



ECS 008

The Gold Standard of Customer Relations

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Introduction

MANY BUSINESSES ASSUME that they already know how to deliver “good enough” customer service, but research does not back this up. It is always a good idea for a business owner to train, and retrain, staff in ways to provide great customer service. Companies that deliver high-quality customer service are more likely to retain customers and generate great word-of-mouth opinion about their business.

Customer Service Training That Reaches Rural Areas

Businesses in rural areas often must send their employees to customer service training in urban areas, or pay to have trainers come to them. Extension educators are strategically positioned to provide quality customer service training to businesses in rural areas. The Gold Standard of Customer Relations program presented here provides educators with the resources to present quality customer service training anywhere.

A Unique Approach

The Gold Standard of Customer Relations program is a unique approach to customer service. It is based on research into effective customer-business interactions. The Gold Standard frames customer service as relationships between people: customers and sales staff, employees and managers, and the business and the community. This concept is the foundation of the program, and goes beyond service to explore the relationships that sustain successful enterprises.

Adult and Teen Workshops

This curriculum has two separate presentations. One is an adult version that is best used with individuals 18 and older, or when working with a specific business with mixed ages. The other is a teen version best used with 14–18-year-olds.

The teen version includes a few more activities and is written in a format that works for employed young people, as well as for those who do not yet have jobs. Also, the workshop instructor for the teen version typically interacts with a teacher or advisor when preparing for presentation of the teen curriculum, not with a business owner.

Make Your Workshop a Success!

Delivering a high-quality customer relations program requires preparation. Treat the organization that you are working with as a partner and work with them to set program outcomes. Our curriculum provides recommendations for pre-workshop preparation, and for following up after the workshop.

Curriculum Contents

The adult and teen workshop sections each contains 1) a detailed outline for pre-workshop preparation, 2) a workshop checklist, 3) a presentation script, 4) a set of PowerPoint slides, 5) activities you may choose to include, and 6) other supplemental materials.

Why Customer Relations?

The Gold Standard of Customer Relations provides a research-based approach to employee preparation in customer relations. This introduction provides an overview of the research behind the curriculum along with reasons this curriculum works when others may fail.

Why do customers leave one business for another? In his book *How to Win Customers and Keep Them for Life*, Michael LeBoeuf reports the following reasons businesses lose customers:

- 3% of customers move away
- 5% develop other relationships
- 9% leave because the competition provides something they seek that you do not carry
- 14% are dissatisfied with the product
- 68% quit because of an attitude of indifference or rudeness toward the customer by the owner, manager, or employee

That is, fully two-thirds of customers who no longer patronize a business leave for reasons that could be controlled by a well-trained manager and staff. This is an important point for all business owners to consider. Regardless of what product or service you provide, the customer is the one who pays for the goods and ultimately determines the success of the business. If customers perceive value, they will return and encourage others to support the business, as well.

Many businesses assume that they and their employees already know how to deliver “good enough” customer service. This attitude assumes that customers are in the store seeking a product and nothing more. However, research does not back up this assumption. While most customers enter a business looking for a particular item, the quality of their experience during the transaction determines if they will return. The actions of every employee who interacts with a customer leave an impression of that business. The impression of employees—the receptionist, the salesperson, but also those behind the scenes—can be more important than the merchandise for customer retention.

For the customer, the purchase also has a psychological meaning. For example, a new car is more than a way to get to work or to the grocery store. It is more than mileage, color, or a monthly payment amount. No matter what kind of car the customer purchases, it also means status, a sense of power, and even a sense of self-worth. Customers who buy a Smart Car may be saying, “I care about the environment.” Customers who purchase a Jeep may be saying, “I am an adventuresome, outdoor person.” And, customers who buy a Lexus might be saying, “I have status and money.” Employees who understand the psychological experience of a purchase and listen to their customers will influence those customers to return for future purchases.

Think about your own experiences as a customer. You have most likely experienced both outstanding and less than outstanding customer service. According to statistics from the American Management Association, when people have a

bad experience they tell an average of 14–20 people, but when they have a good experience they only tell an average of 5–7 people. In any community, this kind of “word of mouth” can be devastating to a business. In fact, when a business delivers poor service, they must work twice as hard to repair the damage done by even one negative experience.

