

## **Really?**

A little more about Doug Ledet and Circle Rainbow. As I tell the little stories that involved Doug and his business, I don't mean to talk poorly about an individual that passed away many years ago. I am not one to disparage a person but when you try to understand a particular business-like Circle Rainbow and how it fell apart as it did, you need to have some understanding of the person that pulled the strings.

Yes, I was naïve. I thought I could make Doug Ledet recognize a better direction. The more I openly expressed my business philosophy, so he may make better decisions, he would just try harder to deceive.

Understanding the man or least trying to understand. Who was Doug Ledet?  
My observations...

I was at my desk on the third-floor office when Doug came in shaking his head as he approached me. He said, "I can't believe that new janitor we hired. He started up a conversation with me before I stopped him. I made it clear that he was just a janitor, and I am the president of the company... he does not get to talk with me."

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Late morning on another day, a man in his thirties walked into the lobby of the Circle Rainbow building. He approached the customer service counter and stated he just purchased a Gulfstream IV and wanted to talk to someone about numerous services. I was asked if I could come down and meet this guy. Over the years, I have encountered several individuals that would talk about their wealth, when in truth they had nothing. It was a bit of a con to see what they might receive in return for their stated business. I also knew that you could not tell a book by its cover. I greeted this man as I would anyone, with a sincere smile and firm handshake and ask how I could help. He began by telling me of his new aircraft and wanted to know if I wanted his business and asked what I could do for him for this opportunity. After a few specific questions, I determined that he didn't have an aircraft at all. I told him to have a wonderful day and started to

walk him out when Doug Ledet approached and wanted to hear what he had to say. Within a minute he asked the guy to come upstairs to the VIP lounge to hear more about his new Gulfstream. They hung out together for a couple of hours before he left the building. I told Doug that he should be careful with this guy for he is not what he says he is. Doug felt I was questioning his intelligence and I was wrong about this guy.

The next day the guy returns and does not approach the counter but goes directly to the elevator while making an announcement that he is going upstairs to meet with his new friend, Doug. Once again, they both spent a couple of hours in the lounge, but this meeting entailed alcohol. When this guy left the facility, it was clear he had too much to drink. While driving or I should say speeding on Lagoon Drive and approaching Nimitz Highway he nearly missed a woman pushing a baby carriage in the crosswalk. Witnesses called the police which arrived on the scene quickly and started searching the vicinity for this guy. They found him in his car in a nearby car dealership. They took him in custody and asked him where he was drinking so early in the day. He said with his new friend, Doug Ledet. The police brought him to the facility to confirm the guy's statement. Doug stated that he never saw this guy in his life. The police did not ask any further question of Doug or ask others at the facility that could confirm that he was indeed in the building.

When I originally encountered this guy the day before, he had a t-shirt that had a Gulfstream IV on the back. On the front it had the words "Hemmeter Aviation Appreciation Weekend." Years earlier I was Vice President General Manager of Hemmeter Aviation and we put on an extravagant weekend at a local resort for all the employees and their family. Everyone that attended received a t-shirt. This guy never was part of that staff. This guy was telling me about his time at Hemmeter Aviation and subsequent purchase of a \$40 million airplane. He was telling me about the interior of new aircraft which included such items that would not fit or make sense. He was excited about the jacuzzi. He did not have answers to my questions of how a jacuzzi works in flight.

On that first day, when I told Doug about my brief discussion, I was dismissed as stated.

Interesting, that it was only a week later, a full-size work van, not in particularly good condition, rolled into the parking lot with about four local individuals. They

came in to talk about their new Gulfstream that was supposedly parked in Hilo. After a very brief discussion, I kindly escorted them out of the building. They were quite indignant and left the facility with middle fingers pointing to the sky. The same sky that they would not be flying their mystery airplane. Doug was not part of this discussion but I did share the story so he might understand that even though it is rare, these people do exist.

Third time is a charm... On another occasion, I had an older gentleman come to the facility to talk about his private jet. He was a little ruffled around the edges in his dress and personal presentation but the answers to my questions were clear and precise. While talking with him, Doug came over to find out who this guy was. After a quick introduction, Doug grabbed his arm and escorted him from the building. This guy took his new private jet to the competition. He probably told others of his encounter with Circle Rainbow Aviation.

You cannot always tell a book from its cover, but with a little reading you can get a sense of what it's all about. Ask the right question and you should have the answers you need to assist in decision making.

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While performing the various services for the private jet customers we needed cash for immediate incidental purchases. A \$300 Petty Cash account was set up and kept at the customer service counter. An aircraft may need current newspapers in the cabin or may require other incidentals before departure. A small purchase would be made and recorded on the petty cash log. When additional cash was required, a report and check request was sent to accounting. Unfortunately, this little cash box was Doug's slush fund. As he left for the day, which was mostly around 3 pm, he would stop by the petty cash box and take out a hundred, maybe two. It made it difficult on customer service, so we requested an increase in the amount kept. As we increased the amount going in, Doug would increase the amount going out. Doug was a frequent flyer of Club "Under New Management" and the petty cash was no better than a ATM.

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Old Joke revised... How do you tell if Doug was lying? His mouth was moving.

In my lifetime, I never heard anyone misrepresent the truth as much as Doug Ledet. It was an everyday event.

The Circle Rainbow building on Lagoon Drive was a massive building that certainly was not getting a return on its investment (*another story*) but we tried to promote the building in every way we could. Sometimes we would rent out areas for small and large events. Other times it would be offered at no expense to help build relationships.

On one occasion we helped Hawaiian Airlines with the use of our VIP lounge overlooking the lagoon. They were planning a surprise 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party for Bruce Noble, current President of Hawaiian Airlines. Shortly after Bruce arrived Doug wanted to wish Bruce a happy birthday but while doing so expressed that it was his birthday as well. Bruce felt compelled to have him join in as co-recipient of the birthday celebration. I knew Doug's birth date and it was months away.

Another time, I approached Doug about holding a fundraiser at the facility. I was a member of the Rotary Club of Metropolitan Honolulu and wanted to hold our annual fundraiser at the hangar, lobby, and ramp areas. It would bring in hundreds of local business folks to the facility while bringing in money to be used in our community. The volunteers would do all the set up and clean-up after and there would be no burden to staff at all. He agreed. The fundraiser was a grand success. After the event, when Doug heard that we brought in over \$50,000, he gave me an invoice for various services including clean-up. We paid Doug a couple thousand as requested.

If Doug's alternatives to the truth were a rare occasion, he may have been able to control them but when it came fast and furious, he could not keep them straight. Increasingly he got caught in his lies. I have stated earlier that I was not allowed to talk with his wife, who was the president of the company, without him being present. It caused him difficulty in keeping the stories straight.

These tales are the ones that occurred when I was employed as Managing Director of his aircraft service company. You would think we would have been closer. When I left with Bob Yosaitis to start Bradley Pacific, Doug unleashed his fury and directed it towards us. His lies increased until he had no place to go. Well, that's not totally true... he went to the Federal Aviation Administration. How does that work?

If Doug put as much energy into the positive development of his company, then he did with the con, he would have fared much better.

I could go on and maybe I will as these crazy stories come to me or maybe I will stop and let the man rest in peace or enjoy his cerveza in Mazatlan or a tuba in Guam.