

# PERColator-Profile-with-Marv-Schurke

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## SPEAKERS

Matt Greer, Emily Martin, Marv Schurke

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Matt Greer 00:09

Today we are very honored to welcome Marv Shurke to the PERColator Podcast as the next guest in our PERColator Profiles episodes, where we get to know an experienced labor relations professional. In this conversation with Matt and Emily, Marv shares stories, advice, and tips from his notable labor relations career. Many of our listeners might know Marv or at least know of him. From his three decade long tenure as the first executive director of PERC. It's hard to imagine many people having more of an impact on public sector collective bargaining in Washington. Marv also shares from his other experiences serving as a private arbitrator, working for the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, and working as a management representative in the private sector before he switched to being an impartial. Enjoy the episode.



Matt Greer 01:05

Welcome, welcome, welcome. Welcome to the next episode in our PERColator Profiles episodes. So I'm Matt Greer, one of the Co-hosts of the PERColator. And with me, we have Emily Martin another one of our Co-hosts. How are you doing, Emily?



Emily Martin 01:19

I'm doing great, Matt. Thanks for having me.



Matt Greer 01:21

Yeah, it's good to have you here. And today, we are especially honored to welcome Marv Schurke as our next PERColator Profile guest. So Marv, how're you doing today?



**M** Marv Schurke 01:33

I'm doing well, thank you.

**M** Matt Greer 01:34

Great. We really appreciate you being here and sharing your wisdom with us, and in our PERColator Profile episodes, we try to get to know experienced labor relations professionals, and try to glean your knowledge and get information for our listeners that will help them be better at their labor relations jobs as well. So we really appreciate your willingness to be here. And obviously, you're a giant in the field and Washington, public sector labor relations, and we really appreciate you coming here and sharing some of your wisdom with us. So welcome.

**M** Marv Schurke 02:03

Thank you. Glad to do it.

**M** Matt Greer 02:05

So what we're going to do is we have our five preset questions that we have for our profiles episode, which you've gotten a heads up on, and I thought we'd just kind of get into that and let you kind of take the lead and kind of chat about that. So our first question is to tell us about your labor relations career and what are you doing these days?

**M** Marv Schurke 02:23

Oh boy. My first Industrial Relations or IR job was in 1966. In the personnel department of Republic Steel's Cleveland plant. I grew up near Chicago earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Chicago and had just completed my first year of law school at the University of Minnesota, and I expressed an interest in IR work after spending summers of 63 to 65, in production control and billing jobs at Republic's Chicago plant, and they offered me the Cleveland job. I got a broader understanding of both the industry and the need to shift unionized worker assignments, almost as if they were following a batch of steel to keep production on track. My second IR job was at Republic Steel Chicago plant in the summer of 1967 investigating grievances. This amount of to go talk to the supervisors involved, and ghostwrite the supervisor response for step one and even the department head response for step two of a grievance procedure that didn't even mention the IR staff until step three, I fairly quickly learned that nothing ever got settled until step four, which was nominally an appeal to the corporate IR office before the union could take the grievance to arbitration in step five, and not all the good guys were on one side of the labor management equation. The Union often had valid concerns in the grievances and the supervisors and managers were often trying to conceal their own misdeeds. My third IR job was at International Harvesters General Office Industrial Relations Department. After graduating from law school and watching my Republic Steel Management Training Program become tangled in a big web of corporate politics after five summers with the company, I went across the Calumet River to the IR office of Harvesters, Wisconsin Steel Division plant and they sent me downtown. I was hired as part of a new team being assembled to reform Harvesters IR policies and practices. I quickly learned first, no

