs won't come close to and memories that I wouldn't trade for the world.

I also recall 30 years ago, loading out of London, Ontario and headed to Texas when I saw a pretty little girl on a tow motor sliding skids onto a trailer. I was pre-occupied all the way to Texas and back and finally worked up the nerve to ask her out. 29 years later... my wife Connie and I celebrated 29 years of marriage last month. The moral of the story is "keep your eyes wide-open drivers... you never know what you might find on the dock and some of it's pretty damn good."

Don't fall into the victim trap that many drivers like to rant about. The world isn't out to get you unless the paranoia-driven driveline of a few is what you focus on. This is a great industry full of fantastic people and I am fortunate to be able to call many of them my friends. Life is what you make of it no matter what you decide to do with it. Focus on what's good and not on what might go wrong from time to time. Believe me, if you do you will be able to draw on those golden memories forever.

What do you think?  
Feel free to drop me a line on this idea.

Take Good Care & Safe Trucking!

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## Don't Join the Club!