

2013

The Zookeeper: The Story of a Young Man Who Inherits a Unique Challenge

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The Zookeeper

The story of a young man who inherits a unique challenge.

Jon England



Zooker Zoo was and is the only zoo in Spurling, Oregon. It was opened Friday, August 10, 1967 by Emerson Zooker. All of Spurling was excited. "Probably half the town showed up that day," as Emerson loved to put it.

When it first opened, Emerson loved to boast about his tiger. "He's the most beautiful creature in the west!" To be honest, Fireball was probably the only thing that was attracting visitors in 1967. Zooker Zoo had one tiger, one bear, and a blind giraffe. It wasn't exactly the largest of zoos.



Still, Emerson took great pride in the Zoo. He continued to fill it with animals - more and more every year. It was his passion that he turned it into his career. Zooker Zoo became his life - his family knew that well. It was tough to get through a conversation without Emerson changing the topic to something about his prized tiger, Fireball. The zoo was just part of life in the Zooker Family. After Fireball passed away in 1995, Emerson felt as if he lost one of his best friends. Meeko, the black panther, did his best to fill Fireball's paw prints. Just as Fireball grew old, so did Emerson.

Yesterday, Emerson suffered a fatal heart attack. He is greatly missed by his family, his friends, and his town. In his will, Emerson leaves the Zoo to his grandson Kris. The legacy of the Zoo is now his.

This begins the story of Kris Zooker and how he became *The Zookeeper*.



Entry: March 3, 2013

So, here you are Kris, writing to yourself in a journal...

Grandpa died yesterday and left me the zoo in his will. I really did not expect that. Grandpa and I haven't spent time together in years. He must have written his will when I was still a kid. I was always the grandchild who enjoyed Zooker Zoo the most.

I have no idea how I should be running a zoo. If grandpa knew that do you think he would have left the zoo to me? I really don't know. Well, that doesn't matter now. The zoo was left to me. In the course of one day I lose my grandfather and am put in charge of a zoo. This has been one of the craziest days I can ever remember.

This is a lot to process. I just graduated with a business degree only two months ago. A zoo is a big responsibility for a 22-year-old. I was minding my own - just looking for jobs. I was looking for jobs at local banks. Suddenly, life happens. I am responsible for a zoo and every animal in it. I'm not sure what to do next.

They say Grandpa Z. left me a letter.

I think maybe it's time to take a look at it.



ZOOKER ZOO



Dear Kris,

August 14, 2003

If you are reading this, that means I have gone to a better place. I'm sorry for being gone... If you are reading this you also know that I decided to leave Zooker Zoo in your care. You were the only grandchild of mine that really took an interest in the Zoo. You always had a wonderful way with the animals. The staff of Zooker Zoo - all the animal handlers and gardeners - always told me that you would make a great Zookeeper. They were actually the ones that put the idea in my mind. I don't know when I will die, but I hope it isn't soon. If it is, I'm sorry. Even if you are young, I still have huge faith in you, Kris. I know that you will make Zooker Zoo a wonderful place. Remember, it's okay to ask for help. Well, not sure what to say, but it's time to feed the zebras. Actually, you're here with me while I'm writing this. You're only 13-years-old now, but I can already tell you will make the most wonderful zookeeper.

I love you and have faith in you, Kris.

Sincerely, Grandpa Z

Entry: March 4, 2013

Grandpa really wanted this for me. He wrote this 9 years ago. I've changed a lot since then, but he seemed to have faith in me regardless. I miss him; I can't let him down. I never knew he had me in mind to run Zooker Zoo all these years. He knew that I was studying accounting and not becoming a veterinarian or animal expert of any kind. Still, he didn't change his mind about me. I can't let Grandpa Z down. I can't let the Zoo down. I certainly can't let myself down. This is something I must do, but how do I do it? How do I go about running this zoo?

Well, if I think of Zooker Zoo as a business, it makes it a little easier for me to understand. Business is my speciality. I spent the last four years learning about how to run one. A zoo is just a business after all, isn't it?

Okay, what do I need to focus on first? I need to learn as much as possible. I need to know everything there is to know about Zooker Zoo. They say knowledge is power. Let's see if that turns out to be true.

What do I need to find out?

1. The animals

a) How many do we have? What do they eat?

b) What else do I need to know? (I'll ask the animal handlers.)

