

EL POLLO LOCO



// BEN LUGO
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Favorable impressions have taken Ben Lugo a long way at El Pollo Loco.

Mr. Lugo was working as a factory supervisor at a maquiladora in Nogales, Mexico, when El Pollo Loco founder Juan Francisco “Pancho” Ochoa approached him about managing one of his restaurants elsewhere in the city. So began a fruitful 22-year career with the company.

Mr. Ochoa quickly became so impressed with Mr. Lugo’s quiet efficiency and rapid mastery of restaurant operations that he tapped him to manage an El Pollo Loco location in Montebello, near downtown Los Angeles.

“There is a lot that you have to learn, from bot-

tom to top,” Mr. Lugo says of El Pollo Loco procedures. “For instance, you have to learn prepping, cooking, handling orders, and of course customer service. Treating customers well is very important at this company.”

Once in Montebello, Mr. Lugo similarly impressed Glen Nanny, who was working there as a franchise owner trainee. Mr. Nanny subsequently hired Mr. Lugo for his own El Pollo Loco franchise in Whittier, California.

Messrs. Nanny and Lugo ultimately went into business together, operating eight El Pollo Loco franchises in the Southern California region.

A year before Mr. Nanny died in 1996, Mr. Lugo

was able to buy one of those El Pollo franchises, acquiring two others in 1997.

He says he’d like to acquire more El Pollo Locos.

“I really like the company. El Pollo Loco has a great corporate culture. The people there really value open communication and hard work,” he says.

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