

**THE SACRAMENTO BEE**  
**Living Here**

**Parenting: Dad listened, Encouraged, empowered**

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Editor's note: Few parents can claim to be child-rearing professionals. In this occasional series, we show what people have learned about parenting from their day jobs. If you have suggestions about other Professionals to profile, let us know.

Anyone with kids knows how they test you.

They refuse to eat something, want to stay up late, or use words or Tones they know aren't acceptable.

Lance D. Shaw, who spent many years managing high-tech teams, said it's the same in the workplace.

"Competent people test you all the time to see if you're competent," he said.

They may use jargon to test your understanding, or posit hypothetical barriers to a manager's instructions, said Shaw, 65, who lives in Fair Oaks and works for the California Energy Commission.

"Because I said so" doesn't work with employees, he noted.

Successful employee management involves listening, encouraging and empowering, to hear Shaw describe it.

And it's no different for children.

It's hard to separate Shaw's parenting approach from his professional skills or even to say one came from the other.

They both seem to come from an attitude toward other people.

Shaw had to practice both parenting and profession intensely.

After he was divorced, he was the custodial parent for his two children for several years in the 1980s-a full time single dad.

At the same time, he was a manager in the volatile high-tech industry where, he said, "when you leave at 5:30 (p.m.), people say, and "Taking the afternoon off again? "

In his self-published book, "Parenting Dad," he tells of bringing his daughter to work and introducing her to a scientist who had multiple semiconductor patents.

He praised the scientist to his daughter and, in his presence, praised her: “Kim, you are just as capable as Dr. Art (Learn).”

When he said things like that to his kids, “they believed me because I believed me, “ he said.

He also trusted employees and kids to make decisions.

“I would usually delegate huge chunks to the people who hadn’t been delegated (tasks) before,” he said.

With his kids, he allowed them to choose what route they would take to school some days. When it was his turn, he would allow them to question his choices.

“I gave them the right to say ‘no’ to me, “he said.

He didn’t push them into careers, though. In fact, he always said he didn’t want to know what they wanted to be when they grew up.

But he believed in raising them to have skills in whatever they chose. Skills like decision-making, creative thinking, math, reading and working as a team.

His kids, Lance and Kim, graduated from California State University, Sacramento, and went to additional education. They are now professionals in business and diplomacy.