2. The employees

a) How many workers do we have? How much are they paid?

b) What do they do; how do they do it?

3. The business side

a) How much are we spending to run this zoo?

b) How much money are we making and how do we make it?



Entry: March 4, 2013 (page 2)

Okay, I've gathered some information from the employees of Zooker Zoo. Well, technically I've been given info from "my" employees. Wow, that sounds weird to say. Anyways, back on task:

1. Animals (I'm just going to list them.)

- a) 2 polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*)
- b) 1 dolphin (*Delphinidae tursiops*)
- c) 4 emperor penguins (*Aptenodytes forsteri*)
- d) 2 zebras (*Equus quagga*)
- e) 2 lions (*Panthera leo*)
- f) 3 giraffes (*Giraffa camelopardalis*)
- g) Meeko the black panther (*Panthera pardus*)
- h) 2 kangaroos (*Macropodidae macropus*)
- i) 3 orangutans (*Hominidae pongo*)
- j) 2 otters (*Mustelidae lutrinae*)

Wow, that's a lot of animals. I asked about what they eat, but the animal handlers told me that it would take a whole day to get into the specifics of what they need. I told them to give me a summary of how much the animals eat per day and how much that costs. They should be getting me that information soon.

2. Employees

- a) 4 animal handlers (Frank, Jimbob, Jessica, and Zoey)
- b) 1 gardener (Martin)
- c) 1 gift shop attendant (Jaime)

Well, Zooker Zoo has definitely grown since grandpa opened since I was 13. I still don't have information on how much everything costs. I'm worried that we are losing money. We haven't had as many visitors to the Zoo as we used to. We will find out.



THE SPURLING TRIBUNE

VOL.,103

SPURLING, OREGON - TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2013

NO. 18

EMERSON ZOOKER DIES SUDDENLY:
ZOO IN HANDS OF HIS GRANDSON

TOWN: "IS KRIS OLD ENOUGH TO RUN ZOO?"



ZOOKER ZOO

FUTURE - UNKNOWN?

The town of Spurling is concerned about the future of Zooker Zoo. They believe the grandson of the great Emerson Zooker is too young to run a zoo. Kris worries about the same thing - he feels ill equipped to be in charge of his grandpa's life work. All of the Zooker Zoo's staff have known Kris for years, but they seem equally worried about their future being held in the hands of a 22-year-old.



Entry: March 6, 2013

I have the information to finally take a look at how much we are spending. I need to compare how much we spend with how much we make. Grandpa wasn't exactly the most organized guy. He must have thrown away a lot of the information about last years costs. I'll have to make a good estimate. At least the animal handlers gave me the information about how much food the animals eat.

1. Expenses (costs, payments)

a) Animals.

The animal handlers tell me that, on average, the animals eat about 5 bags of food per day. Each bag costs about \$45 dollars. I wonder how much we spend per year on food? I can multiply 5 by 365, the number of days in a year. This will let me know how many bags of food they are eating per year. Then, I can multiply that number by \$45. This will give me an estimate of how much Zooker Zoo spends on food per year.

$$5 \times 365 = 1825 \text{ bags of food per year}$$

$$1,825 \text{ bags} \times \$45 \text{ per bag} = \$82,125 \text{ spent on food per year}$$

I estimate that we are spending about 82 thousand dollars per year on food. Wow. I wish food didn't cost so much. I wonder how much each animal costs to feed per year. We have 22 animals, and they all eat different amounts, but I wonder what the average is per animal of Zooker Zoo.

To find that out, I can take the \$82,125 that we spend every year and divide it by 22, our total number of animals. This will split the \$82,125 into 22 parts. It will show me about how much each animal is costing me every year to feed.

$$\$82,125 \text{ divided by } 22 = \$3,732 \text{ (per animal per year)}$$



Entry: March 6, 2013 (Page 2)

Interesting. On average, it seems to cost quite a lot to feed our animals.

