It’s not often that attending an educational institute is a life-changing event, but for Robert Rizzuto, going to the NACUFS Leadership Institute (http://www.nacufs.org) in summer 2007 was exactly that.

“I came from the old school where it was commonplace to work 80 hours a week. I was brought up on the fact that you have to control your labor and food costs (still true today), but you did it by working yourself and staff 70-80 hrs a week on a salary basis. Also, as a manager or boss I thought I was supposed to know how to do everything within my operation. Whenever anyone mentioned the possibility of a career in foodservice they would immediately compare it to long hours, little pay, divorce, etc. This is still the case in many operations today.”

—Robert Rizzuto

What Robert discovered at the Leadership Institute was a set of tools that made possible the very changes he thought couldn’t be made. Tom Champoux of the Effectiveness Institute (www.effectivenessinstitute.com) described how the work culture and environment either foster collaboration, engagement, and accountability for outcomes — or not.

Change begins with a leader who is prepared to face change, both in himself and his environment — and see it through.

defined job expectations and faith in the competence of colleagues: all these served to bring about a more humane and healthy work environment.

• First and foremost I took a long hard look at myself by identifying my style.
• I now understand the styles of the staff and surround myself with qualified people who are strong in areas where we need assistance. I realized I don’t have to know everything.
• By creating expectations and asking the staff for accountability, they have clear direction and a purpose for what they were hired to do.
• This also results in a better quality of life for staff because it reduces the number of hours they have to work.
• And finally, I knew I was from the old leadership style, being the problem solver and making staff dependent on me. I found out if I wasn’t at the operation, no one knew what to do in a difficult situation. I set myself up for having to be in the operation 80 hours a week. It was basically a confidence issue. My staff learned this from me and used the same management style which caused them to work long hours.”

—Robert Rizzuto

When Robert returned to NYIT, he developed an internal vision for the kind of manager he wanted to be, where he wanted his operation and his staff to go and the kind of work environment he wanted to create. Caring and respect for others, trust in their integrity, realistic and well-

NACUFS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Effectiveness Institute is a premier organization and performance-development company specializing in helping companies, groups, and individuals maximize their performance. The Effectiveness Institute is founded on the principles of trust, integrity, respect, dignity, and commitment.

Don’t wait—start the process today.

Robert Rizzuto, New York Institute of Technology

www.nyit.edu