corporate plan or good intention is guaranteed to last beyond the end of the current fiscal year. When the executive suite ordered all departments to cut expenses, the key leader of our new team decamped to a competitor and the entire mood of the place change. And the other thing was not all the good guys were on one side of the labor management equation. So my fourth job in the IR business began in 1970 When I started work in one of what was then 10 mediator, arbitrator, hearing officer, and examiner positions on the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission staff. The WRC had perfected the multifunctional staff model, where the NLRB and FMCS in some states divide their dispute resolution between two separate agencies and the organization charts of other state agencies divide their staff into separate branches, just south of the agencies head, the WRC had staff that did it all. And I was one of those staff. WRC Chairman Morris Slavney, was a legendary figure in the dispute resolution field. And he liked to brag that the WRC was the Slavney school of labor law. I loved the work, enjoyed all four roles, issued dozens of decisions on a wide variety of disputes, and was having a, having a good time. My fifth IR job was as executive director of the Washington PERC. I was doing some management analysis work for the WRC, but knew the only upward mobility for me was bound up in politics. In other words, you had to be a political animal, to get a gubernatorial appointment for one of the three full time Commission member jobs at the WRC. I also knew that a staff colleague who applied for a leadership role in another state labor relations agency was labeled as disloyal by Slavney. I had a funny experience, WRC staff member Amedio Greco and I were conversing at a WRC office bulletin board, where job announcements were posted for executive director positions in New Jersey and Washington. I saw Slavney walking down the hall and couldn't resist tweaking his ego. I said, Greco I have relatives in Washington and you're from Jersey, so you should take the Jersey job and I'll take the Washington job, Slavney walked over, pulled both job postings off the bulletin board and threw them in the trash. I figured if he was sufficiently threatened by them being posted, I would take another look and as I retrieved the Washington posting, applied for the job. In interviews with the original PERC Commissioners, I said they should hire me if they wanted to replicate the multifunctional staff model which they already had somewhat done with predecessor agencies in Washington. And I also said that I would not be interested in running a bifurcated agency. And I also said that NLRB style, investigation and prosecution of unfair labor practices would doom any effort to meet the uniform, impartial, efficient and expert mission given to PERC in chapter 41.58 RCW, because we didn't have a separately appointed General Counsel. With all those cautions, they hired me anyway, I held the job for more than 30 years. My sixth IR job was private practice as an arbitrator beginning in the 1980s. When the Spellman administration cut budgets and pay increases, they also told state employees who weren't being laid off that they had to take days off without pay. So I asked that then commission members to allow me to have a side practice to supplement my PERC income. Now, because chapter 41.56 and 49.08 RCW both authorized PERC to have staff members serve as arbitrators without cost of the parties. I added that I would not compete with the agency. So my arbitration practice was limited to cases outside the State of Washington. I then continued to arbitrate with addition of Washington cases after I retired from the executive director job in 2006. It proved to be more work eventually than I really wanted in retirement, and I thus began closing out my arbitration practice in 2015. And I'm now really retired in 2016, my wife and 55 years and I moved to California, and I now pursue gardening, railroad history and model railroading, hobbies and having a good time.

M

Matt Greer 09:03

Great, yeah, well deserved retirement and gardening and a railroad after all that, your long career. So yeah, thanks for sharing that. And the reason why, kind of the reason why Emily and I are here is we kind of represent both of those aspects of your impartial agency work. I worked

at the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission after you left and it was kind of fun talking with you before the episode about some of the names that we were familiar with. And I had heard Maury Slavney's name a lot. So I had a picture from my mind mind was fun to hear from you and talk about that him and other people that we have some crossover and then Emily is one of your hires here in Washington, right?

**M** Marv Schurke 09:42

Yes. Very much. So. So yeah, I left the Wisconsin agency in 1976. And probably hired Emily and 2002.

**E** Emily Martin 09:56

Yeah, about then, yeah.

**M** Marv Schurke 09:58

About that. Yeah. Okay.

**E** Emily Martin 09:59

Yeah, there was a bunch of us, there's still me and Guy. And you know, one of the things I think about, about coming to PERC is I really appreciated how you found a really diverse group of mediators that came in with me. So that's something that that I just really admired about that hiring process. And I got to meet a whole bunch of different kinds of people. And it was, it was in a state that that sometimes doesn't feel like it has a lot of diversity. You did a really great job. So I wanted to thank you for that. But but I'm dying to know did you think about going to New Jersey instead? Was there ever..