Okay, it's time to take a look at how much I'm paying our employees every year. I wish I had the actual information, but it seems that grandpa threw away the actual info. Shame on you Grandpa Z! I'll have to take another look through my grandpa's things soon.

b) Employees

Okay. Well, we have 4 animal handlers, 1 gardener, and 1 gift shop attendant. Each of them works 40 hours per week and are paid \$15 for every hour they work. They work year round, but have 4 weeks of unpaid vacation time. There are 52 weeks in the year, but with the vacation they only work 48 of those weeks. So, I will multiply their wage (\$15/hr) by how many hours they work per week (40).

$$40 \text{ hours per week} \times \$15 \text{ per hour} = \$600 \text{ per week.}$$

This is their weekly payment. Then, I will multiply that this by 48. This will give me an estimate of how much I pay each employee every year.

$$\$600 \text{ per week} \times 48 \text{ weeks} = \$28,800$$

(So each worker is paid about \$28,800 every year)

I want a total for how much I pay all employees. Well, since I have 6 of them, I will multiply \$28,800 \times 6. This will let me know how much I pay all 6 of them in total. Oh wait, I almost forgot. I will need to pay myself too. I almost forgot about that. It almost seems weird to be paying myself. I will assume myself at the same wage. This makes 7 employees total.

$$\$28,800 \text{ yearly wage} \times 7 \text{ total employees} = \$201,600 \text{ per year.}$$



Entry: March 6, 2013 (Page 3)

Well, we are definitely paying a lot to our employees. That seems right though, they are the ones that keep Zooker Zoo running smoothly. Let's total up the two main costs of Zooker Zoo to estimate the major part of how much we spend every year.

$\$82,125$ food costs + $\$201,600$ employee cost =

$\$283,725$ total estimated cost every year

That's a lot of money, but it doesn't seem too abnormal to me. So what this means is that we need to make more than $\$283,725$ per year in order to make a profit. Well, Frank said he kept a tally of how many adults and children visited the zoo last year. Let me go ask him.

Okay, got this from Frank:

Adults: 9,625 adults in 2012

Children: 20,300 kids in 2012

We charge $\$10$ for an adult ticket and $\$7.50$ for each child ticket. I wonder how much money we made last year in total.

$9,625$ adults \times $\$10$ adult ticket price = $\$96,250$

$20,300$ kids \times $\$7.50$ kid ticket price = $\$152,250$

So our total revenues, how much money we brought in, are both of these added together:

$\$96,250$ adult revenue + $\$152,250$ kid revenue =

$\$248,500$ total revenue

Let me compare the total expenses to total revenues to see if we made more money than we spent. I'll take the $\$248,500$ revenue and subtract the $\$283,725$ we had to pay from it. Uh oh, I can tell right away that we lost money. We spent more than we made!

$\$248,500 - \$283,725 = -\$35,225$

YIKES! It looks like we lost $\$35,225$ last year! Not a good thing...



THE SPURLING TRIBUNE

VOL. 103

SPURLING, OREGON - TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2013

NO. 18

**ZOOKER ZOO FACES MORE TROUBLE
AS KRIS DISCOVERS ZOO IS IN DEBT
TOWN: "CAN KRIS REALLY HANDLE ALL THIS?"**



ZOOKER ZOO

EVEN MORE PROBLEMS!

It seems like one problem after the next for Zooker Zoo. Today, Kris received a letter from Turkley Bank. The letter indicates that Emerson Zooker borrowed \$100,000 from the bank last year. Kris suspects that his grandpa borrowed the money to help pay employees and buy food for the animals. This makes sense, as Kris estimates Zooker Zoo lost around \$35,000 in 2012. The first repayment of \$15,000 on the debt is due in 4 month's time. Kris is worried. He thinks Zooker Zoo is already spending more money than they are making. How will they make enough money to pay back the loan to Turkley Bank? All of Spurling is curious. Kris wishes the town didn't already know about this. Running a zoo is difficult enough; it's even more difficult to run it while being judged by his entire home town.



Entry: March 20, 2013

It's been about a week since I got the letter from Turkley Bank. Boy, was that an unpleasant surprise. I've finally figured out why Grandpa Z borrowed the \$100,000. It was confusing, if we only lost about \$35,000 - why would grandpa borrow \$100,000?

I asked around and found out that Meeko had a lot of health problems last year. Grandpa wanted to keep it quiet from the public. After what happened with Fireball, he couldn't go through that situation again with Meeko - not with all of Spurling breathing down his neck. I can definitely relate with that. That explains why I knew nothing about the Meeko situation.

So, we have debt. It's bad, but it's not the worse thing that can happen. There are a lot of reasons to take out debt. I remember grandpa took out loans in the early days to help pay for zoo expansions and to buy different animals. That investment ended up making Zookeeper Zoo even more popular and paid for itself in no time at all.

