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Ted Sparkuhl, contract administrator and president of the LA Gateway Chapter of the National Contract Management Association, presents guest speaker Tommy LaSorda. Photo: Gayle Anderson.



Dodgers' Tommy Lasorda Gets Metro Employees Ready to 'Play Ball'

By JENNIE HARRIS

(June 1, 2007) Dodger legend Tommy Lasorda rallied Metro employees, Thursday, urging them to work hard and love their jobs during a speech sponsored by the LA Gateway Chapter of the National Contract Management Association.

"Everybody in this country, from the President of the U.S., on down to the lowest job, at some time another, [needs] to be motivated," said Lasorda. "There are times when we are not doing our job the way we should, but somebody motivates us, we get that new energy, and then we do the job."

The Association's meetings normally address procurement, but the May meeting had about four times more attendees than usual. Rolling laughter and applause punctuated his Board Room speech.

Susan Dove, the chapter's co-secretary, said, "Mr. Lasorda's

speech inspired and motivated me... to focus on my goals, work hard and be thankful for what I have and continue to strive for the best."

Lasorda won the crowd's attention with jokes about Italians, the Pope, and, of course, baseball. "Laughter is the food for the soul," he said. "When we can laugh, we can forget whatever other problems we might have in life."

The audience hung on to Lasorda's inspiring but stern words about attitude at work. "What you do, you want to be the best at it. The price of success can only come through the avenue of hard work."

'You gotta win'

"You gotta win. If you don't win, you'll fall by the wayside," said Lasorda. During his 20 years of managing the Dodgers, 210 managers were fired.



The wind-up, pitch and delivery: "You gotta love what you're doing, because whatever it is, you're gonna have to do it a lot of times." Photos by Ned Racine.

"You gotta love what you're doing, because whatever it is, you're gonna have to do it a lot of times," chuckled Lasorda. "If you don't love it, then you're making the biggest mistake of your life. If you don't like your job, my advice to you would be: quit. Go do something else, because you're not helping your organization, and you're not helping yourself. So do something that you love to do, no matter what it is."

"I always tell people I'm the luckiest guy in this whole world, because I'm doing what I want to do," said Lasorda. "I've done it since the time I was 16 years old."

Lasorda has been with the Dodgers for 58 years and is currently special advisor to owner and Chairman Frank McCourt. During his career, he won two World Series, four National League pennants, and eight division titles.

In 1997, he was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame as a manager. Three years later he managed an underdog U.S. Olympics baseball team to win the Gold Medal in Sydney.

How did Lasorda become more successful than other managers? "I knew one thing: how to outwork them all."



Employees line up for photo ops with Tommy Lasorda. Pictured here are, from left, Ted Sparkuhl, Art Henry, Frank Clarke, Lasorda, and Lety Licon. Photo: Gayle Anderson

