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### **Preliminary Questions**

1. The main expectation of this audience is complete honesty. The relationship Larry has with his employees is much closer than many businesses. The Rockford Rentals employees feel like they are more than just employees and deserve to be recognized as such.

2. The general purpose of this speech is to inform the employees that Larry will be retiring. After listening to my speech, the audience will know that the company is in good hands, despite losing their leader. In addition, I want the audience to know how hard it was emotionally for Larry to make the decision to retire.

### **The Body of the Speech**

3. The presentation will be best arranged chronologically. It is the best for particular situation because I want to take them through everything they have been through with Larry and the company, together. I really want them to see that they have helped build this company and are just as important in the decisions Larry makes as anything else.

4. The main points I wanted to talk about were how the company began, the tough times throughout the years, all the support the employees have given to Larry and what the future would look like for the company.

5. The main way I will support these points is by simply telling the story of Rockford Rentals. I really want to describe how deeply Larry feels for his employees.

6. My language for this speech will not use any jargon or buzzwords. The words will be descriptive and use emotional to make the audience feel how Larry is feeling.

7. No visual aids will be used. I think it would be too much with how emotionally charged the speech itself is.

8. There will be a quick introduction, thanking everyone for being and describing the relationship between Larry and his employees.

9. The conclusion will mainly focus on the future and how it relates to the past. It will then end with a call to action.

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and thank you for being here today. As you all know, I'm Larry LaGrange, president of Rockford Rentals. It is a title I wear proudly, thanks to each one of you. I've been lucky enough to work with some of the best and most dedicated people in this business. Over the years, we've become more than just Rockford Rentals. I consider each of you a close friend and family.

This is why I've brought you here today. I believe you deserve the respect and the courtesy of hearing this announcement before the Rockford media and community are told. Effective January 1, 2012, I will be retiring. I am both saddened and excited to announce this news to you. Rockford Rentals has been part of my family, as well as all of you, for over 50 years. Although I will greatly miss Rockford Rentals, it is time for a change.

My father, Robert LaGrange, started this company in 1957. It was a prosperous time in Rockford's history. And while many of his friends and family were working in manufacturing, he saw an opportunity and went against the grain. All of our family, all of our friends told him that he was making the biggest mistake of his life. No one believed the company would be a success. But, it was.

It wasn't a success right away, but it didn't take long. In fact, others in his family opened rental businesses when they saw how successful my father was. It wasn't an easy business to get into and what they didn't understand was that it took the hard work and dedication of one incredible man to make the business work.

Some of you may have known my father. He was a very tough man and when I was just a boy he had me working the store. I was his only son, but he didn't care. When I was at the store, I was an employee first and a son second. In fact, when I

started I made absolutely nothing. He refused to pay me and often times gave me the hardest job to do. I had to work harder than everyone else and I had to work my way up in the company. He had a reputation for being brutally honest and stubborn. And, trust me, he was never too afraid to express his anger if I did something wrong. But he rewarded just as much as he punished.

He knew everything there was to know about this business and taught me all he knew. I was never just given anything and for a long time I resented him for that. I didn't realize until after he was gone, how much he helped me, and the company, by forcing me to work for everything I had. Without that knowledge and support, I could never have succeeded in managing a business such as this.

After his death, my sister, Diane, and I took over control of the company. Never was there a more difficult time in the history of Rockford Rentals. And while each company, no matter how successful, no matter how big or small, will experience such times, I was utterly unprepared for the betrayal of my own family member. Although she almost brought this company to the ground, she didn't. I simply could not let her ruin something my father had worked his whole life to create.

When I was finally able to buy her share of the business, it was like starting over, again. We had too much debt to comprehend and a reputation in shambles. But with hours of overtime from each one of you and months without a day off, together, we were able to pay off the debt and become one of the most sought after rental businesses in the Northern Illinois area. Today, we reach customers from Wisconsin all the way down to parts of Southern Illinois and Iowa.

However successful we had become, time would still prove to have hard times in store. Shortly after I took over the company completely, it was discovered that I had a large tumor on my colon. My mother had just died of colon cancer and I was afraid I would be next.

It was a scary time for the company, as well. I truly believed that I would not be able to return and the future of Rockford Rentals was unsure, at best. I was scared for what would happen, but amazed at your response.

I had never been away from the company for that long, but all of you stepped up and took control where I could not.

I can't express the pride I feel, and you should as well, with the work we've done, especially with all we've been through together. However, it is time to take that next step. I'm 58 years old now and have been working here nearly all my life. We've spent years building to reach the success we had in the past and, now that we have, it is a time for change. I've done all I can for Rockford Rentals.

I have thought long and hard about this decision. In fact, I sought the advice from many of you on how to proceed with the company's future after my retirement. After all my father went through, after all our hard work in bringing this company back to being a success, I could not bear to see the company ripped apart and sold piece by piece.

Which is why I am also announcing the sale of the company to 5S Rentals and Sales, also effective January 1, 2012.

The company will be sold as a working operation. We will not shut down at any time and will collaboratively work to make a smooth transition into 5S Rentals and Sales.

5S Rentals and Sales is a large rental company with branches all over the state of Texas. Similar to Rockford Rentals, they offer a wide variety of services and equipment. For years, they had hope of expanding in locations all around the United States. This sale will be their first initiative towards reaching that goal.

There were many companies interested in the purchase of Rockford Rentals, but only one that had the same mission and beliefs as our own. I've seen the work 5S Rentals and Sales has done and personally gone down to Texas to work with them. After all that I have seen, I think you will be surprised at how well suited our two companies are for each other.

I know some of you are wondering about your future with Rockford Rentals and the new ownership. 5S Rentals and Sales hopes to maintain a fluid transition within the company. Per our agreement, each one of you will have the option of continuing on. Along with those who remain, I will continue on with the company through September 1, 2012.

Along with each of you, 5S Rentals and Sales hopes to hire an additional 25 workers. Plans for this branch include expansion of the building and multiple locations within the community. In addition, 5S Rentals and Sales plans to expand into all of Northern Illinois and parts of Southern Wisconsin.

Again, I cannot express how grateful I am to each one of you. You've treated this company as if it was your own and in many ways, it is. This will not change with

the sale. I've talked to 5S Rentals and Sales about this and they will be coming to speak to all of you, as well. In many ways, the every day operation of the company will not change as much as it may seem. For most operations, Rockford Rentals will continue to run as an independent company. A member of the 5S management team, who will become the head manager of this branch, will work with each of you during the transition stage in preparation for that change.

I know this is a difficult time for each one of you, but it is what is best for company. Without the opportunity for growth, Rockford Rentals would not be able to maintain the success we have reached thus far. It would be a shame to have reached this high and then stop. We have to continually strive to be better. All I ask of each one of you is to be as loyal and hard working for 5S Rentals and Sales as you have for me.

Thank you all for listening and being here today. I look forward to seeing what the future has in store for the company and all of you.