We need to make a good bit of money to pay this debt off though. Grandpa spent all the \$100,000 he borrowed, so that won't help us pay back any of our debt problems.

Okay, how much money do we need to be making to start breaking even? Since we lost about \$35,125 last year, I can figure out how much our monthly losses are by dividing it by the total number of months in a year (12).

$(\$35,125 \text{ loss per year}) \text{ divided by } (12) =$

$\$2927 \text{ per month loss (I'll round this up to } \$3000)$

I need to make \$3,000 more per month to break even. Wait, I forgot to include the \$15,000 we owe the bank. I'll add that in. The other \$85,00 we owe will be dealt with later; that's not due yet.



Entry: March 20, 2013 (page 2)

Not only do I need to make that \$3,000 more. I also need to find a way to make \$15,000 in 4 month's time to pay back the debt to the bank. So, I need to find out how much extra I need per month to make that payment.

$(\$15,000) \text{ divided by } (4) =$

$\$3,750 \text{ per month to pay for the debt.}$

Adding both of those per month requirements together $(\$3,000 + \$3,750)$ means I need to make about \$6,750 per month in order to break even and pay back that debt. Let me see how many adult tickets that is per month. Each adult pays \$10 to get in to the Zoo, so I can divide by \$10 to figure out how many adult tickets we need to sell.

$(\$6,750) \text{ divided by } (\$10 \text{ adult ticket}) =$

675 Adult Tickets

I need to attract an additional 675 adult visitors every month in order to handle the financial problems we are in. It will be difficult, but if I don't do it then we will have even bigger problems. We can take another look at these finances after our debt payment that is due July 15. For now, we need to think of some ways to attract more people to Zookeeper Zoo.



Kris decides that a customer appreciation day is the best way to bring attention to the Zoo. He plans the customer appreciation day for two weeks later. This time around, he actually contacts The Spurling Tribune instead of avoiding them. He's hoping for some free publicity. He wants to get the word out and let more people know about the Zoo. Kris needs all the attention he can get for the zoo at this point.

To draw people in and out of respect for Emerson Zooker, Kris has decided to name it "Emerson Day." The date is planned for May 1st, 2013 and all ticket prices will be half-off.

THE SPURLING TRIBUNE

VOL.103

SPURLING, OREGON - SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2013

NO. 18

KRIS ZOOKER ANNOUNCEMENT:
"EMERSON DAY - MAY 1ST, 2013"

"CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAY FOR MAY 1ST
IN HONOR OF EMERSON ZOOKER" - KRIS Z.

ZOOKER ZOO

EMERSON DAY:
MAY 1ST, 2013! LOW PRICES



Entry: April 15, 2013

It's been decided. We are having a customer appreciation day on May 1st. That's a little less than two weeks away. The newspaper wrote about it. That's good; we want everyone to know about it and I didn't have to pay The Spurling Tribune anything for the free publicity.

How else can I get the word out? Well, we could run around Spurling and shout it out loud. It sounds fun, but I'm guessing there are better ways. Maybe I should do some advertising for the Zooker Zoo and for Emerson Day. Yeah, I'll advertise. There is only one major problem, I don't have any money to spend on advertising. Maybe I do. Let me run a quick analysis of the costs.

I just called a graphic designer and he estimated that it would be about 6 to 10 hours of work. His hourly rate is \$75. He's very good at what he does, but I'm not sure I can afford that. It will cost me:

$$10 \text{ hours} \times \$75 \text{ per hour} = \$750$$

Not to mention, I'll also have to pay to have the flyers printed up. I think I'll go ahead and design a flyer myself. I used to do some art in high school; I'm sure I can whip up something that looks decent.

I called Leroy's Printing, he charges 75 cents per flyer. I'm hoping to print at least 500 and put them up everywhere around town.

$$500 \text{ flyers} \times 75 \text{ cents} = \$375$$

I can afford that.

Other than that, I need to think of other ways to get some free attention to the Zoo. The local news channel KB-7 has been calling me and asking for an interview. Maybe now is the right time for it.





EMERSON DAY - WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 2013

COME SUPPORT ZOOKER ZOO!

- HALF OFF ALL TICKETS!
- MEET THE ANIMAL HANDLERS!
- INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO ZOOKER ZOO!

