

# **Exceptional Customer Service:** *Create an Impressive Reputation for You, Your Organization, and Your Community!*

**Cedar Falls Tourism & Visitors Bureau  
Waterloo Convention & Visitors Bureau  
March 22, 2018: 8:30 a.m., Noon, or 3:30 p.m.  
Brenda Clark Hamilton, MA Ed.**

# **Exceptional Customer Service**

*Create an Impressive Reputation for You,  
Your Organization & Your Community!*



## Here's Where We're Going...

**I. Laying the Foundation**

**II. Customer Service 101**

**III. Put Yourself in Their Shoes**

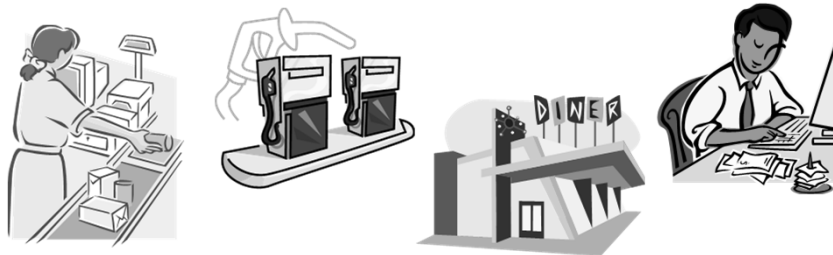
**IV. If Something Goes Wrong...**



## I. Laying the Foundation

*Think of the individuals and businesses that you turn to for your product and service needs.*

*What is it that keeps you coming back?*

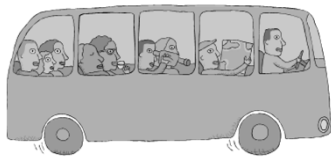


*What are your top  
“pet peeves”  
when it comes to  
other companies’  
customer  
service?*



How they make you feel...

- **Who are your customers?**



*“In the nursing home industry, we often think of the customer as the resident, but in reality, the customer is anyone who comes into contact with the facility.”*

*--Phyllis Thornton*

## II. Customer Service 101

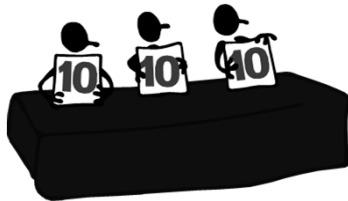
*Which has a greater impact on an organization's reputation?*

- a) The organization's advertising
- b) The actual service that customers receive at the organization



*“...it is the actions and attitudes of every employee that have the greatest impact on how a facility is perceived by the public.”*

—Phyllis Thornton



*What do you want customers/visitors to say about your organization's products, services, and employees?*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## *The “Meat & Potatoes” of Great Customer Service!*



1. Be friendly, kind, and a good listener.
2. Do what you say you will do...or more!
3. Find a way to say “yes” and/or to pleasantly surprise customers.
4. Recognize that each employee is a representative of your company. Their attitude, integrity, and professionalism (or lack of) speak volumes about your company.
5. Realize that your words, actions, tone of voice, and demeanor constantly broadcast to customers how much you value them! Leave no doubt in your customers’ minds that they are important to you.

## *How do your customers RATE you?*

- **Reliability**
- **Assurance/Trust**
  - *Product Knowledge*
  - *Company Knowledge*
  - *Listening Skills*
  - *Problem-Solving Skills*
- **Tangibles**

- **Empathy**
- **Responsiveness**



--from *Delivering Knock Your Socks Off*  
Service, Performance Research  
Associates, New York

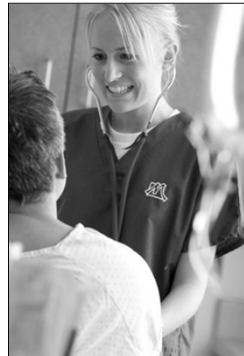
## Top 10 Service Expectations of Bank Retail Customers

--from *Delivering Knock Your Socks Off Service*, Performance Research Associates, New York

1. Being called back when promised.
2. Receiving an explanation of how a problem happened.
3. Knowing who to contact about a problem.
4. Being contacted promptly when a problem is resolved.
5. Being allowed to talk to someone in authority.
6. Being told how long it will take to resolve a problem.
7. Being given useful alternatives if a problem can't be solved.
8. Being treated like a person, not a number.
9. Being told about ways to prevent a future problem.
10. Being given progress reports if a problem can't be solved immediately.

