

WEEK THREE: USE A PERSONAL TOUCH MARCH 17, 2014 SERVICE PRINCIPLES NEWSLETTER

This week our focus is on the Service Principle “Use A Personal Touch”.

When we talk to people and find out what brings them to our library, it helps us determine what might be useful to them. Using this information to offer individual service is another way to let people know they are welcome and appreciated.



11. I Welcome Every Customer I greet every customer with sincere enthusiasm using the 15/5 Rule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 15 feet, make eye contact and SMILE • At 5 feet, maintaining eye contact, greet the customer by name, if known, and the time of day greeting (Good morning, good afternoon, good evening) 	12. I Use Telephone Etiquette I answer the telephone professionally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Within three rings and with a smile in my voice • Using the customer's name, when appropriate • Asking the caller, "May I please place you on hold?" • Allowing the caller to end the call 	13. I Focus on Individual Needs I offer information and services relevant to each customer's specific needs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively offering options & suggestions • Asking the right questions • Demonstrating warmth, compassion, and empathy 	14. I Personalize the Visit I watch and listen in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn customer's preferences • Remember them • Offer assistance at every level • And acting upon them when possible 	15. I make Every Customer Feel Valued I am friendly to every customer in my presence by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stopping all other work and conversations • Making eye contact and smiling • When appropriate, asking if I can help • Using their name • Saying thank you
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DISCUSSION STARTERS:

As a group, take some time to discuss some questions you could ask a customer to determine the purpose for their visit and then come up with 1-2 pieces of relevant information you could offer the customer.

Something to think about...

Break the Law, Get Good Service

Mary works at the Judicial Branch of the Centralized Infractions Bureau of a major metropolitan area. She enjoys giving her 'customers' good service – and is always looking for ways to improve.

'However,' she explained, 'the problem we face is quite obvious. Being a government enforcement agency, we must follow many rules and there is literally zero leeway in the options we can give defendants in how to take care of their infractions.'

Mary is absolutely right.

Many enforcement and regulatory agencies face similar 'customer service' situations: police departments, judicial courts, customs offices, immigration counters and licensing bureaus, to name a few. Staff may be eager to provide wonderful service, but they cannot jeopardize the integrity of the law or equality in the administration of justice.

Can these government officers be flexible and change the rules? No, that would make a mockery of the law.

Can they give highly personalized and customized service? No, that could lead to allegations of favoritism, partiality and scandal.

But can government departments and civil servants offer speed? Yes. Courtesy? Yes. Useful and easy-to-understand information? Yes. Proactive advice on what to expect and how to navigate each step in the process? Yes. On-line applications and filing systems? Yes. Convenient locations? Yes. Extended hours of operation? Yes. An attractive physical environment? Yes. Support materials such as pens, paper, photocopy machines and telephones? Yes. Dignity and respect for all?

Yes, yes, yes!

I call these different aspects of service your 'value dimensions'. There are many 'value dimensions' that apply in every service situation, even in the judicial system.

No matter who you are, what you do or where you work, you can find a way to increase service value and make your service better.

Continued...

Key Learning Point

Every interactive situation offers an opportunity to improve your service to others. If you can't be flexible, be fast. If you can't be generous, be courteous. If you can't be personal, be informative. If you can't be low price, be high value.

Never let your situation become an excuse for giving up. Find another way to serve someone better.

Action Steps

Stop whining, complaining or using circumstances as an excuse for not improving your service. Everyone can make service improvements, no matter who you are or where you are. Look around. Find a better way. Then do it.

PS: Don't use this lesson to avoid making service improvements where you can and should. If you *can* be flexible, bend. If you *can* be generous, give. If you *can* be faster, hustle



DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Little Things Can Mean a Lot

Your action steps needn't be big, bold or expensive. Often it's the little things that make a big difference in service.

Make a big impression by paying attention to the little things that count. Maybe it's the personal note you write, or remembering a customer's preference from one visit to another. Perhaps it's pre-filling a form on your customer's behalf, or keeping track of an order and calling ahead to reconfirm delivery.

Take some time to share some other personal touches we can add to our customers' experience.

Encouraging Words...

Hospitality

Cheerfully sharing food, shelter or conversation to benefit others.

Gratefulness

Letting others know by my words and actions how they have benefited my life.

A Thought...

Because appreciation is an action, that means it is a skill you can actually practice to improve. We can improve our attention and our expression of thanks

Did you Know?

What Customers Want From Customer Service

- *To be greeted promptly—whether in person, on the phone or via a quick-loading web site.*
- *To have concerns addressed with sensitivity and efficiency—with eye contact if the exchange is person-to-person.*
- *Clear communication from people who know what they're talking about.*
- *Individualized solutions rather than cookie-cutter responses that apply to one and all regardless of unique needs or circumstances*

Bottom line: Customer want to be treated like they're important and valued.

Staff Recognition— Our Service Principles at Work

Do you want to know a way to get **better service, more loyal customers, and stronger relationships** at work and at home?

Consciously recognize things you appreciate, then express genuine thanks.

It sounds easy and simple. **So why do so few do it regularly.** Oh, they may mindlessly say the words “*thank you*” as a matter of courtesy and social habits. But that is not the same. That is **polite but not really appreciative.**

The challenge of genuine appreciation is it **requires regular attention** to all that we should appreciate but often take for granted. Appreciation **requires consideration and understanding** of the effort, perspective, intention and value of others.

You cannot accidentally appreciate. It is a deliberate action.

It requires recognition.

It requires thought.

It requires perspective.

It is rewarding to all.