**M** Marv Schurke 10:35

No! I said, I said to Greco he was from Jersey, he should take that one. I'll take the Washington one. I did never wanted to go to Jersey.

**M** Matt Greer 10:44

Well he still lives in Wisconsin, I believe I actually went to his house for lunch when I was there, they had kind of a WRC get together, he would host every once in a while at his house. And I don't know if he ever went to Jersey, but he made his way back to Wisconsin at some point.

**M** Marv Schurke 10:57

We didn't do that in those days.

M

Matt Greer 11:01

Well, I really appreciate the fact that you brought the multi, the multiple role function and I that was one of the reasons why I moved to Washington after Wisconsin and kind of needed to take my career in a different direction. And one of the highlights for me is I do really enjoy the mediator role the hearing examiner role the hearing officer role, the trainer role. I really like being able to wear all those hats. I think it makes us well, well rounded labor relations, neutrals and impartial in the field by having those multiple hats. So, so thank you.

E

Emily Martin 11:33

Yeah. Now, before I came to PERC, I took a CLE class on like, how to be happy as a lawyer. And, and the answer was like find a job where you can do a bunch of different things. Some things you like more than others. And it makes you more well rounded and it gives you diversity and improves your skill set. And then additionally, the ability to have an arbitration practice outside of our work. I really appreciate I don't actually have an active arbitration practice, but I really appreciate that being an option and I had no idea it was due to furlough days.

M

Matt Greer 12:13

It makes sense though.

M

Marv Schurke 12:14

Furlough days, Spellman's furlough days and pay freeze triggered the go outside.

E

Emily Martin 12:22

Yeah, no, we've had furlough days since then. I don't think anyone's negotiated such a good deal. It's a good job. We still benefit from that. And I think it's a great way to build a practice. You know, there's a lot of conversations happening right now that how does a, how does somebody become an arbitrator and not have an income of being an advocate for the time period. And I think working in a place like PERC can be a path to that have some time as being a neutral and actually being able to have an outside arbitration practice, especially with the advent of online arbitrations. I think that's something that people don't think about when they think about becoming a neutral, but it's a viable place to work without having a cut and pay for the amount of time it takes to build a practice.

M

Marv Schurke 13:12

That's right. At least George Fleischli, Arvid Anderson, and in Maury Slavney, were I think, all presidents of the National Academy of arbitrators at various points. And I don't remember if Howard Bellman was there or not, but several, PERC members were big in the arbitration

field.

E

Emily Martin 13:36

Dan Nielson as well.

M

Marv Schurke 13:38

Oh, yeah, I forgot about Dan.

M

Matt Greer 13:41

Well, that might lead us into our next question, actually, with some of the names that you'd mentioned. You know, we were wondering, you know, who were some of your mentors and we asked for one but you I think you have a series of mentors that you wanted to share, some of the wisdom that you got from earlier in your career and, and what you learned from them that sticks with you or stuck with you throughout your labor relations career.

M

Marv Schurke 14:02

Okay, for starters, I obviously learned a lot from Morris Slavney during more than five years at the WRC. But Maury wasn't very happy about my departure. So I turned to four other people for real help and guidance says Executive Director at PERC, the first name to mention is Harold Newman, who was the second New York State Public Employment Relations Board Chair. He was the chief faculty for a US Department of Labor conference put on for new members, and administrators of state labor relations agencies, and they put it on and several years I attended in 1976. But then thereafter, I had many conversations with Harold. New York was an agency that had a divided staff but they did all four functions. But Harold, Harold was a whole lot of help in figuring out how to deal with specific problems at PERC. Mary Allen Krug was the second Washington PERC Chair, she was chair from 1976 to 1981. And she taught me a lot. And she particularly inspired my use of impartial by declaring, quote, neutral sounds like something important, has been surgically. We are impartial. The third is Bob Howlett who was then the Michigan Employment Relations Commission Chair, who was very generous with his time at Association of Labor Relations Agencies, ALRA conferences during and after 1977, and whenever I telephoned him for advice. Michigan was another agency that had a divided staff but did all the functions and was very helpful with a whole lot of issues. And then Arvid Anderson, who was both a former WERC member, commission member, and became the first New York City Office of Collective Bargaining Chair, that's a mouthful. He was generous with his time at ALRA conferences. Whenever I asked for advice, he'd come out of the multifunctional model. And never did figure out exactly how New York City Office of Collective Bargaining is structured and did their work. But Arvid was very generous with his time and advice and the Attorney of the Year award that was given to me by the American Bar Association in 2018, honors Arvid. So those four were the people I called most often, and they gave me answers frequently, in my early years at PERC.

