

WEEK ONE: SHOW OUR COMMITMENT JANUARY 31, 2011 NEWSLETTER

This week our focus is on the Service Principle “Show Our Commitment”

We are all members of a team and we need to make sure that we are all working together towards the common goal of providing excellent customer service.



<p>1. I Proudly Represent MLS</p> <p>I am an ambassador for the MLS by actively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Displaying a positive attitude -Talking enthusiastically about my Library System and its services -Contributing to an inviting environment 	<p>2. I Show Respect for Others</p> <p>I treat everyone with respect by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Being sincere & Kind -Being considerate of individual differences -Acknowledging contributions -Practice acceptance of everyone 	<p>3. I Practice Teamwork</p> <p>I am a team player working with my MLS teams to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -An inviting, innovative link to the world -The goals of our Strategic Plan -Customer satisfaction -Personal accountability 	<p>4. I Practice Safe Work Habits</p> <p>I show I care about my own and others' safety by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Working safely -Responding appropriately in an emergency -Reporting any unsafe condition 	<p>5. I Show Respect for the Library and Community</p> <p>I ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use resources wisely -Practice preventive maintenance -Report problems and/or defects immediately -am aware of resources for diverse cultural interests
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DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Defining Teamwork

Teamwork is not about getting along well together, though that is part of working as a Team. There is a quotation adapted from Henry Ford that really pinpoints teamwork –

Coming together is a beginning.

Working together is progress.

Achieving together is success.

Take some time to discuss a challenge your department is facing. What can the team do to reach a positive solution?

Something to think about. . .

How to Gain Respect & Live Responsibly

Whenever we start a new year we usually go through some review in our mind of the previous year and what we have accomplished or have yet to accomplish in our life. Setting goals, releasing negative feelings, forgiving and striving for some personal growth is always on people's minds, no matter what they have experienced in life. Many times, the thought of professional and financial attainment or lack of is what a new year brings, along with all the emotional feelings that follow. When you take the honorable approach throughout your life, it will always result in other gifts coming your way without intentionally seeking them. This is why we should make the three R's a reality in our lives. They are: *Respect for self, Respect for others and Responsibility for all your actions*. People's intentions are often not the reality that they live. It's not because they don't want to, but because they just don't have the discipline to be consistent without help from others. To change one's behavior and thought processes can challenge a person's will. Most people alone are not strong-willed enough to stick with it throughout the time it takes to attain their goal. It's never too late to start to live your life in a respectful and responsible way, so your daily interactions will be set on a positive path. So let's start with some of the thoughts and activities that are associated with respect and responsibility.

Respect for Self is a feeling of confidence and pride in one's own abilities and worth. Having regard for one's character, and one's conduct with appreciation of one's self elevates our awareness of who we are. Self-respect is the cornerstone on which many other attributes are built such as dignity, honesty, loyalty, confidence and integrity. Feeling good about yourself, thinking enough of yourself to make decisions that will be good for your long term emotional, physical, spiritual and mental health, will improve your character and self worth. Always surround yourself with people who have your best interests involved, who care about your thoughts and feelings, who share your passions and interests and who live healthy lifestyles. Conduct yourself on a daily basis with a happy heart, engage in physical activities that are health-oriented, be polite and pleasant to others and it will elevate your own self respect. By walking the walk and talking the talk you can display the respect you have of yourself by honoring your body and mind. The person with self-respect simply likes themselves. It should not be contingent on success or a result of comparing ourselves with others. Self-respect is a given because of who we are and not because of what we can or cannot do. No one can take steps towards their goals, dreams and aspirations without liking the person they currently are.

"Respect for ourselves guides our morals; respect for others guides our manners". -Laurence Sterne

Respect for others is to have unbiased consideration and regard for the rights, values, beliefs and property of all people. To hold in special regard someone's opinions, talents and/or abilities, reflects your own values and standards. It also shares what you believe in, and in part, what you see or would like to see in yourself. By respecting others, you show the attitude of friendliness and comfort towards them. Listening to other people's thoughts, feelings and desires without judgment, allows you to respect them for who they are, and not what you want them to be. Very often, we impose our own ideas on others without being able to respect other people's inherent differences. Everyone you encounter has a unique moral fiber that has created who they are and how they think. Being able to allow others to express themselves in their own way will open your mind to different theories and information that might not be part of your mindset. Respecting other people in your personal and professional environments will encourage the same respect be given to you, in return. We show respect by speaking and acting with courtesy. ...Continued

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Always treat people the way you would want to be treated: with civility and dignity. Ask yourself if at any time during your day: Did my verbiage or actions ridicule, embarrass or hurt other people? Become aware of how you treat people, so you can improve your behavior. Being fair minded, truthful and polite will reflect the virtues of respect and bring back to you the same positive energy that you put out to others.

