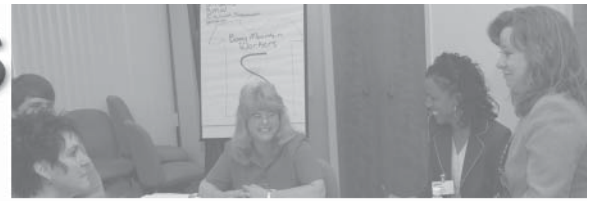




taye's tips



Summer 2005 Newsletter

Your Tiny Dose of Leadership Tid-Bits

Topics In Talk

At Your Service!

Creating Customer Service Excellence

My grandfather owned a country store in North Carolina in the early 1940's. He had a rule about customer service. No matter what you were doing, when someone came into the store you stopped that activity and assisted the customer. Period.

Makes sense, doesn't it?

However, in today's work place this is more of a rarity than an actuality.

Many of us think that providing great customer service is just common sense, that we shouldn't have to explain what that means to an employee. Don't get caught in that trap!

Remember, we are raising a generation of young adults that may not have had the same examples as some of us 'older' folks. Look at what they watch on TV, what music they listen to, most of those examples don't inspire the kind of customer service that we expect.

So, how do we transform, or enhance, our teams skills in this area? First and foremost, providing exceptional customer service must be a communicated expectation. You can't expect an employee to follow the rules if the rules are vague or non-existent.

An expectation of exceptional customer

service must be firmly in place, it should be a standard. Do your employees know what standards are important to your **financial institution**? A standard is something you want to have happen. For example, there should be a "standard" set in place for greeting a customer or member when they walk into the lobby, a standard for how to handle an upset customer, for expressing what the company does, and standards for directing customers to the correct company personnel to meet their needs.

Take five minutes and observe your work environment.

- *Are customers made to feel welcome? If not, what changes need to be put into place?*
- *Take a look even deeper. Are your employees empowered to do whatever they need to do to make the customer happy?*
- *Do your frontline employees feel respected and appreciated? If not, customer service will never reach the "exceptional" level.*

In summary, communicate your expectations and look for ways to reward behavior.

News & Notes

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKSHOP

Charlotte, NC
Summer 2005
We will be conducting a customer service workshop in Charlotte, NC during the summer 2005. More information will arrive to you soon, or contact Taye at 704.567.3095 for details.

The Book "Rec"

Recommended "customer-service" related reading:

■ FISH

By Stephen Lundin, Ph.D., Harry Paul, and John Christensen

■ Best Practices in Customer Service

Edited by Ron Zemke and John A. Woods

■ The 3 Keys to Empowerment

By Ken Blanchard, John P. Carlos and Alan Randolph

Apply The Concept

Making Customer Service "A Standard"

When a customer walks through your door, he or she should be treated like a guest in your home.

Here is a "Six Keys" example of a Customer Service Standard that you can adapt for your organization....



6 KEYS TO EXCELLENCE

- 1 Look up and smile! When the lobby door opens, the front line providers should be ready to acknowledge the guest.
- 2 Greet the customer. "Good Morning!" and "How may I help you?" are fine, though canned greetings may sound canned. Find your own greeting.
- 3 Maintain eye contact. Positive eye contact builds both rapport and credibility.
- 4 Use the customer's name. If you don't know how to pronounce it, ask the customer, they'll be happy to tell you!
- 5 After the initial transaction, ask the customer "Is there anything else I can do for you today?"
- 6 Thank the customer! Let them know how much their business is appreciated.

Quotes To Consider

It is better to have enough ideas for some of them to be wrong, than to be always right by having no ideas at all.
- Edward de Bono



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