M

Matt Greer 16:42

Yeah, that's great. It's nice that you had the cadre of folks to lean on as you're starting up a new agency here in Washington.

M

Marv Schurke 16:49

That's yeah. And there's no book written on how to start a new Washington state agency.

M

Matt Greer 16:54

It's all maybe there is now you wrote it, I guess, in some ways.

M

Marv Schurke 16:58

Well, I, I arrived at early afternoon, went into the office where the over at the old capitol building where SPI was located, they had a fella there that had done the teacher mediation work. And his secretary said, well, OFM left a message for you to come see them. They want to see you as soon as you get here. So I called OFM. And I got immediate, you know, come over here. And so I went down to OFM, and their two messages were, you never buck the governor's budget, and you never overspend your appropriation, it's a felony. Now, go start your agency. And that was all the advice I got from OFM.

M

Matt Greer 17:42

Yeah, at least give you some leeway to do do things. And that made sense. Well, our next question for you is, what tips what negotiation or labor relations or collective bargaining tips that you that you've learned along the way they like to pass on to others who are might be in the earlier stages of their career, like most of our audience are folks who are in the heat of the moment as labor relations folks, union leaders, representatives, HR labor relations, folks on the employer side and some impartial is out there, so thought we kind of see if you have any tips from your 55 plus year career that you might want to share with them?

M

Marv Schurke 18:19

I would divide the answer into two parts. First, for the labor and management advocates, respects the impartiality of mediators, arbitrators, hearing officers and examiner's or administrative law judges if they use that title, as well as the important role that impartial dispute resolution plays in the overall labor management equation. You won't win every case, but impartial will be doing their job if they find the facts and the evidence and apply the statute or the contract. Expect that's what they will do. For people who are staff and board members of agencies or want to become board members, staff members, charged with impartial dispute resolution. Shed every ounce of labor management advocacy that you have when you take the impartial roll. Call the cases as you see them apply the law or the contract in

every case that you handle. And keep in mind it's the parties dispute and the parties ulcer, not your dispute. That's what I tell them and I still get calls every once in a while from some, somebody wanting that advice and that's what I've been telling them for about 40 years.

**M** Matt Greer 19:34  
Okay.

**E** Emily Martin 19:36  
That's so powerful. You know, I'm I got flashbacks to when I started at PERC and we were in the Kirkland office. You've giving us talks like that. So it's, it's something that has stuck with me for the 20 years I've been here and it's really important to keep in mind and it it sounds easy, but there are moments where it gets hard. So it's not as easy as it sounds sometimes.

**M** Matt Greer 20:00  
And the last part about that it's the party's dispute and ulcer, not mine as the impartial. That's something that I have to remind myself of quite a bit. So it's good. Glad to have that reminder.

**M** Marv Schurke 20:09  
I had an ulcer working for International Harvester. It cured up as soon as I went to work for the WERC.

**M** Matt Greer 20:15  
Oh wow. Okay. So it was a literal ulcer in your case.

**M** Marv Schurke 20:19  
That is a from experience. True statement.

**M** Matt Greer 20:24  
Wow. Glad that healed up. Sounds like you made a wise choice there.

**M** Matt Greer 20:28  
All right. So the next question we have is tell us a story. Sometimes it gets kind of fun to hear stories from, you know, things that have happened in the past from people who've been doing this work for a while. And we asked you for, you know, either a spectacularly good story where



you did something really well, and really shown or a really bad experience, and it's something you learn from and you went above and beyond in your homework and I think you have a story about each, so tell us tell us a couple of stories, Marv.