SPECIAL PRICE FOR MAY 1ST:

ADULTS: \$5.00

CHILDREN: \$3.75

THE SPURLING TRIBUNE

VOL 103

SPURLING, OREGON - TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2013

NO. 18



**BUZZING ABOUT
EMERSON DAY**

**EMERSON DAY EXPECTED TO BE BIG HIT
KRIS ZOOKER EXCITES ALL OF SPURLING**

"WE EXPECT A BIG TURNOUT. I HOPE
HALF THE TOWN SHOWS UP," SAYS KRIS.



Entry: April 25, 2013

We are getting a lot of attention now. I'm glad the flyers are working. After the past few weeks I never expected to be happy with The Spurling Tribune; yet, here I am - excited as ever. We are 6 days away from Emerson Day and I think we are finally on track for some success here. I'm glad our advertising efforts are being well-received.

I'm scheduled to be on the Friday night news for KB-7 tomorrow. I've never been on TV, so this will be an interesting experience. Honestly, I'd rather not do it; speaking in public makes me crazy nervous. I have to though. I have to do it for Grandpa, for myself, and for Zooker Zoo. I also managed to convince Leroy's printing to give me a special deal for 50 cents per page if I mentioned him on the news. I can certainly do that; I don't have any money to spare so I need to save it where I can.

Okay, the advertising cost me:

$$500 \text{ flyers} \times 50 \text{ cents} = \$250$$

It's a bit of money, but I'm thinking it will be worth it in the long run. People keep asking me, "If you're trying to make money, why are you offering the tickets for half price?" It's a good question. I think that the buzz and excitement from Emerson Day will spark some interest in Zooker Zoo again. Sometimes you don't know how much you like something until you try it. Zooker Zoo is one of those things. I bet people will keep coming back after they get to experience all the fun of Zooker Zoo on May 1st.

I've been out of loop with the animals lately; I've been focusing myself on Emerson Day. Jessica came to today to let me know that Meeko has been eating less than he normally does. That worries me...



Entry: April 27, 2013

Wow, today is a mixed bag. Great things happened at the exact same time horrible things happened. Okay, enough writing about my feelings. It's time to get into the facts.

I'm starting with the good. The interview last night could not have been better! Emma Bradley is such an expert newscaster; she got me laughing and helped me keep the nerves away. When we opened up the phone lines, the calls poured in. We got calls from 3 different local elementary schools telling us that they were planning field trips to come to Emerson Day. That's fantastic! The community seems to really be getting behind us on this one.

Now, the "not-so-good" news. Otherwise known as BAD news... Meeko is really sick. I mean extremely sick. He didn't eat yesterday and hardly moved around the way he normally does. He threw up blood this morning. We sent him to Charles Gingerpuckle D.V.M. soon after that. Charles is the most respected vet within 200 miles. I got a call about 30 minutes ago from Charles. He told me that Meeko needs emergency surgery or else he will almost surely die. His stomach is bleeding. Even with the surgery, the doctor estimates that Meeko only has a 25% chance of pulling through it alive. He hasn't been the same since Grandpa died; maybe they both started getting sick around the same time. Not only that, everything for Meeko is going to cost about \$20,000. Talk about bad timing.

I do have an idea though. I'm going to be putting out a donation jar in front of Meeko's cage. I don't normally like asking for donations. In this case, I'll make an exception. It reminds me of what Grandpa wrote in his letter. "Remember, it's okay to ask for help."

Grandpa, need you now more than ever.



THE SPURLING TRIBUNE

VOL.103

SPURLING, OREGON - TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 2013

NO. 18

ZOOKER ZOO'S PRIZED PANTHER FALLS ILL - QUICKLY SHIPPED TO VET

"25% CHANCE OF SURVIVING THE EMERGENCY
SURGERY," - CHARLES GINGERPUMPLE, D.V.M.

MORE BAD NEWS FOR
ZOOKEEPER, KRIS ZOOKER



Kris Zooker finds himself facing even more adversity. That's the nature of running a zoo, it seems.

Meeko survived surgery, but his condition is still unstable. Everyone is anxious to know what will happen - especially Kris. Grandpa Z. viewed Fireball as a best friend and Kris is beginning to understand that relationship a little better now. "It's weird how the animals seem like family," stated Kris during his interview with KB-7 news.

