

A Passion For The Customer

Louisville Cardinals: A. Ray Smith

Minor League Baseball Club

Seats steam cleaned and hand wiped daily.

25 item checklist: restrooms, concourse, etc.

\$1.00 hot dogs, 75¢ beer, variety of food available.

Bands on the concourse and in the stands.

Picnic area on the concourse, fans allowed to bring their own food.

Players sign autographs before each game.

Large, professional-type scoreboard.

Multiple promotions and drawings.

Games are locally televised.

Fireworks after every game.

What Makes The Difference? *He treats the customers like they are all relatives. No gouging, clean facilities, blatantly and obviously better than the industry standard in all areas.*

Benefit To Customers: *More enjoyable atmosphere, they feel appreciated, don't feel plundered.*

Residual Benefit To Louisville Cardinals: *Maximizing price-quantity equation. Customers come regularly for fun rather than a once-in-a-while treat.*

Suggestions: *Make a list of every aspect of your business; get an idea from the list above. Survey customers to find out "What do you NOT like about (Your Industry)?" Then, write down ways to far exceed what your industry standards are. Then you must innovate--no one's going to ask for a band, but they'll sure like it.*

Key Words: *Clean, Fair, Over-deliver.*

Federal Express: Fred Smith

Overnight Delivery Service

In early days, won \$27,000 in Vegas to cover payroll.

Lets customers sound off; employees put themselves in customer's place.

Customers get response to an inquiry the same day.

Handles 200,000 calls a day.

Process 700,000 letters/packages a day.

Phone rarely rings more than one time before being picked up.

What Makes The Difference? *Operations system allows for quick response--both in package delivery and customer relations.*

Benefit To Customers: *High degree of confidence in company's ability to fulfill the big promise of Absolutely, Positively, Overnight. (Currently repositioning to respond to markets' catching up)*

Benefit To FedEx: *Customers focus on confidence rather than price. Repeat is automatic.*

Suggestions: *Find ways that your company can improve response time. One area is in operations--maybe procurement or delivery--the other is your system to handle customer inquiries and complaints. The key is the system.*

Key Words: *Response, System, Confidence.*

Worthington Industries, Columbus, Ohio: John McConnell

Steel Mill

Employees have no job description, no policy manual, no organization chart.

Quality is 5 times industry standard.

No time clock; all employees are salaried.

\$3,000 / 90 days profit sharing.

Must be voted in to profit sharing plan.

30% of stock is owned by employees: stimulates loyalty without supervisors.

No janitors--everyone cleans their own areas.

No quality control--each person responsible for their own.

No layoffs.

All employees must make sales calls.

Haircuts available for \$2 on company time.

What Makes The Difference? *The way they treat the employees. They build loyalty, dedication, and strong work ethic simply by treating everyone like they own the place--and they do.*

Benefit To Customers: *Steel that is higher quality than the average, lower defects which lowers their costs, more input which allows them to control projects.*

Benefit To Worthington Industries: *Customers choose the product for reasons other than price, reorder is almost automatic. Employees stay longer with the company and try harder.*

Suggestions: *How can you empower your employees to give them more pride in their work? Are your front liners enthusiastic, well versed, well groomed, and the epitome of what your company stands for? If not, change now.*

Key Words: *People, Empowerment, Ownership, Front Liners.*

The Limited, Columbus, OH

Women's Apparel Stores

200,000,000 garments thru distribution every year: 3 per woman per year.

26 miles of conveyors, ¾ million boxes a week.

Leases planes and ships for their exclusive use.

4 to 5 week response: industry standard 5 to 9 months.

All store cash registers linked to main headquarters.

Top 100 store managers flown to Vail for special recognition conference.

What Makes The Difference? *Operations allow them to respond quickly to fickle fashions. Commitment to responsiveness in all facets of the business, including POS information.*

Benefits To Customers: *Most current fashions will always be on the shelves, prices are substantially lower due to systemization and volume.*

Benefit to The Limited: *Repeat, repeat, repeat.*

Suggestions: *Would your customers like speedier response? Is it important in you industry? If not, find out what your customers do want. Ask--they'll tell you. Employees are more loyal.*

Key Words: *Systemization, Response, Reward.*

University NH Bank, Palo Alto, CA

Full Service Bank

No lines, all employees trained to be tellers.

Know customers by name, employees all have cards.

Stamps available at no extra charge.

No chains on pens, calculators available.
Office for customers' personal use available.
Try not to charge overdraft fees.
Employees get birthday card with \$50, and a rose on valentine's day.
Bank will deliver things to you.
Bank will open any time.
Public restrooms.
Free balloons for kids, shoeshines.
Statement day--all employees do it together.

What Makes The Difference? *Respect for the customer, enthusiasm of employees, flexibility of services.*

Benefits To Customers: *Feel less intimidated by the bank, more likely to have wants and needs met given the flexibility of the organization.*

Benefit To University NH Bank: *More customers completing more transactions--customers may be more likely to use this same bank for other financial needs given its non threatening atmosphere.*

Suggestions: *Find ways to make doing business with you less threatening and more enjoyable. Show your customers you trust them and respect them as individuals. Maintain a flexible attitude.*

Key Words: *Flexibility, Trust, Fun, Non-intimidating.*

Summary of Key Points

Fantastic Customer Service Can Be Achieved Several Ways, Including:

1. Systematizing your operations so that your products or services are the most up-to-date, always consistent and predictable to your customers, and instantly responsive to their needs.
2. Maintaining a "Flexible Attitude" that gives your customers confidence in your ability to solve their individual problems.
3. Empowering your employees thru ownership, rewards, and/or responsibility so that they have increased loyalty to you, greater interest in completely satisfying customers, and top-notch work ethics day in and day out.
4. Showing your customers that you trust them.
5. Delivering a product that far exceeds industry standards or customer expectations.
6. Listening and responding.
7. Ensuring that front liners are treated like the most important person in the company--because they are.
8. Make what others consider to be mundane, extraordinary.
9. Providing inspired leadership to your crew and customers.

Always Remember The Reward of Excellent Customer Service...

Not only will your customers consistently favor your business, they won't see your competitors as an option. Confidence will be the number one factor in any purchasing decision, price will be last. You will make more money.