## A Few Lessons from Health Care Customer Service...

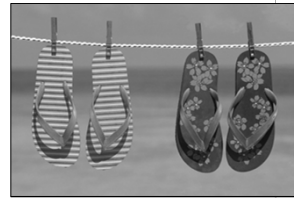
- How important is good communication?  
*(Michigan managed care plan study of complaint letters)*
- How important is a friendly greeting?  
*(Williamsport, PN, hospital ER study)*
- How important is what employees say about their organization?  
*(Manage Up—Quint Studer)*



### III. Put Yourself in Their Shoes

*For every customer who complains to a company, there are \_\_\_\_\_ other unhappy customers who the company doesn't hear from.*

- a. 2
- b. 5
- c. 17
- d. 26



- a. 2
- b. 3
- c. 5
- d. 10



*It costs as much as \_\_\_\_\_ times to attract a new customer as it takes to keep an existing one.*



- **The traveler and/or vacationer mindset**

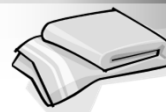
- *Tired; Stressed*
- *Valuable vacation days and money*
- *Needs and wants*

- **Six ways to put yourself in their shoes...**



## 1. Make their visit as stress-free as possible.

- Think *easy!* 
- Anticipate their needs (*vs. responding*)
- Be empathetic, patient, and understanding
- Seek to go “above and beyond” 





## 2. Make them feel good about interacting with you.

- Pay attention to your greeting

- Take personal responsibility for customer needs and requests



- Be careful about “fine-print” on offers

- Maintain professional appearance, behaviors, and attitude by *all staff members at all times!*

- Use professional phone etiquette:

**1. The Salutation**  
(“*Good morning*”)

**2. The Identification**  
(“*XYZ Resort—  
This is Brenda*”)

**3. The Solicitation**  
(“*How may I help you?*”)

- Minimize background noise

- No eating or drinking

- Five Qualities:

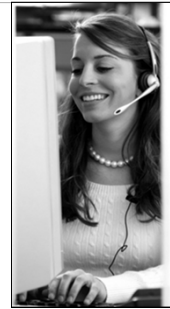
**1. Alert**

**2. Pleasant**

**3. Conversational**

**4. Articulate**

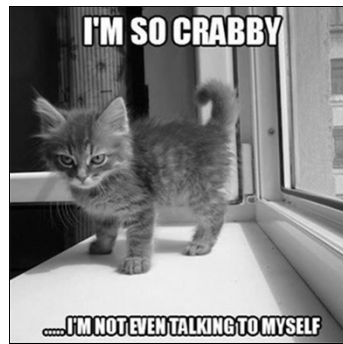
**5. Expressive**



### 3. Provide exceptional internal customer service.

- *Part of your pay...*

- Leave a bad mood or personal problems at home!



- Be friendly, kind, helpful, and pleasant to coworkers!

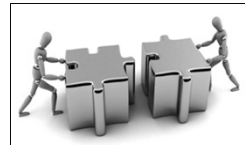
#### True or False, and Why?

*“As long as I’m providing great service to our guests, it doesn’t matter if I’m inconsiderate or short-tempered to my colleagues. We’re just coworkers, after all.”*



***“There’s a remarkably close and consistent link between how internal customers are treated and how external customers perceive the quality of your organization’s services... It’s almost impossible to provide good external service if your organization is not providing good internal service.”***

**--Benjamin Schneider,  
University of Maryland**



## ***Mojo vs. Nojo***

*(Marshall Goldsmith, Mojo: How to Get It, How to Keep It, How to Get It Back If You Lose It, 2009)*

- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| ✓ Take responsibility      | ✓ Play the victim            |
| ✓ Move forward             | ✓ March in place             |
| ✓ Run the extra mile       | ✓ Satisfied with the minimum |
| ✓ Love doing it            | ✓ Feel obligated to do it    |
| ✓ Appreciate opportunities | ✓ Tolerate requirements      |
| ✓ Make the best of it      | ✓ Endure it                  |
| ✓ Inspirational            | ✓ Painful to be around       |
| ✓ Grateful                 | ✓ Resentful                  |
| ✓ Curious                  | ✓ Uninterested               |
| ✓ Caring                   | ✓ Indifferent                |
| ✓ Zest for life            | ✓ Zombie-like                |
| ✓ Awake                    | ✓ Asleep                     |