*Everyone is hoping Meeko pulls through okay.
"I'll let you know the second we do." states Dr. Gingerpumple.*

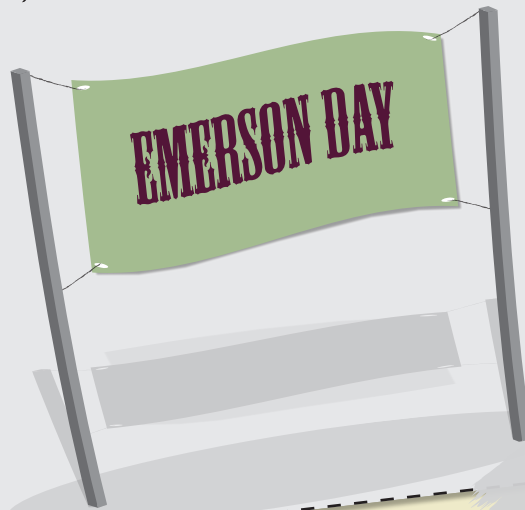
Emerson Day will have to commence with uncertainty in the air. Kris hopes the community will still be interested in coming to the zoo despite the absence of their prized panther. All of Zooker Zoo's staff hope for good news and good fortune.

"This is the moment of truth." - Kris Zooker



Welcome!

Thanks for coming to Emerson Day!
Please feel free ask our staff any questions
you may have about the zoo!



Zooker
Zoo

Emerson Day was an exceptional success. Zooker Zoo experienced record attendance that day. Four different schools came by on scheduled field trips. The Zoo's staff was absolutely thrilled to have so many visitors.

Zooker Zoo accommodated 512 different people on Emerson Day. They sold 188 adult and 324 kids tickets. Even at half price, the Zoo made far more money than on any ordinary day.

As Emerson Zooker always loved to put it, "Probably half the town showed up that day." Spurling, Oregon is home to about 1,000 residents. In truth, more than half the town visited Zooker Zoo on May 1, 2013.



It was indeed the moment of truth. Meeko the panther, however...

Entry: May 3, 2013

Today I got a call today from our vet, Charles Gingerpumpkin.

IT'S GOOD NEWS! Charles expects him to make a full recovery. Meeko is old and he will need a lot of rest in the next weeks, but he's coming home! That's the best news I've gotten in a long time. This week has been crazy; it's finally time to recap Emerson Day.

Donations:

The donation jar in front of Meeko's cage took a long time to count. It ended up being \$834.24 in total. I was pretty astounded by that generosity. A few people left checks that were more than a hundred dollars each! Nothing was quite so heartwarming as watching so many elementary students put money in Meeko's jar.

I just received a letter in the mail this morning from Jeff Turkley, the owner of the bank that loaned Grandpa the money. I was just expecting another notice about our debt, but that wasn't it at all.

Jeff Turkley wrote a check for \$10,000 to donate to Meeko's recovery. I'm simply shocked by his donation. I was completely surprised to find a check instead of a debt notice. Fortune is shining on Zookeeper Zoo thanks to the good hearts of the people around me.

Let's figure out the money we made on Emerson day from the half-priced tickets.

$$188 \text{ Adult Tickets} \times \$5.00 = \$940$$

$$324 \text{ Kids Tickets} \times \$3.75 = \$1,215$$

$$\$940 + \$1,215 = \$2,155$$

Wow, I'd say that we are well on our way to paying that debt back. We might even be making a profit on top of that. We will know soon.

To top off the good news, Matilda the penguin laid an egg today!



Entry: May 12, 2013

Let's see if we are on track to pay back the debt. I'm just going to list the new things. I'll still be paying for food and employees, but I'm going to assume that those costs will stay the same. New stuff:

Expenses:

\$22,000 for Meeko's medical fees

Revenues:

\$834.24 from donation jar

\$10,000 from Jeff Turkley

Charles had to keep Meeko a little longer than expected and it cost us \$22,000 instead of \$20,000. He said that we can pay him back by the middle of July. That's around the same time we have our debt payment. I'm going to save the money from donations to pay for Meeko's bills. I'll subtract the two donations from the \$22,000 to see how much is left to pay to Charles by July 14th.

$\$22,000 - \$834.24 - \$10,000 =$

\$11,165.76 left to pay Charles

I'll factor it the same way I did before on March 20th. The only difference is that now we are only 2 months away from when we need to pay the bill.

