

Profitable Performance

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NEW IMAGE ASSOCIATES
Adding Science To Talent Development

Six Keys To Customer Service

All customers have certain expectations about what good service should be. It is the personal responsibility of every employee to provide exceptional customer service.

Customer expectations differ from one person to another but, basically, they all expect the same things.

Customers expect:

- **Value - Fair Prices**
- **Quality**
- **Variety**
- **Pleasant Atmosphere**
- **Friendly Service**
- **Interested Employees Who Care**
- **Attentiveness To Their Needs**

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Are you providing exceptional customer service?

Five Essential Qualities Of Leadership

Leaders and leadership are top-of-the-mind subjects among businesspeople, coaches, athletes, politicians, clergy, and individuals in all walks of life. We demand more from our leaders every day but do little to prepare people for

the leadership roles they take on during their lives. To paraphrase Shakespeare, some people are born leaders, some achieve leadership, and others have leadership thrust upon them. By whatever means a person attains a leadership position, there are five essential qualities that he or she must possess to be successful as a leader over time.

1. Above all else, a leader must have **Courage**. The majority of people fail to achieve the quality of life they seek because they are shackled by their own fears. Thoreau said, “The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.” It’s not that the courageous leader is not afraid. Everyone is afraid at one time or another. Courage is the will to press on, to do what is necessary and what is right, to overcome obstacles even when afraid. It isn’t courage if you’re not afraid. The only antidote for fear is courage.
2. Fear has a partner in crime – self-doubt. Self-doubt is that little voice in your head that says, “You can’t get that promotion, you’ll never make the team, you aren’t attractive enough, or you just can’t cut it.” Fortunately, there is an antidote for self-doubt as well: **Confidence**.

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There are six keys to excellent customer service.

1. **Competence**
2. **Knowledge**
3. **Pride**
4. **Appearance**
5. **Courtesy**
6. **Extra-Effort**

Key 1: Competence

People who enjoy what they are doing usually do it well. Before a person can really begin to enjoy the job, he or she must be confident in his/her abilities to do every aspect of the job correctly. The amount of time we take and the efficiency we display doing our job shows to others our level of competence.

Key 2: Knowledge

We can increase our level of competence by learning as much as we can about our own jobs, the functions of other departments and the total organization. The elements of job knowledge include areas such as product information, procedures, problem solving, and the ability to answer questions.

Key 3: Pride

The attitudes that we show are very important to excellent service. An attitude of pride is one which gives employees the energy and the incentive to become more knowledgeable and competent. The amount of interest and commitment we bring to the job affects the quality of service that we provide to our customers.

Key 4: Appearance

First impressions are extremely important. It tells the customer how we feel about ourselves and our job. Customers notice the care we use in our personal appearance. They also notice the eagerness we show in performing our job and the approach we use when we address customers. We never get a second chance to make a first impression.



Continued on next column –

Key 5: Courtesy

Customers view courtesy as a basic part of service. Courtesy is the single most important behavior a customer expects from us. We demonstrate courtesy by what we say, the tone we use to say it, and the gestures we use. Through our actions and words, we show customers how we feel.

Key 6: Extra-Effort

The absence of courtesy makes a lasting poor impression. On the other hand, a little bit of extra-effort leaves a lasting positive impression. The extra-effort we extend to customers is the part of service that keeps customers coming back. Do you always go the extra step for your customers?

Rate yourself and your staff in each area. What are your strengths? What areas need improvements? What action steps will you take?

Rate from 1 to 10 (10 being the best)

- ◆ Competence
- ◆ Knowledge
- ◆ Pride
- ◆ Appearance
- ◆ Courtesy
- ◆ Extra-Effort



Excellent customer service doesn't just happen. It happens because you focus on leading by example and following the six keys to excellent customer service.

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Confidence is the unshakable belief in yourself; that you can make happen what you want to happen. It's not the self-doubt that limits you; it's your reaction to that self-doubt. Confidence allows you to keep trying until you get better, to seek help and advice, to ignore the well-meaning spectators who are ready at your first misstep to tell you that you can't do it right, you never were good enough, and you never will be. Confidence is infectious. If you believe in yourself, others will believe in you.

