

WEEK FOUR: GO THE EXTRA MILE AUGUST 8, 2011 SERVICE PRINCIPLES NEWSLETTER

Our goal is to make our customers feel special. Every day this week, we will focus on a Service Principle that will help us care for our customers in a special way.



16. I Make Great First Impressions I ensure a great first impression every time through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My appearance • The appearance of my area • Following "clean as you go" throughout the building 	17. I Stay Flexible When responding to customer requests, I ensure each customer is satisfied by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking questions to learn more • Determining the customer's needs • Thinking of creative ways to help them 	18. I provide service graciously I am more than my job. I care for every customer by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being prepared to assist • Showing that I am genuinely glad to help them • Demonstrating that I genuinely care about them accomplishing their goals 	19. I Do More I am empowered to serve our customers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting upon opportunities to do more than is asked • Going the extra mile whenever possible—to make the customer feel special • Being a capable problem solver 	20. I show Genuine Appreciation I show genuine appreciation by thanking each customer for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the library • Sharing feedback with us
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DISCUSSION STARTERS:

We hear a lot about customer experience and going the extra mile for our customers. And these are good things. Every employee in every business should pay attention to these.

Every organization does something for their customers. What experience do we deliver that puts MLS ahead of our competitors? Develop a message around this experience. What does our message tell customers to expect from us?

If you tell people what to expect (assuming it's what they want) and then do it for them, they'll become loyal customers. It's that simple.

Something to think about...

Business Etiquette - Deal Maker or Deal Breaker?

Etiquette is one of the most often overlooked facets of successful business. A new generation of business owners and employees, from large corporations to small companies, seem to regard manners in the workplace as passé. Presenting themselves with polish and professionalism is not a concern. Treating customers, clients and colleagues with respect and courtesy have no value. These people are blind to the fact that they are losing business everyday by ignoring the details that build relationships and drive customers to their door.

In the best of times, etiquette can give you the edge over your competition. In difficult times, manners will set you apart. There are any number of companies that can offer the same services and products as you. The critical difference is ultimately how you make people feel when they do business with you. Manners are the missing link. Excellence in etiquette will send you over the top.

So how do you create a culture of courtesy in business?

You make etiquette a value at every level of your organization. Everyone plays a role. Executives and business owners model good manners. They treat their employees with kindness and respect. They provide them with training in business etiquette. They recognize and reward those employees who present themselves and the organization with polish and professionalism.

Here are some of the areas where successful business people focus to achieve excellence in etiquette.

Beginning with first impressions, no facet of workplace manners is ignored. It all starts with appearance and good grooming. It includes eye contact, a smile, using the customer's name, a genuine desire to please and a great attitude.

Professional attire sends a stronger message about you as a business person than you may realize. One size does not fit all in the workplace. Your business wardrobe should be governed by the industry in which you work, the job you have within industry, the geographical area in which you live, but most importantly by what your client expects to see. Ask yourself how your attire affects your credibility on the job.

E-mail etiquette requires as much skill as your telephone manners. In this digital age, e-mail is often the primary means of communication in business. Make sure that whatever you send online is as impressive as your handshake, your voice mail greeting and your personal appearance. Simple violations of e-mail etiquette have derailed more one career.

Phone courtesy counts. While the telephone may seem to be playing second fiddle to e-mail, phone courtesy can never be overlooked. Your tone of voice and your choice of words can turn that customer on or off in a heartbeat.

The technology that brought us the cell phone, the smart phone and all their cousins has taken rudeness to a new level—one that is not necessarily up. We often treat our portable communication devices with more importance than the customers, clients and colleagues who are standing in front of us.

Excellence in etiquette extends to networking opportunities and how we conduct ourselves at business/social events. When you are trying to make connections and build relationships, manners make the difference.

Dining skills have suffered as much as business dress in the past few years. Too much business is conducted over meals to let table manners go by the way side.

Your standards of etiquette should be as high when interacting with coworkers and colleagues as they are when you are dealing with clients. Showing courtesy and respect to your co-workers has a definite impact on productivity and profitability.

No matter your business, excellence in etiquette is vital to the company culture. You will win over potential clients and keep your current ones by meeting them on a path that has been outlined and understood for generations. Your business will attract and retain the respect and loyalty of those who work with you and for you.

Adding polish will always build profits.



DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Stay flexible when you work with your customers.

With most things there is no one right answer. There is almost always more than one way to accomplish something. But we don't always admit it. Too often we focus on one way to do something. Maybe it's the only way we know. Maybe it's the fastest, cheapest or easiest route to helping our customer. But that doesn't make it the best.

Our goal is to help our customers get what they want, within our ability. So we always need to look for alternatives. We need to be creative. We need to be flexible. Being flexible means offering customers more than one solution. By offering choices we're making it more likely they'll get what they want. There are few things worse than being a customer and someone says "that's the only way you can do it".

Being flexible also means being willing to try new things and go the extra mile for customers. It means being a problem solver rather than an order taker. Customers know the difference. (So do managers.)

Take an honest look at how you do things. Are there rules or habits that get in the way of your customers getting what they want? If so, could those rules or habits be changed so you are able to serve your customers better?

Encouraging Words...

Initiative

Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before I am asked to do it.

Creativity

Approaching a need, a task, or an idea from a new prospective

A Thought...

"The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra"

~Jimmy Johnson

Discussion Starter:

When you hear the phrase “going the extra mile,” what do you think about? Hard work? Doing the unexpected? Other people? Someone special? You?

Where does the Extra Mile come from? How are Extra Mile stories created? What do they mean to our customers and co-workers?

Staff Recognition

Our service Principles at Work

Are you feeling under appreciated? A little taken for granted?

If you answered yes, rest assured you are not alone.

There are plenty of people that go above and beyond the call of duty on a regular basis and get nothing in return. There are others who do simple little actions that make the lives of others easier or more enjoyable. You may be one of them.

If you're never told that what you do makes a difference you may think, from time to time, ... well why bother?

Other people are no different. You may not **expect** anything in return but it's still nice to know what you do is appreciated.

Think about what kind gestures your friend has done for you. What has a co-worker done to make your job even a little more enjoyable? What little things do your family members do for you that you really appreciate?

A lot of time *we* know we appreciate these people and the reasons for it but unless we *show* them they won't know.

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