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How's Your  
*Customer Service?*



Let's face it we are in the people business. The success of our churches and youth ministries is based largely upon the success of our ability to provide quality "service" to those who attend. If people have a good experience they will return. If someone likes something they will tell six friends. Be careful though, because if they don't like it they will share it with 12 friends.

We often think that our competition is other churches or youth groups in the community. Wrong! ***The competition is anyone the customer compares with you.*** McDonald's is our competition because they are committed to catering to kids. FedEx says "We are going to get the job done with speed and excellence." "Can you hear me now?" Verizon Wireless says to the customer, "We are doing a self examination to make sure we are providing the best service

possible.” The upbeat and enthusiastic voice on the American Airlines voice mail system will also be compared to your answering system. (which often sounds like someone in a pickle barrel with 5 giant marshmallows in their mouth.) All of these companies and many others set the bar. My son has worked for Chick-Fil-A for over a year and accidentally says “It is my pleasure” at home (Kim loves this). People’s expectations of church have been raised because of the standards set by other businesses and organizations within the community.



Why do some churches grow while others struggle? Generally we all do the same basic things. ***It's the little things that make the big difference.*** I believe some churches choose to do a great job versus a good job. It's the extra effort that is going to set you apart, both seen and unseen. Your attention to detail says to your members and guests, “You are valuable,” and it improves loyalty. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “What you do thunders above your head so loudly, I cannot hear the words you speak.”

***Why do customers quit?*** 1% Die; 3% move away; 5% other friendships; 9% competitive reasons; 14% product dissatisfaction; **68%** quit because of an attitude of indifference toward them by some employee (or volunteer). About a year ago I went to see a knee specialist. He was supposedly a very good doctor, but his attitude and demeanor turned me off so much in my first visit that I walked out vowing never to return. Experts in church growth tell us that people have decided within the first three minutes if they will return to our church. Therefore our return rate of first time guests is not based upon the music, preaching, or cool videos. It based upon the attitudes and warmth as they walk into our facilities. Our attitude is the difference between success and failure. The Stanford Research Institute found, “The money you make in any endeavor is determined by only 12.5% knowledge and 87.5% by your ability to deal with people.” If that principle is true in the business world then it's true even more in the people business of church. Our ability to love, value, respect, and embrace people will impact our success in connecting them to a loving God.

Rally your leadership team to train them what excellent customer service should look like at your church or ministry. Here are just a few suggestions for your staff and volunteers to get the ball rolling.

### **Sunday Morning Customer Service**

1. Cover each service you serve with prayer. It really does make a difference!
2. Know the vision and heart of our church and be able to communicate it.
3. Serve with a SMILE!
4. Make yourself familiar with the facility and know the location of the nearest restrooms and the classrooms for each age group.



5. Do everything with excellence. Continually walk the extra mile.
6. Read your bulletin when you arrive so you are familiar with the upcoming events of the church.
7. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
8. Always assist parents with small children.
9. Wear deodorant, perfume, and/or cologne.
10. Always make use of breath mints.
11. Have a positive attitude.
12. Escort people to the desired location instead of pointing.
13. Learn and use people's first names.



14. Greet everyone you meet or pass in the hallway.
15. Be a good listener. Look people in the eyes when they are talking to you.
16. Make sure your words are positive and encouraging.
17. Compliment them.
18. Address and greet their children.
19. If you don't know the answer to their question say, "Hold on, let me find someone who knows that answer."
20. If praise is our only pay to our faithful volunteers then give everyone a praise raise and always thank them for their time and service.

21. When you seem someone in the church lobby with that bewildered look of "Where do I go?" ask them, "Is there any way I can assist you this morning?"
22. Always be looking and asking, "How and where can we improve?"
23. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's prompting and leading.
24. Don't get so focused on the mission that you forget to recognize the people around you.



Quench the thirst of a generation!

*Pastor Dean*

# Just For Fun

Are You a Carrot, an Egg or a Cup of Coffee?



A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed as one problem was solved, a new one arose.

Her mother took her to the kitchen and filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to boil. In the first she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans. She let them sit and boil; without saying a word.

Twenty minutes later she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl. Turning to her daughter, she asked, 'Tell me what you see.' 'Carrots, eggs, and coffee,' she replied.

Her mother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. The mother then asked the daughter to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, the mother asked the daughter to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma. The daughter then asked, 'What does it mean, mother?'

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity: boiling water. Each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard, and unrelenting; however, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell



had protected its liquid interior, but after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. The ground coffee beans were unique because after they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

'Which are you?' she asked her daughter. 'When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Am I the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength? Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit, but after a death, a breakup, a financial hardship or some other trial, have I become hardened and stiff? Does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and hardened heart?



Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavor. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you. When the hour is the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate yourself to another level? How do you handle adversity? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?

May we all be COFFEE.

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