M

Marv Schurke 20:28

Yeah.

M

Marv Schurke 20:55

Okay for the spectacularly good experience, a bit of background, one of my law professors made reference to the Perry Mason's television series saying, you will probably never see even one witness stand confession in your entire career as a lawyer, let alone Perry Mason getting one a week. Similarly, one of the first things I heard as a new staff member at the WERC was Labor always asked for more than the employer is willing to offer, and you'll never see it any other way. So on my second solo mediation case, I had a crusty teamsters secretary treasurer speaking for the Union and a seemingly inept city manager speaking for the employer. The mediation session had to begin after dinner, so city council members who were employed elsewhere during the day could attend. And we had four language issues and wages on the table. So we dove into the language issues, some discussion at the bargaining table, some discussion in my separate meetings with each party, and we had solutions to all the language issues before 11 o'clock at night. By 11 o'clock. The parties it started out at 15 cents apart on wages. 15 cents is miniscule now, but it was big money in 1976 or 1970. The parties were 15 cents apart when they started and they had each moved a nickel. So I had them five cents apart. And it was 11pm. And as I confirmed settlement of the last language issue in a caucus with the employer team, the city manager blurts out, we can go up another three cents to wrap this up tonight. Okay, I walked down the hall feeling pretty confident, before the door close to the Union caucus room behind me, Mr. Secretary Treasurer announced, we'll take a deal tonight if the city will give us another two cents an hour and I can get a beer or two before the bars in this town closed at 1am. You'll have to work fast. I was the only person in the world who knew that these parties had just crossed offers. My first thought was to split the difference. But I thought about that city manager and I that night never been able to deal with hay pennies as a wage rate. So I use the situation as an interview question. And each and every staff member I hired during 30 plus years as Executive Director PERC, more to see how they would deal with the issue or the situation, then what action they would actually take. So it was a good situation that I took advantage of for 30 years following. I did get a settlement that night. But I let fate decide the result of a coin toss that I conducted alone in a restaurant did not let my impartiality be affected by any past feelings. Spectacularly terrible situation occurred in the same timeframe. My first solo mediation case turned into what was then the longest teacher strike in Wisconsin history. I kept the record until several years after I'd moved to Washington. The Union spokesman was a teacher who thought every proposal emanating from a questionnaire response received from 500 plus teachers had to be dealt with. And you can imagine the employer spokesman was a law firm senior partner who did not have that much patience. So when comparing the party's positions in a union caucus during the strike, I asked, can you compromise on why the employer is offering X and the Union wants Z and in a disgusted tone the union team member interrupted saying, "You keep calling us the union, we are the Education Association." To which I replied, when you're out in the picket line, you look like a union. When you talk at the bargaining table or to the press, you sound like a union, you're a

union. Let's get on with the substantive issues. We had no further debate about semantics. I realized, however, that I needed help and asked for help. And one of the WERC members joined the mediation effort. And we eventually got a deal. And my one caution to impartial and to advocates is ask for help if you're getting in over your head, it's, I should have asked for help sooner. You don't know it all going in, and you can learn. Crazy that happened in the first two cases I ever put my hands on. But there it was.

M

Matt Greer 25:39

Funny how that happens, it feels like those first few mediations we have are always really momentous for a variety of reasons. But yeah, you definitely got two whoppers there of situations. So yeah. Yeah, asking for help. That's a good tip. I have to remind myself of that, too. All right. So the last question, Emily, did you have anything you wanted to add there?

E

Emily Martin 25:57

I mean, I, I think it's really, this is the kind of work that it's hard to learn from a book, you know, and it's, you never know what's going to be thrown at you. And so having the ability to have somebody to team up sometimes and learn from each other and learn from sometimes you can even learn from advocates. But paying attention to the moments and learning from the good things people do and the mistakes people make. That's one of the best ways to become a good negotiator, good or bad. It's always a learning opportunity.

M

Matt Greer 26:31

Yeah, sometimes the harder situations are the ones you'll learn the most from, right?

