



MAKING IT HAPPEN!

Presented May 11, 1995
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Customer Service Workbook

Park Ridge Park District - May 11, 1995

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

By the end of this three hour workshop we will have:

- Identified the customer "moments of truth" at Park Ridge Park District;
- Described the key characteristics of the customer base and identified their service expectations;
- Explored the areas on which the Park District has met or exceeded expectations;
- Identified the service challenges which face us;
- Developed a 3 month strategy for overcoming the challenges and better meeting customer expectations.

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What is a Customer?

The Customer is the most important person ever in this office.....in person, by phone or by mail.

The Customer is not dependent on us...
we are dependent on the Customer.

The Customer is not an interruption of our work...(s)he is the purpose of it.

We are not doing a favor by serving the Customer...
(s)he is doing us a favor by giving us
the opportunity to do so.

The Customer is not someone to argue or match wits with. Nobody ever won an argument with a Customer.

The Customer is a person who brings us wants. It is our job to handle them successfully and profitably for the Customer and Ourselves.

The L.L. Bean Company

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MOMENTS OF TRUTH

**A moment of truth is a moment of customer contact.
It is also a moment when you have an opportunity
to make a difference;
and when the customer has an opportunity
to be glad you were there.**

What Are Your Moments of Truth?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Note: The concept of "Moment of Truth" came from Jan Carlzon of Scandinavian Airlines Systems. It is used extensively as a way of looking at customer contact in many books including: *How to Win Customers and Keep Them for Life* (Michael LeBoeuf) and *Service America!* (Albrecht and Zemke)

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THE CUSTOMER IS THE SCOREKEEPER OF YOUR SUCCESS!

Who are your customers?

- Ages _____
- Interests (services they are looking for) _____
- Time Limitations _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

ON WHAT ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS KEEPING SCORE?

**What do your customers expect
or want from you?**



- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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We Deserve a "E-Plus" for:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Note: "E-Plus" - or "Expectation-Plus" is another way of talking about the important concept of added value. It is discussed in the book *50 Powerful Ideas You Can Use to Keep Your Customers* , by Paul Timm. (See Bibliography)

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A Service Challenge Can Get in the Way of
Meeting Customer Expectations and Wants.
It is a Question Your Are Constantly Asking?
You Know the Questions; You Can Find the
Answers.

What are your Service Challenges?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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PARK RIDGE 3 MONTH CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN

STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME

"A satisfied customer is the best business strategy of all."

From *How to Win customers and Keep Them For Life* by Michael LeBoeuf.

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DEALING WITH DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS

OR

HOW TO TURN THE DIFFICULT CUSTOMER INTO PUZZLE YOU CAN SOLVE

- **Don't take it personally.** Assume that the customer is simply reacting in their typical way to a situation that is troubling. You can't change the customer; you might be able to change the situation - and thus defuse the reaction.
- **Stay calm and act confident.** Think of the customer as a question you can find answer for; a puzzle you can solve.
- **Listen** - let them vent - don't interrupt.
- **Empathize** with them for being in the situation. "It must be frustrating to be....."
- **Let them know you want to help;** or will find someone who can.
- **Use WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHO, HOW questions** to get the customer to describe the situation and their expectations. Begin to do this as soon as possible after the venting is over.
- **Help if you can.** Explain exactly how you will go about this. Say "Here is what I can do.....".
- **Promise only what you can realistically do.** Don't assume you must bend the rules in every situation; but be as flexible as the operation allows.
- **Know what situations allow for flexibility.**
- **Know who you can ask for help or information.**
- **Seek help for the person** instead of making them follow an information maze on their own. **WAITING FUELS A FIRE!!!!!!**
- **If the answer is no, offer alternatives to meet their wants.**

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note: There are many (hundreds) of books on customer service. These are my personal favorites. They are short, readable and contain common-sense solutions to common customer service and communication challenges.

Albrecht, Karl and Zemke, Ron. *Service America!* Homewood, Illinois: Dow Jones-Irwin, 1985.

Bolton, Robert. *People Skills*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979.

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Willingham, Ron. *Hey, I'm the Customer*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. 1992.