

In times of uncertainty, take your cue from the janitor

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A friend of mine told a story of a time his flight to a foreign country was delayed by several hours, and the flight finally arrived shortly before the airport closed for the night. He retrieved his bags from the baggage carousel and waited for his hosts to come pick him up.

While he waited, the closing time of the airport passed. He was the only person left in the airport, except for a janitor who was busy mopping the floor.

And then there was a commotion at the other end of the baggage claim. A team of police with their weapons drawn scurried into the building, hiding behind walls and other structures, as if they were searching for an armed intruder.

My friend was rather worried at this display of force and wondered what was going on.

Then he looked over at the janitor. The janitor continued to mop the floor, unphased by the hubbub surrounding him.

My friend breathed a sigh of relief. The fact that the janitor remained unperturbed told him that this was probably some sort of training exercise that the police did every night after closing, or at least frequently enough that the janitor knew that it was nothing to be concerned about.

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