E

Emily Martin 26:35

And when when I started Marv, you had a system where I was able to observe so many mediations. And that was and hearings and all of the casework and that was a really, really useful experience to be able to see different experiences and not be in the hot seat and to be in the room and get to know advocates, without necessarily being the one that that was mediating. And I felt like that was a really, really valuable way to get into the field and learn to do the work and meet the people and and get to watch and get involved that way.

M

Marv Schurke 27:09

And I did ask you that question Emily. I don't remember your answer,

E

Emily Martin 27:14

I don't remember my answer.

E

Emily Martin 27:15

but it was good enough that it passed, and ironically, I never had parties cross again, in 30 plus years of mediating.

M

Matt Greer 27:29

Thankfully, that's a tough situation to be in when you're the one who knows. All right, so the last of our regular questions here is what advice would you give to yourself as a brand new labor relations professional in light of all your experience?

M

Marv Schurke 27:42

Okay, again, a two part answer for the labor and management advocates, a variant; you don't want a mediator, arbitrator hearing officer or examiner or administrative law judge or whatever, who favors your side of the labor management equation. Because if it's permissible for them to be favoring your side, then it's going to be permissible or open the door at least for the next one you meet to favor the other side. I've done a lot of history of the collective bargaining process and how various laws worked. And one of the things that stands out to me is that collective bargaining laws work best when they have impartial professional dispute resolvers. And advocates should demand impartiality in every case, and not be looking for hoping for the judge or the mediator who's going to favor their position for agency staff members and board members charged with resolution of labor management disputes. Practically the same thing that I said earlier, shed every ounce of labor or management advocacy, and become impartial, call the cases as you see them, apply the law or the contract and every case they handle, it's their dispute, not yours. I had an experience one time going up to I think Appleton for a mediation case in Wisconsin, driving along. I think that's highway 151 barreling along in a state car. And I thought, What am I doing? I pulled over to the side of the road and I asked myself what's a former management advocate doing driving to a meeting where the management will give more than it wants to in the union will take less than it wants to. And I thought about it for a minute unanswered myself, because it's fun to watch them reach a settlement. I put the car in gear and went to the meeting and got a settlement. And then bane of my existence as executive director of PERC was that every once in a while the Department of Personnel yelled and screamed that I had to do employee evaluations. And I tried to do evaluation on keep people informed every day if they're doing well or or screwing up. But my first question when I did do evaluations was are you having any fun? And I think that it was important for, with the variety of things going on and multifunctional staff that people were enjoying what they were doing and I think they did. So that's that's what I would advise.

M

Matt Greer 30:15

I can say that last question kind of hits me hard. I know I know for you your experiences impartial was like they were they were ebbs and flows in terms of there were periods of time where it really felt like really good, you're really doing a good job, really valued, the job was enjoyable. But there's always those valleys where it feels like I can't do anything right and not

being effective at all. And I think kind of remembering that, yeah, it should be fun. I'm going to try to ask myself that more often. And try to find ways to find the fun and it and I I'm inspired by that question. I don't think about it too often.

M

Marv Schurke 30:47

Yeah, it's it is enjoyable and rewarding to watch the parties who have been arguing with one another for three or six months or whatever, it may be an angry across the bargaining table. And you come in and go through the final, this is the deal. Everybody say yes. And they say yes, and then they get up and they're hugging one another, and shaking hands and, and they're suddenly happy because they have to live together. We are going to leave. But it's rewarding to see that they're going to be able to go on living together.

E

Emily Martin 31:18

It's that happy dance moment. You know, sometimes I make it back to the parties and say, Hey, this is what I live for. It's when we do the happy dance. And I remember I was at a conference and I was walking through a city in the East Coast, and the parties called me and told me they had a deal. And I did the happy dance walking down the sidewalk.

M

Marv Schurke 31:41

Right on.

M

Matt Greer 31:42

All right, so those were the five questions. But Marv, we have a little bit of a wild card to throw at you, we have five kind of questions that we didn't give you a heads up about. So I'm gonna ask you to give me a number between one and five. And I'm gonna ask you one of those questions, which I'm hoping will be kind of a fun, light hearted way to end our conversation. So give me a number, one to five.