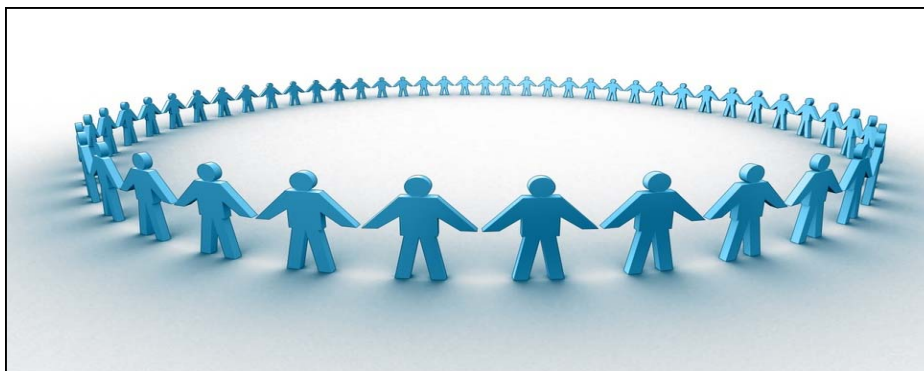
"Every human being, of whatever origin, of whatever station, deserves respect. We must respect each other even as we respect ourselves" -Ulysses S. Grant

Responsibility means to accept accountability for your actions. When you make a mistake, you accept it, correct it, and offer amends, instead of making excuses. Responsibility is the ability to respond and make smart choices for yourself. Being responsible for your actions allows you to accept that everything along the way that happens to you, good and bad, has been determined by the choices you have made. You are in control of those decisions and blaming others for your situation is *avoiding* your responsibility. You can pretty much choose almost everything in your life; your career, your spouse, where you live, who your friends are, your social activities with the one exception of the parents you were born to. You need to make sure that you acknowledge the responsibility that follows those decisions because they are your own and not anyone else's. Personal growth develops when we are accountable because we accept the choices that we made and learn and grow from them.

People who take complete responsibility for their lives experience inner joy and control of circumstances. They are able to make better choices because they understand that they are responsible for those decisions. Take a review of yourself to see how often you take responsibility or place blame on others. Listen to your verbiage to see if you often point fingers of blame at your friends, spouse, co workers and family. Are you making excuses and shifting responsibility to others for the things that don't always go right? How many times have you said: "He/she did this to me?" You can change these negative behavior patterns by first understanding that you made choices that ultimately created these results. Taking responsibility is the first step in acknowledging that you have the control to make better choices in the future. Become proactive, not reactive, to your situations and be accountable. Acknowledge that your life is your responsibility. No one can live your life for you. You are in charge. No matter how hard you try to blame others for the events of your life, each event is the result of choices you made and are making. By breaking the blame-game patterns in your life and accepting responsibility, you will see your circumstances change for the better.

"The willingness to accept responsibility for one's own life is the source from which self-respect springs" -Joan Didion

When you put into practice the three R's on a daily basis you will start to see your life change with positive experiences. Lessons are learned and spiritual growth becomes prevalent. Don't allow the past to dictate the present, unless it honors you and your life. Start to modify your behavior to reflect actions that display respect for yourself, respect for others and take responsibility for all your actions. It's never too late to get support so you can be on a better path in your life. You do have the power to change your circumstances and the change starts the day you commit to live an honorable life.



DISCUSSION STARTERS:

What is respect? Do you respect yourself and others? Do you respect other people's opinions and beliefs?

Respect is an attitude that helps you succeed in your life and build harmonious relationships. What five ways can we show respect for our customers, co-workers, friends, family, community?

5 Ways to show respect:

- 1. Behavior:** Good behavior is crucial for everyone. The way you behave and treat people represents your values and how you treat others. Always strive for the best behavior and treat people the way you want to be treated.
- 2. Language:** Communication is a very important skill that people have to pay attention to. When you talk to others in a negative way, others will lose the respect for you and will start to pull away from you. Learn to be polite in your communication with others and people will respect you for that.
- 3. Respect the laws:** Can you imagine streets without traffic lights? Can you imagine soccer matches without rules and laws? Can you imagine a company without regulations? Learn to respect these rules, laws, and regulations because they are good for the well being of everybody involved.
- 4. Respect the differences:** Learn to respect other people's opinions and beliefs. Let me ask you, what makes you think that your opinions and beliefs are more important than others? You have to realize that what is good for you might not be good for others and what is good for others might not be good for you. You can disagree with someone's opinions and beliefs in a respectable and positive way, not in a negative way.
- 5. Respect yourself:** You have to learn to respect yourself, otherwise people won't respect you. Start now to respect your body, health, exercise, read books, invest in yourself, and develop your opinions and positive beliefs.

DISCUSSION STARTER:

Teamwork is about working together to achieve shared goals, and getting that feeling of shared achievement that comes from success. It is about HOW we work together as a Team. Good teamwork involves having good systems and processes to work effectively together as a Team. For example, there are often times in an office where the workload does not seem to be equally shared. One person feels they are getting too much, or all feel that another person is not pulling their weight. Without teamwork this quickly leads to stresses and bad feeling within the office.

What strategies can your team put into place to address such an issue? What best practices will you implement to ensure success?

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Language is an exceedingly powerful tool. Whether you communicate orally, or in written form, the way you express yourself will affect whether your message is received positively or negatively. Even when you are conveying unpleasant news, the impact can be softened by the use of what we call positive language.

It is very easy to fall into the negative language pattern. Many of us do so without being aware of it, particularly in written communication. For example, it is not uncommon for government organizations to write negatively phrased letters to customers, applicants and those it regulates. Take a look at the following typical government memo.

"We regret to inform you that we cannot process your application to register your business name, since you have neglected to provide sufficient information. Please complete ALL sections of the attached form and return it to us."

While it is polite (albeit overly formal), it is also exceedingly negative. It includes several negative words -- cannot, and neglected, and it has a tone that suggests that the recipient is to blame for the problem.

How could this be re-written with a more positive approach?

What are the characteristics of negative language? What are the characteristics of positive language?