## 4. Know who you are dealing with.

- The Director
- The Analytical
- The Relator
- The Socializer
- The Bargain-Shopper
- The Killing Time Customer



*(adapted from the work of Rick Segel)*

## 5. Give them a pleasant surprise.

- Pleasant surprises are wonderful ways to make customers feel wonderful about you, your organization, and community!



**How many times will people retell the story?**

- The *Sweet Upgrade*
- Cold bottled water, snacks, and fresh-baked cookies upon check-in



- Candy/Cookies in hotel room with hand-written note
- Coupons for free shot glass, playing cards
- Offer to take the group picture

• **Consider partnering to create a doubly-pleasant surprise.**



- Other ways to pleasantly surprise:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

|| Your smile  
is your LOGO,  
your personality  
is your BUSINESS  
CARD, how  
you leave  
others feeling  
after having  
an experience  
with you  
becomes  
your TRADEMARK. ||

Jay Danzie

## 6. Give Them a Positive Memorable Event to Tell About.

- Fred Lee's *Law of the Memorable Event*



- Social media:
  - Monitor (e.g., *Trip Advisor*) to find out what stories are being told, and to respond appropriately
  - Use social media to your advantage (e.g., *have a fun photo-op*)

- Brainstorm the possibility of **Experiential Travel**



## IV. If Something Goes Wrong...

- The average wronged customer will tell \_\_\_\_\_ people.
- It takes \_\_\_\_\_ good customer service experiences with a company to overcome one bad one.



## The HEAT Method of Service Recovery



- **H**ear them out (*Let them talk, then paraphrase; Fix the person first, then the problem*)
- **E**mpathize (*Acknowledge their inconvenience*)
- **A**pologize (*Sincerely apologize; Let them know you are here to help; Tell them what you will do*)
- **T**hank them (*for bringing it to your attention*)

### During service recovery, remember...

- *Better they tell you than fifty (or five thousand!) others.*
- *An upset customer truly can be an opportunity to gain a more loyal customer.*
- *Fix the person first, then the problem.*
- *Watch your body language and tone of voice.*
- *Know if you have any atonement options.*





## *Do's and Don'ts of Deescalating Situations with Angry Customers*



### **DO NOT...**

- **Interrupt.**
- **Say, “*Calm down.*”**
- **Blame another department.**
- **Argue back.**
- **Use confusing jargon.**

### **DO...**

- **Humanize yourself and them as much as possible.**

### **DO...**

- **Keep a calm tone and open body language.**
- **Tell them you are taking notes because you want to get it right.**
- **Remember that people under stress hate to be left in the dark.**
- **De-stress yourself regularly.**

## *Phrases to use if you want to make angry customers more angry!*

- **“No.”**
- **“I can’t.”**
- **“I don’t know.”**
- **“You’ll have to...”**
- **“You should have...”**
- **“I’ll be honest with you...”**

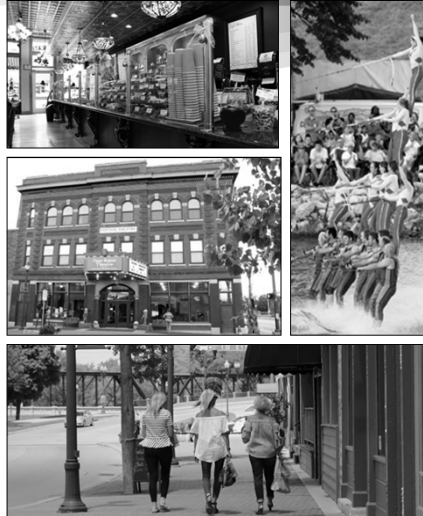
--adapted from *Beyond Hello*, Davis, Aurora:  
Now Hear This Publishing, Inc.



**What feelings will visitors associate with their time in Cedar Falls/Waterloo?**

**“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”**

*- Maya Angelou*



*Brenda*  
**CLARK HAMILTON**, MA Ed.



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