M

Marv Schurke 32:02

Okay, let's try four.

M

Matt Greer 32:03

Four. Okay. All right, I like this one. So how do you or how did you celebrate a big win in your labor relations career, maybe you just finished up a big decision or award and you were issuing it or you got out there and you got it, you worked with the parties to get to a TA at 2am. And you're finally done with a long mediation, what do you do to celebrate that moment?

M

Marv Schurke 32:27

Hmm. As Emily just said, kind of whether you do the happy dance or just the feel good, get in the car and drive home or go to the hotel, whatever it is and get some sleep. The job is done you're over with and and you don't have to worry about this one any longer. And you can stop running ideas through your head. You know, one of the one of the things that Morri Slavney taught us as mediators was the succession of ideas that you keep coming up with ideas, and one of them will eventually stick and settle a deal. And after I'd been WERC couple, three years, they assigned me to work in a private sector mediation case, which had had a federal mediator. And so I joined the mediation with the Fed there, the Fed and I went out for lunch. And he said to me at lunch, you put out a lot of ideas for the parties to think about. I said, "Why, you know, don't you?" He said, "Oh no, I never, I never never put out anything in my own." I said well then all you are as a message carrier, you're not really doing anything. And it goes back to the we are impartial, we're not neutral, that we have nothing. We are impartial but positive dispute resolvers the original PERC logo was a plus sign between two opposing forces, that perc was going to be a positive influence on the labor relations process. And that's very much the approach that that I was going to take, so at the end of a mediation session or even when the court decision comes down affirming you think hey that that's good. You know go from there.

M

Matt Greer 34:16

Yeah. Yeah, be able to relax and turn that thought process off. Yeah. It's hard to do though. Sometimes big cases. So yeah, great. Thanks, Marv. So that's that's what we had, I don't know Emily, did you have any other any follow up comments or questions for Marv before we end our interview?

E

Emily Martin 34:35

I just want to take a moment to thank Marv. Marv, not just for coming on this podcast but for starting the Washington agency, for hiring me, for creating a space that promotes looking for the fun, looking for the positive, being that positive influence, focusing on the impartiality. You've you've left a huge mark in Washington State's labor relations, and I really want to thank you for that.

M

Marv Schurke 34:59

Thank you. I appreciate that.

E

Emily Martin 35:02

If anyone left a mark, you are the father of Washington's Labor Relations.

M

Marv Schurke 35:08

Well, as I said earlier, there was no no manual about the the how to start an agency. And the mechanics of the bureaucracy, we had to do some things different. And fighting with

mechanics of the bureaucracy, we had to do some things different. And fighting with bureaucracy was not always easy. The Department of General Administration had standards for housing of staff and I fought with them about not having open cubicles, because my staff were sitting in offices, that the next staff member over might be the unfair labor practice examiner on the mediation case, that the next door neighbor is mediating, and so they couldn't hear one another talking to clients, or talking on the phone, oh, we can't do! I said, well, you're going to, and always kept PERC in a private building, rather than in a state building. So that we were not having state employees going through our garbage cans or, or anything like that, and just maintain that impartiality, which was crucial. And you know, the the four words that I quoted earlier are in 41.58, uniform, impartial, efficient, and expert. And we adopted that as the mission statement and tried hard to do it. And I'm glad that glad it is still well remembered. Thank you, Emily.

M

Matt Greer 36:31

It is. We really appreciate that, and we still benefit from all those decisions you made back in those those days. So I appreciate that. Well, thanks, Marv. We really appreciate your time. And, you know, hopefully, we'll have some other opportunities. Maybe we can bring you on as a guest for other episodes along the way as we get things going. So hopefully, this will not be the last opportunity, but we really appreciate your time sitting down with us and talking.

M

Marv Schurke 36:51

Be happy to do that. If you have more questions. We'll figure out how to do it.

M

Matt Greer 36:55

Okay, sounds great. Thanks. Thanks, Emily.

E

Emily Martin 36:58

Thank you.