

WEEK FOUR: GO THE EXTRA MILE DECEMBER 26, 2011 SERVICE PRINCIPLES NEWSLETTER

This week our focus is on the Service Principle “Go The Extra Mile”

Our customers expect to be “satisfied” with our service. It is our job to go beyond “satisfy”. When we do we are showing our customers how special they are to us. That’s called



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:

Look at our business through your customers’ eyes. Have we made it as easy as possible for the customer? Or are some of the procedures in place simply for the convenience of you or the system? Ask your customers. Listen to their answers. What ways can we improve?

The bottom line is the easier you are to do business with, the happier your customers will be.

Something to think about. . .

Making The Most of First Impressions

Can you establish a lasting business relationship in just seven seconds? You can if you make a great first impression. Seven seconds is the average length of time you have to do it, and everyone knows that you won't get a second opportunity. A positive first impression can turn a chance encounter into a long term association. .

Whether that initial meeting is face-to-face, over the phone or online, you do not have time to waste. It pays for you to understand how people make their first judgment and what you can do to be in control of the results.

1. Learn What People Use To Form Their First Opinion.

When you meet someone face-to-face, 93% of how you are judged is based on nonverbal data--- your appearance and your body language. Only 7% is influenced by the words that you speak. Whoever said that you can't judge a book by its cover failed to note that people do. When your initial encounter is over the phone, 70% of how you are perceived is based on your tone of voice and 30% on your words. Clearly, it's not what you say---it's the way that you say it.

2. Choose Your First Twelve Words Carefully.

Although research shows that your words make up a mere 7% of what people think of you in a one-on-one encounter, don't leave what you say to chance. Express some form of thank you when you meet a potential connection. Perhaps it is "Thank you for taking your time to see me today" or "Thank you for joining me for lunch." People appreciate you when you appreciate them.

3. Use The Other Person's Name Immediately.

There is no sweeter sound than that of our own name. When you use a person's name in conversation within your first twelve words and the first seven seconds, you are sending a message that you value the other person.. Nothing gets other people's attention as effectively as calling them by name and giving them your full attention.

4. Pay Attention To Your Grooming.

Others will. In fact, they will notice your hair and face first. Putting off that much-needed haircut or color job may cost you the relationship. Very few people want to do business with someone who is unkempt or whose hairstyle does not look professional. Don't let a bad hair day cost you the connection.

5. Keep Your Shoes In Mint Condition.

People will look from your face to your feet. If your shoes aren't well maintained, others will question whether you pay attention to detail. Shoes should be polished as well as appropriate for the business environment. They may be the last thing you put on before you walk out the door, but shoes are often the first thing other people see.

6. Walk Fast.

Studies show that people who walk 10-20% faster than others are viewed as important and energetic---just the kind of person others want to do business with. Pick up the pace and walk with purpose if you want to impress. You never know who may be watching.

7. Fine Tune Your Handshake.

The first move you should make when meeting someone is to put out your hand. There isn't a businessperson anywhere who can't tell you that the good business handshake should be a firm one. Yet time and again people offer up a limp hand. You'll be assured of giving an impressive grip and getting off to a good start if you position your hand to make contact web-to-web with the other person's. Once you've connected, close your thumb over the back of the hand and give a slight squeeze. You'll have an impressive handshake and the beginning of a good business relationship.

8. Make Introductions With Style.

It does matter whose name you say first and what words you use when making introductions in business. Because business etiquette is based on rank and hierarchy, you want to honor the senior or highest ranking person by saying his name first. When the client is present, he is always the most important person. Say the client's name first and introduce other people to the client. The correct words to use are "I'd like to introduce..." or "I'd like to introduce to you..." followed by the name of the other person.

9. Never Leave The Office Without Your Business Cards.

Your business cards and how you handle them contribute to your total image. Have a good supply of them with you at all times since you never know when and where you will encounter a potential client. How unimpressive is it to ask for a person's card and hear the words, "Oh, I'm sorry. I think I just gave away my last one." You get the feeling that this person has either already met everyone he wants to know or maybe didn't come prepared to do business.

Keep your cards in a card case or holder where they are protected from wear and tear. That way you will be able to find them without a lot of fumbling around, and they will always be in pristine condition.

10. Match Your Body Language To Your Verbal Message.

A smile or pleasant expression tells people that you are glad to be with them. Eye contact says you are paying attention. Leaning in toward the other person engages you in the conversation. Use as many signals as you can to look interested and interesting.

In the business environment, you plan your every move with clients. You arrange for the appointment, you prepare for the meeting, you rehearse for the presentation, but in spite of your best efforts, potential contacts pop up in the most unexpected places and at the most bizarre times. For that reason, leave nothing to chance. Every time you walk out of your office, be ready to make a powerful first impression.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

In customer service, as 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.

Remember, 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 think beyond the first solution that comes to mind when we're working with our customers.

Being flexible means being willing to try a different path. (This is good advice in life as well as business.) Always consider other options as possible ways to help your customer get what they came for.

It 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. Stay flexible as you provide solutions to your customers. They'll thank you with their loyalty.

Take some time with the group to discuss some uncommon and challenging requests you have received. How did you determine the customer's real need and how did you ultimately satisfy the customer?

Did you Know?

Loyalty Goes Both Ways

We all want our customers to be loyal. So here is a thought:

In order to get your customers to be loyal to you, you need to be loyal to your customers.

Are you loyal to your customers? Do they know it? Do they feel it? What are you doing to prove it?

Loyalty is about creating value, building a strong relationship, developing trust, having an understanding of their business, knowing their wants and needs, making them feel special, letting them know you appreciate them – and much more.

While there may be lots of things you can do to prove your loyalty, it really isn't that difficult. All of the above mentioned – and more – is just common sense. These are the things we should be doing for our customers. So, I have a little exercise/assignment for you to do. It shouldn't take very long. Here it is:

Write down all of the things you think you are doing, or should be doing, to show your loyalty to your customers. You can start with the list above. Then add more. Be specific and write down how you are (or should be) doing it. Ask a few others what they think and add to the list. Pat yourself on the back for the ones you are doing already, and start doing the ones you aren't.

That is it. A simple assignment on the surface that will hopefully bring you closer to understanding the value you are giving to your customers – as well as the loyalty you are showing them. After all, why should your customers be loyal to you, if you can't prove your loyalty to them?

Staff Recognition

It takes energy and commitment to deliver consistently uplifting service. Praise is the spark that lights the fire. Frequent recognition is the fuel that keeps the fire burning. Use plenty of both to keep the climate warm for your co-workers and the customers they serve.