

SERVICE PRINCIPLES

METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SYSTEM

WEEK FOUR: GO THE EXTRA MILE APRIL 21, 2014

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

We want our customers and co-workers to feel special. So every day this week we will focus on a Service Principle that will help us care for 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:

Are you a gracious business professional? The word gracious is defined as: marked by tact, kindness and courtesy, characterized by charm, good taste and generosity of spirit. Review each of this week’s Service Principles. How will you apply each one to provide service graciously?

Something to think about...

First Impressions

by Shep Hyken, CSP

Some of my clients ask me if there is one simple thing they can share with their employees that will make the biggest impact for better customer service. This is not easy, as there is no quick fix for problem service or some miracle elixir that by magic will transform an organization into a first class customer driven company. It is a combination of many things put together. But there is a simple concept. It falls back on the original concept of managing the Moment of Truth and creating Moments of Magic.

The simple concept I am talking about is has to do with managing the first impression. I am not talking about meeting someone for the first time, although that is obviously a first impression. I am talking about the first impression we make that may set the tone for any interaction that is to follow.

Here is a very basic example. When you walk into work in the morning, how do you greet your coworkers? Do you strive for a positive early morning greeting? Or, are you one of those people who claim not to be an "early morning" person - at least not until you have had your three cups of coffee? So, what if you are not an "early morning" person. Your goal is to make the people you work with want to be around you the rest of the day. Your early-morning greeting is simply setting the tone for any interaction that is to follow.

How do you dress for success? Dressing for success does not mean wearing a business suit, tie, etc. It means dressing appropriately for the situation.

What do your body language and facial expressions tell people? Body language, eye contact, facial expressions are read, sensed and interpreted by those around you.

How do you answer the phone? Do the people calling you feel that you welcome their call, or do they feel as if they are an interruption?

All of these, and more go toward setting a positive "first" impression.

My assistant, Lois Creamer, called to congratulate a business associate on an outstanding news article that appeared in the St. Louis paper about his company. Let's call this person Bob.

Bob answered Lois' phone call curtly. Lois immediately knew he was busy and started to feel uncomfortable. So, she just said, "Hi Bob, it's Lois Creamer from Shep's office."

Bob said in a sharp, almost angry tone of voice, "Lois, I am real busy and I can't talk."

Lois said, "I can tell. All I wanted to do was congratulate you on the great article in the paper. Good-bye."

There was a moment of silence as Bob realized that all Lois wanted to do was compliment him. He sheepishly said, "Good-bye."

In this case, Bob got a double whammy. He not only gave off a negative first impression with his curt greeting, but he also caused himself a lot of embarrassment.

By the way, Bob called back later to apologize about the way he acted on the phone.

What if the person calling Bob hadn't been Lois, but instead an important customer? Would he or she have been as forgiving as Lois? Imagine the "back peddling" Bob would have had to do to get the client to feel comfortable with having called him.

Hopefully Bob learned a lesson that day. If he was too busy to answer the phone he should let a receptionist or his voice mail pick it up.

As mentioned before, these first impressions come in many forms beyond greetings. Pay attention to what your non-verbal actions are saying. Managing the first impression simply lets you start off on a positive note. Why should you start a conversation or a meeting at a psychological deficit?

It has been written that it takes many more good things to make up for a single bad thing in business. Most of the statistics range between eight to twelve good things to make up for a Moment of Misery. One good thing does not fix a bad thing or make things even. You have to go much further than getting back to even to renew the confidence in a customer.

Managing the first impression is so simple, so why make it hard on yourself? Simply manage the impression and set a positive tone for any interaction that is to follow. It all helps toward creating those MOMENTS OF MAGIC for your customers.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

People's "perception" about us DOES matter. We are all judged by people through "What we say", and "How we say it". We are also judged by "How we Dress", "How we walk" and even "How we eat our food". In the work environment, we judge people by the size of their office, the location of their office or by the number of people working for us. As a business the company is judged by the way we answer the telephone or greet people at the door.

Think about it!

You CANNOT, NOT! make a first impression. People always form an initial impression about us the first time they come in contact with us whether it is in person or whether it is over the telephone or even by the way we leave a message on THEIR answering machine. Every other contact with us after that first time either supports or conflicts with that first impression. Create a good first impression and the relationship grows from there. Create a bad first impression and your relationship with that person can be an uphill battle.

Look around your area. Think about the way you interact with others. What will you do to ensure a great first impression every time?

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Reputation is Built on First Impressions

Mom always said, *“There’s no second chance to make a good first impression.”*

Employees create strong impressions that become part of the organization’s reputation.

Who speaks your Reputation?

Who speaks for the organization?

Who interacts with customers?

Who wears the company logo?

Do they create a lasting reputation we want to keep?

The person *behind the phone, behind the counter, and even behind the wheel*, is critically important to our reputation.

Consider...

Everyone in the organization becomes an **“Impression Opportunity.”**

Every **touch point** with a customer is an impression opportunity that **builds or destroys the organization’s reputation**. Your website and online marketing strategies are only a portion of your brand. Other than personal interaction, with are some of our Impression Opportunities?

WORDS TO LIVE BY:

Generosity

Carefully managing my resources so I can freely give to those in need.

Orderliness

Arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve greater efficiency.

How do these words apply to our Service Principles this week?

Did you Know?

"Service" is defined as (we will assume the customer is involved here):

- Work done for others as an occupation or business, or
- An act or a variety of work done for others, especially for pay, or
- Assistance: help, or
- An act of assistance or benefit, or
- Offering services to the public in response to need or demand.

With a definition like that I guess that I am receiving customer service when greeted with a blank stare or a grunt, because that appears to be assistance or the offering of service.

Hospitality is defined* as:

- Cordial and generous reception of or disposition toward guests, or
- An instance of cordial and generous treatment of guests, or
- The act or practice of one who is hospitable; reception and entertainment of strangers or guests without reward, or with kind and generous liberality, or
- Kindness in welcoming guests or strangers.

Synonyms are: accommodation, affability, amiability, cheer, companionship, comradeship, consideration, conviviality, cordiality, entertainment, friendliness, generosity, geniality, good cheer, good fellowship, heartiness, hospitableness, obligingness, reception, sociability, warmth, welcome.

Hospitality is a much better word than service to describe what we should be providing; words like cordial, generous reception, kindness, consideration and warmth say it equally well. What is being offered to your customers?

Staff Recognition

Internal Customer Service is defined as effectively serving other departments within your organization. How well are you providing other departments with service, products or information to help them do their jobs? How well are you listening to and understanding their concerns? How well are you solving problems for each other to help your organization succeed?