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## **April 2022 Monthly Sales & Service Tip**

### **Service Excellence is the Only Variable That Differentiates You from Your Competitors!**

What separates an ordinary company from an extraordinary company? Many of us can agree that it's the people within the organization. These are the people who sell and serve your customers with daily transactions that lead to lifelong relationships and business. People become your greatest asset or biggest liability. So do your customers. How can two companies compete with similar products and services and with the same quality? At the end of the day, it's all about your team members and associates and how they create a favorable impression, with a positive customer experience, that keeps your customers coming back and telling others to do the same. A company can't change until the people change. Creating a Service Excellence process begins by getting your people in alignment with your strategic initiatives and training them on the methods and procedures to change your culture with a customer focus. It's never too late to start the change! Let's explore this phenomenon together as I share my 40+ years of experience as a sales and customer service trainer.

#### **"THE CUSTOMER IS THE ENEMY"**

Customers look at your environment in one of two ways. The customer either perceives you as being pleasant and friendly with a willingness to serve, or you come across as negative, condescending and basically suffering from the syndrome, "The Customer is the Enemy." Which culture do you have at your company? Does your customer service come across as your secret weapon, or is it, "The Customer is the Enemy?" Not too long ago when I was interviewing a customer service manager, he went off on a tangent about responding and handling customer complaints in a timely manner. How many of you have lived this scenario? The sales rep promises a certain date or delivery time and operations fails to meet it! In the heat of battle with the customer, the rep blames operations, operations blames shipping and shipping blames it on the customer. That's right! The customer becomes the enemy. We laughed during our discussion, but in all seriousness, there was a major problem internally in this company. They suffered from the "Customer is the Enemy" syndrome. It wasn't surprising to hear about all of the quality, lead time issues and infighting going on with everyone blaming everyone, pointing fingers and making excuses. Meanwhile, customers were going elsewhere as the company continued down their death spiral.

#### **SERVICE EXCELLENCE IS PEOPLE SERVING PEOPLE!**

How do you compare the level of customer service now versus ten years ago? Most would say that the level of customer service has drastically declined. In fact, in many situations, there's no service at all. Computers and cell phones have jeopardized the true art of serving others. Has technology created a "self-service world" and replaced the human element of people serving people? Providing Service Excellence isn't about using the latest technology and machines. Customer service is a human experience between the service provider and the customer. In the delivery of the service or product, there are many "Points of Interaction" with the customer. These are also referred to as a "moment of truth" or "touchpoint" which occurs whenever there is a customer contact. Each "Point of Interaction" can create a positive or negative experience for the customer. But, it's always an opportunity to meet and exceed the customers' expectations. Why? Because, this is the moment when the customer forms a perception of your company, its people and its products and services. I met with a company who had the most state-of-the-art and sophisticated call center I've ever seen. It was cool! But, the organization still failed and went under due to the lack of training support. My conclusion is Service Excellence has to be a human experience and it's harder to serve each other internally than serving our customers externally!

#### **TRAINING BECOMES THE VEHICLE TO COMMUNICATE!**

In the past, I preached that training cannot solve management problems. I was wrong! Training becomes

your forum to communicate company strategies and initiatives so everyone is heading in the same direction, with a customer focus. If the company who had the state-of-the-art call center would have spent a fraction of that cost on customer service training, they would still be here today. Customer service training is not about telephone techniques and fancy slogans or themes. Customer service training should be about understanding people and dealing with personalities, especially behaviors. There's a new dawn awakening the human spirit on Service Excellence. People want and need this type of training, which helps to explain why we do what we do. Human beings need to socialize and interact with each other on more of a human level. Today, people skills are needed now more than ever before. Service Excellence is a human experience and it's emotional. When you demonstrate a willingness to serve and the customer senses it, you exceed their expectations. Remember, your company can't change its service culture unless your people change first!

## **YOUR CULTURE IS SHOWING!**

I've been privileged to have worked with some world-class customer service teams in my career. They all exhibit similar traits: strong leaders, competitive team environment with the structure and disciplines in place, along with a passion to serve people. I can sense a service culture the moment I enter their department or facility. It's a feeling or attitude displayed by all associates. It's emotional, with laughter and heightened discussions going on internally and externally. It's quite an experience to witness a true service culture, putting the customer first, and not being just all about the company. Creating a customer service culture begins internally with training your associates with the emphasis on people skills. Most of us learned these skills at home in the past from our parents and family. Unfortunately, today, the millennials may have the savviness for technology and social media, but often lack in the social skills and interaction when dealing with people. The sooner you can start developing your people, the sooner you'll witness a change in your culture, along with a team committed to raise the bar on Service Excellence in your company. Remember, it's never too late to start your change process. Good luck with your Service Excellence!

Don't miss out on this opportunity to witness some worldclass customer service training at an affordable value via remote training. **Please join us May 16-19, 2022 for four, 2-hour sessions 8am-10am ET from the security and comfort of your home or office.** Remember, Sales brings in customers...Service keeps them for LIFE! Together, we can create your customers' experience, so give us a call 937-298-7462 or email [bbutler@butlerlearningsystems.com](mailto:bbutler@butlerlearningsystems.com) for more information.

Good Luck with your Service Excellence!

Bob Butler, TSP  
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**Together Each Achieves More**

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