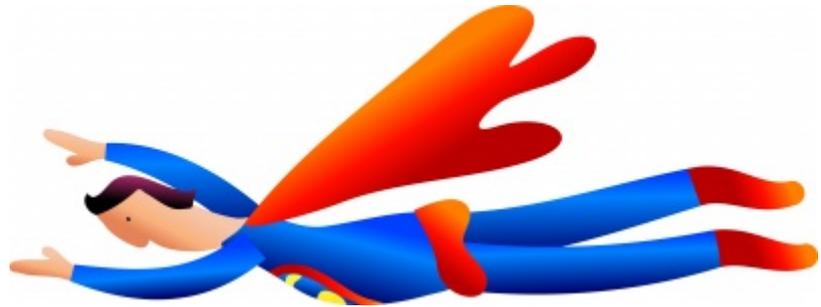


The Legend of Kip Cave

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Is Kip Cave the legendary unsung superhero teaming with Buck Rogers to save the universe? Unfortunately not, but Kip Cave is someone we all know, have met and worked with.



Kip has been at the company so many years and he made sure the boss's loved him. He was a hero because he came in when he was on holiday to fix something or even offer to help them set something up at home. They all thought he was a team player that goes the extra mile. Kip would get himself involved in all aspects of the business, whether it concerned him or not, sharing his pearls of wisdom. He would always turn up at the seemingly right time and offer his "insights", the hero to save the day yet again.

But there was a problem with Kip, and the rest of the company suffered as a result. He hid it well and although he was popular, Kip was not really a team player, he was only interested in himself.

He was earning reasonable money, had a comfortable life, always made sure he got his breaks and left on time. Playing by the rules he would call it, because he also knew that the rules were to be enforced, the inflexibility suited him and made his life easier, the more rules, the more complications it created, the better for him.

Each day he would see a machine failing. He knew the actual problem because he was responsible for running it. But if he fixed the machine, there would be less rework and rework meant overtime. He worked on the other operators not to tell, they were also getting the overtime and had become used to the extra cash.

He had spent his working life finding out all he could about the company, but he kept it to himself. He would hold onto every nugget of information, ready to reveal at the right moment for him, once again he could rescue the day!

There was more to it than that, Kip did not like change. "I need xyz" would be met with "Can't do that, the rules won't let you!", stopping the idea dead in its tracks... or so he thought.

The problem for Kip was that although he was influential in the organisation, he did not have sufficient authority, despite his aspirations to lead his department. Somewhat of an irony that his people skills were very good, unfortunately they were utilised to manipulate.

The real problem for Kip was his boss, who knew he was not technical enough to understand what Kip did each day. He did know that things needed to change and so he looked for someone with specific knowledge to help him run things. He also knew that Kip was not really the right person he needed, because things had stagnated.

To compensate for not being promoted, Kip was promised that he would become the understudy, mentored and trained to become the person he thought he should be. After some while, a new manager was hired and they set to putting things right. This brought a lot of changes that Kip did not like, being accountable and honouring his commitments, sharing knowledge, fixing things once and for all. Bringing structure to his working day, Kip was losing his hiding places. If things were fixed, he would lose his overtime. How could our hero rescue the day if things weren't broken?

So Kip would resist, seemingly compliant but doing enough to frustrate and hold back progress.

When asked for information, Kip would respond with a sheet of paper containing the minimum information to satisfy what had been asked of him. That had to change, the knowledge was no good in his head. How could the rest of the team function effectively if they did not know key facts.

When asked what he had planned, he would blurt out a list of requests from people around the business. That had to change, cherry picking jobs, not prioritising and leaving others in limbo was not helping the business.

When asked how things were working, he would just say "Nothing to worry about". That had to change by creating and maintaining a status report, highlighting issues as soon as they became apparent and implementing corrective actions.

When asked why he was coming in on a weekend, he would say that he needed to fix something, when in fact he wanted to invoke his call out payments. That had to change with configuration baselines and releases, managed through change control, so things were understood, stabilised, and monitored.

When asked why he had bought a particular piece of equipment, different from everything else. He said it was cheap and available. That had to change, with equipment being specified for the purpose, standardised wherever possible to provide commonality and integration, taking advantage of costs through an approved supply chain.

These were just some of the antics of Kip Cave, keeping things reactive and maintain enough chaos to slow progress, in his own safe and happy world, regardless of the consequences for others.

And who is Kip Cave really?

.... **Knowledge Is Power, Completely Against Virtually Everything.**

Cave is also Latin for beware, sound advice indeed.