$\$11,165.76 \text{ divided by } 2 \text{ months} =$

\$5,583 per month.

Adding \$5,582.88 to our old "per month requirement" of \$6,750 will let us know about how much more we need to make per month to pay all our bills. This will be a rough estimation, but it will still give me a good idea of what we need:

$\$5,583 + \$6,750 =$

\$12,333 per month



Entry: May 12, 2013 (Page 2)

This means that Zookeeper Zoo needs to attract \$12,333 each month for the next two months MORE than we did last year. Yikes...

I suppose I should find the monthly revenue average for last year just to make a comparison. I need to know how reasonable it is to make that additional \$12,333 per month.

On March 6, I figured out that we made \$248,500 revenue in ticket sales. I can divide this by 12 to figure out our monthly revenue for 2012.

$$(\$248,500 \text{ yearly revenue}) \text{ divided by } (12 \text{ months}) = \\ \$20,708 \text{ of revenue per month.}$$

Again, YIKES! We need to make \$12,333 more than the \$20,708 we were making last year. I certainly hope that Emerson Day increased our popularity. Right now, there's not a whole lot I can do. I'll do a little more analysis just for extra information. It will help me track whether or not we have high enough Zoo attendance. By adding our last year's revenue per month (\$20,708) to the extra amount required this year (\$12,332) it will let me know how much money we need to make each month in June and July.

$$\$20,708 + \$12,333 =$$

$$\$33,040 \text{ revenue required in both June and July.}$$

Now I will divide this by our adult ticket price of \$10. I can see how many additional visitors we need each month in June and July.

$$(\$33,040) \text{ divided by } (\$10) =$$

$$3,304 \text{ tickets}$$

Let me figure out how many visitors we need to get every day in order to meet this.



Entry: May 12, 2013 (Page 3)

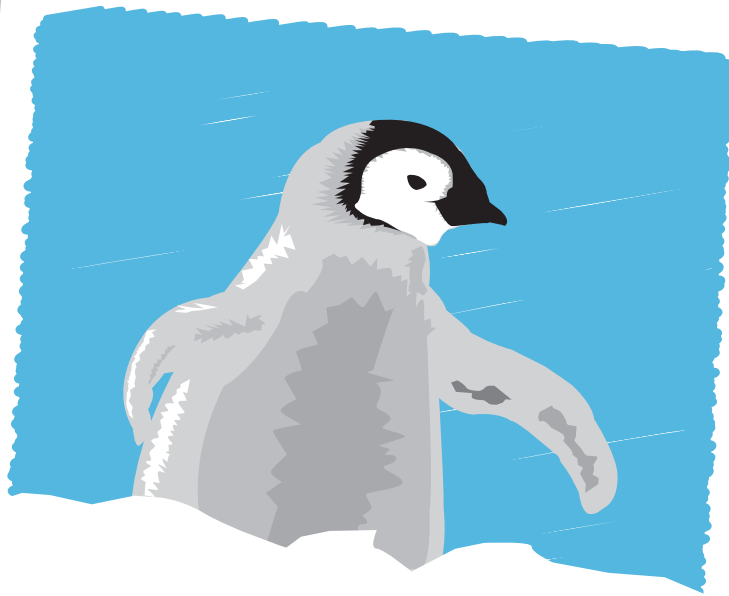
So we need to sell 3,305 tickets each month. There are 30 days in a month, so we can divide that ticket number by 30 to see how many adult tickets we need to sell every day.

$$(3,304 \text{ tickets}) \text{ divided by } (30 \text{ days}) = \\ 111 \text{ adult tickets per day}$$

We did have 512 people show up for Emerson Day. I doubt we will get that sort of attendance every day, but 111 is definitely not too far gone. Since Emerson Day, we have averaged around 100 adult tickets per day. (about \$1000 in revenue). Not all adults, of course. It's just a good measure to keep track of it. 100 per day is really good considering last year our average ticket sales were about 70 per day. Plus, Meeko will be back sometime in the next few days. I know people will want to see him.

For now, it's business as usual. We will have to wait it out and see what happens.





