

WEEK FOUR: GO THE EXTRA MILE JANUARY 23, 2012 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 going the extra mile.



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:

Customers get to choose where they spend their money and time, and are more likely to do so with businesses and people who provide the best and friendliest service. Perhaps even more importantly, customers are more likely to frequent places where they can feel good about themselves. What five things can you do to make your customer glad they spent time in the library?

Something to think about. . .

Customer Service at Chick-fil-A

By: Dr. Nathan Mallor

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to meet S. Truett Cathy, founder of the popular restaurant chain, Chick-fil-A. Since that time, I have become a vocal fan of Chick-fil-A and their approach to business. So when his son, Dan Cathy, recently came through Oklahoma City for a business meeting, I was thankful to be able to attend.

Dan Cathy spoke about Chick-fil-A's philosophy toward service and how they have adopted what he called the 2M2N (second mile, second nature) approach. The concept of "going the second mile" began during the Roman Empire. At the time, Roman soldiers had the right to force the people they had conquered to carry their equipment up to one mile.

Consequently, people would make the one-mile journey as slaves to their captors. But some challenged the thinking of the time by suggesting the oppressed should go to two miles instead of one. In short, you can't enslave people how choose to serve. It empowered the oppressed.

Dan Cathy said Chick-fil-A adopted the 2M2N philosophy because they found it gave them a sense of freedom. They found that going the first mile with a customer was simply a transaction, but going the second mile required a different way of thinking.

They made a list of what customer expected when they paid five or six dollars for a meal (first mile), then they made a second list that included what they felt they could provide that the customer would not expect (second mile). It changed what they provided. This is why they provide freshly ground pepper, and why they carry trays to your table, and why their drive-thru process is so impressive.

By adopting the 2M2N approach and embracing the character quality of availability, they moved from a transactional mindset to a transformational mindset. To me, this is when life at work becomes fun.

One of the ways they motivate their employees to provide 2M2N service is by training the people they have hired to consider the "story" behind each customer they serve. To help bring that concept to life, they provided a short video that I would recommend to you.

Look for the video "Every Life Has a Story" on Dan T. Cathy's YouTube channel.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Customer appreciation is one of those terms that is bandied about so much that it has lost its meaning. Car dealers, furniture stores, banks all hold “customer appreciation days.” (Google the term and see what all pops up.) I'm just waiting for the Internal Revenue Service (or the US Congress) to hold a customer appreciation day!

So many "thank you" statements have become mechanical. Even vending machine flash “Have a nice day” on its screen after you make a purchase. We've become numb to these statements of "appreciation."

Customers can be pretty cynical about these attempts at such marketing hype, so imagine how pleasantly surprised our customers are when they **actually feel appreciated as a customer**.

What can we do to show our sincere appreciation to our customers?

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Maximize every customer opportunity.

Knowing how to greet and engage customers doesn't matter if you don't do it with every customer.

The ability to help customers make informed decisions about our materials or services doesn't matter if you don't do it with every customer.

Recommending additional resources that will enhance a customer's experience doesn't matter if you don't do it with every customer.

Having fabulous new materials or incredible programs doesn't matter if people don't know about them. Sure, you can post signs to that effect but nothing reinforces the message more than an employee enthusiastically telling me about them. But it doesn't matter if you don't do it with every 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.