3. Even though a leader is courageous and confident, if he or she does not have the capacity for intense **Concentration**, that leader is likely to drift off course. Concentration has two parts. The first is persistence, the most important determining factor in an individual's success. Persistence is the unwillingness to quit until the goal is achieved. Persistence does not require talent, only determination. The second component of concentration is focus, or the ability to stay on track, organize oneself, and reduce debilitating distractions. Great leaders have the ability to separate what is immediately pressing from what is truly important.
4. Why are leaders able to inspire others? It's because they have **Passion** for what they do and what they believe in. They are consistently enthusiastic, upbeat, and optimistic. They bring a genuine joy to whatever they do. Even when things are not going well, they can instill in others the belief that together they can make the situation better. Great leaders are also committed to whatever they undertake. Commitment means throwing yourself into whatever you do with everything you have. It has been said that some people drink from the fountain of knowledge while others only gargle. Leaders don't gargle.
5. Finally, leaders must have a strong sense of **Values** if they are to succeed in the long term. Values are enduring standards of behavior. They are the stuff upon which our reputations are built. They help us determine whom we can count on, how people will react in given situations, and whom we want as friends. The chances are good that if you follow the golden rule, do the right thing when nobody is looking, and live your life the way your grandmother told you to, you will be demonstrating a sense of values that others will readily respect and follow.

Submitted by Angelo C. Valenti, Ph.D, Fearless Leadership System. Phone: 615-221-8745 or visit his website at: www.fearlessleadership.com

There is no such thing as a failed experiment, only those with unexpected outcomes.

— Buckminster Fuller



ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Delete Pages From Your History

In Internet Explorer 6.0, you can delete individual pages from your History. Do this by clicking on the "History" button in the toolbar, right-click on the page you want to delete, and select "delete" from the pop-up menu. You can delete your entire History of visited by pages, by going into the Tools menu, under Internet Options.

Easy Eyeglass Protection...

To prevent the screws in eyeglasses from loosening, apply a small drop of Maybelline™ Crystal Clear nail polish to the threads of the screws before tightening them.



Sore Throat?

Just mix 1/4 cup of vinegar with 1/4 cup of honey and take 1 tablespoon six times a day. The vinegar kills the bacteria.



Tips For Conducting Better Training Meetings

As a team leader, conducting a productive training session is challenging. Your training meeting must be informative, relevant, open for participation, fun, and motivating. Here are some suggestions for making your meetings more effective:

Treat all of your team members as knowledgeable. Appreciate their experiences and their opinions.

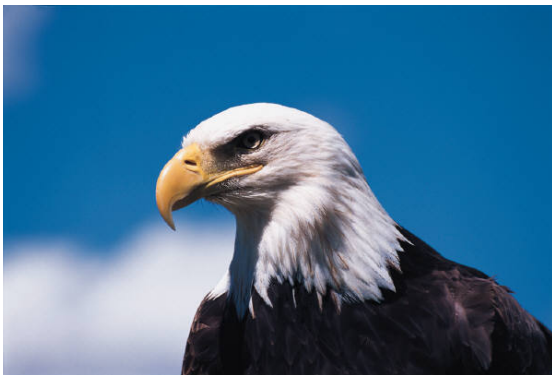
Do not lecture. How boring! Make the meeting a participatory experience for everyone. Ask questions and allow them to participate in the discussion.

Don't just read what's in the training manual. Team members can read it themselves. Your job is to expand on the subject and provide clarity of the information as well as to explain how it applies in your company.

Be prepared for the training meeting. You should know ten times more about the subject than your participants. Give yourself plenty of time to research and validate the information.



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INSIGHT !

**...THE ABILITY TO SEE AND UNDERSTAND
CLEARLY THE INNER NATURE OF THINGS**

McKinsey and Company's 1998 publication, "War for Talent" predicted that, due the coming shortage of skilled workers, the most significant business challenge over the next 20 years will be recruiting, retaining, and inspiring talent.

Some recent information that corroborates their view can be found in Dr. Ira Wolfe's publication, **"The Perfect Labor Storm Fact Book: Why Worker Shortages Won't Go Away"*** scheduled for release on March 15.

Some interesting facts:

Fact #101

- Only one in ten workers has a clear line of sight between his or her task and company goals.

Fact #102

- Only 50 percent of employees feel they follow through with discipline on their key priorities. (What would you pay a taxi driver who spent only 50% of the time trying to reach your destination?)

Source: Stephen Covey and Harris Interactive

Fact #103

- The cost of replacing a senior executive averages two to five times his or her annual salary.

Source: Training and Development, February 2004

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