Sassafraass

It's July 15, 2013. Kris Zooker just shook Jeff Turkley's hand after writing him a check for \$15,000. With Meeko back, Zooker Zoo attracted even more visitors. They averaged 130 adult tickets per day from May to July. Kris and his crew expect that number to continue growing as they expand the zoo and introduce new animals.

Speaking of new animals, Matilda's egg just hatched. Zooker Zoo has a new penguin on their hands and they named him Sassafraass.

It's only been four months, but Spurling and all of the staff at Zooker Zoo are already referring to Kris as "*The Zookeeper*." Kris never expected to run this Zoo, nor did he expect to love it quite so much. When Emerson decided to leave Kris the zoo, he did it for good reason.

THE SPURLING TRIBUNE

VOL 103

SPURLING, OREGON - MONDAY, JULY 15, 2013

NO. 18

THE ZOOKEEPER MEETS HIS DEBTS
AND STARTS TO PLAN FOR FUTURE

PENGUIN BORN AND TOWN WONDERS
WHAT ZOOKER ZOO STAFF WILL DO NEXT



Entry: July 15, 2013

I just left my meeting with Jeff Turkley. Handing him the check for \$15,000 was such a relief. Our \$22,000 payment is in the mail and on its way to Charles Gingerpump. Things are finally starting to slow down around here. Not attendance though, attendance is still huge! The next payment we have is another one for \$15,000 in about 4 month's time. We are finally starting to save up some profits; I have no doubt that we will be able to meet the deadline this time.

Meeko is full of life again and Sassafrass is such a character. Baby penguins are so cute it should almost be illegal. I find myself spending almost the entire day at the zoo. The animals and staff are quickly becoming family to me.

I had never expected to be the one running Zooker Zoo. I don't have a single complaint though; it's been as rewarding as it has been challenging. Frank is taking over for the week and I'm taking a little bit of vacation time. I need it. I'm emotionally, mentally, and physically exhausted - in a good way though.

Grandpa, I know you're not here anymore, but there are a few things I need to say to you. Thanks for giving me this gift. At first I thought it was more of a curse, but you challenged me to become a better person. I will always be thankful for everything you've taught me. This has definitely been a wild ride. Everyone keeps calling me "The Zookeeper." Honestly, I just prefer Kris. I definitely catch myself smiling every time I hear them say it though. Love you Grandpa.

Well Journal, I've got big ideas for when I get back. If we save up some more money, I'm planning to buy out the adjacent land and look into buying some sloths. Everyone loves sloths. Until next time,

Kris Zooker, a.k.a. "The Zookeeper" (haha)



After recent renovations, Zooker Zoo's gift shop - The Zooker Zone - has finally reopened its doors for business. Do you think you have what it takes to run the Zooker Zone?



Discussion Questions:

- 1) What do you think the main costs (expenses) within the Zooker Zone are?
- 2) How do you think the Zooker Zone makes its money (revenue)?
- 3) If the Zooker Zone were open for business during Kris' first months as the Zookeeper, how could they have helped pay back the debt?
- 4) If you were running the gift shop, what sort of information would you keep track of to help you make decisions the way that Kris did?
- 5) In what ways are "Zooker Zone" and "Zooker Zoo" different? In what ways are they similar?



Now, if you were in Kris Zooker's shoes, how would you respond to these problems?

Discussion Questions (continued)

- 1) If Zooker Zoo wasn't in debt with the bank, do you think that Emerson Day is still a good idea? Why or why not?
- 2) If Zooker Zoo wasn't in debt with the bank, how would you have spent the extra money to improve the Zoo?
- 3) Kris only focused on two main costs of running a zoo - the cost of food and employees. What other costs do you think most zoos might have?
- 4) In reality, many Zoos are dependant on the donations of generous individuals. Is there anything you have donated to in your personal life? Is there anything that you plan to?
- 5) Do you know of anyone who runs a business? In what ways do you think that business is similar to a Zoo. In what ways do you think it might be different?
- 6) Kris tried to keep close track of how much money he was spending and how much money he was making. Do you think there is a way to apply this to your own life?
- 7) Kris developed a strategy to pay back the debt he owed to Turkley bank. If Kris had no debt, do you think he could use a similar strategy to figure out how many tickets he needed to sell in order to save up for something - perhaps for a new animal?
- 8) Has "The Zookeeper" changed the way you think about how a business is run? If you think that it has, is there a way you can apply this in your own life? Could it help you save up money for something you've been wanting?