When businesses hire an employee, they may assume that anyone can deliver customer service. Unfortunately, the research on customer service does not back up this assumption: the kind of customer service that brings customers back again and again does not just happen. It takes forethought, planning, and training on the part of the business owner to establish a program of customer service that not only keeps customers happy, but makes them the best marketing tool for the business. Ultimately, success depends on focusing every employee, including the owner, on creating and keeping customers.

What Are Customer Relations?

Customer service has its roots in the 1950s, when organizations began to realize that customers were not an inconvenience to a business but vital to the success of their business. Customers drive businesses; they determine product or service lines, business hours, and even business location. One of the earliest understandings of customer service was written in a 1952 General Electric report, where management stated that marketing is the activity that helps the company understand and service the customer, and that marketing should drive company behavior.

The focus of the majority of customer service literature centers on frontline employees. How can employees who interact with customers be more effective in meeting the needs of the customers? From that viewpoint, typical topics of customer service workshops and literature include effective listening skills, accountability, professionalism, and conflict/anger management.

However, as we tested various workshop presentations, it became clear that businesses were searching for more than the basics. Their customers were more than just customers—they were their neighbors, families and friends.

Delivering exceptional customer service takes much more than the basics. Delivering exceptional service means treating your customer as you would like to be treated.

Customer service is the provision of service to customers before, during, and after a purchase. Customer relations is the process of building a strong relationship between a business and its customers and potential customers. This curriculum covers how to develop exceptional customer relations.

Research by Chip R. Bell demonstrated that relationships are the building blocks of customer loyalty, and that successful businesses create these sustaining personal bonds with each and every customer. The six keys or attributes presented in the curriculum (generosity, trust, vision, truth, balance, and grace) are patterned after the qualities that Bell cites in his book, *Customers As Partners*.

With the close ties common in small communities, one might think that building customer relationships would be intuitive. However, we found that this was not the case. Customer partnerships take more effort, but are more economically rewarding, can endure more mistakes, and produce more intrinsic rewards than traditional provider-to-customer encounters.

While this curriculum focuses on creating meaningful customer relationships, it is important to note that not all customers want to participate in customer partnerships. Some customers enjoy privacy and aloofness, while others may desire the “serve me” relationship. Customer relations are an art rather than a science. Business owners and employees must rely on their instincts as they get to know their customers.

At the core of customer relations are expectations. Every customer has expectations when they enter a place of business. It makes no difference whether the customer enters via the front door, by telephone, email or even “back door customers.” Each customer wants to be treated as a person—a special person.

Workshop Resources

Resources for Teen Workshop

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Further Reading

- Barlow, J., and C. Moller. 2008. *A Complaint is a Gift*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
— The gift metaphor offers a useful frame for businesses to maximize the informational value of customer complaints as they also mend relationships with those customers.
- Bell, C. 1994. *Customers As Partners*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
— This book provides an introduction to six attributes that build lasting customer partnerships.
- Bell, C., and R. Zemke. 1992. *Managing Knock Your Socks Off Service*. New York: American Management Association.
— This reference focuses on strategic approaches for management to use in developing employees who are committed to exceptional customer relationships.

- Denove, C., and J. Power, IV. 2006. *Satisfaction: How Every Great Company Listens to the Voice of the Customer*. New York: Penguin.
— These authors offer clear evidence of the importance of customer relations to business success and the role frontline employees play in building a committed customer base.
- Charthouse Learning. 1998. Catch the Fish Philosophy (18 min.). Burnsville, MN: ChartHouse Learning. <https://fishphilosophy.com/fish-philosophy-video/>.
— This lively training video illustrates customer relations from the Pike Place Fish Market in Seattle.
- Farrell, B. E., and B. Perkins. 2002. *Give 'Em the Pickle* (20 min.). Seattle: Media Partners Corporation. https://www.mediapartners.com/product/give_em_the_pickle.html.
— This entertaining motivational video on customer relations is well suited for all ages.
- Friedman, T. 2005. *The World Is Flat*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux.
— The author analyzes the implications of technological advances for global innovation.
- LeBoeuf, M. 1987. *How to Win Customers and Keep Them for Life*. New York: Putnam's Sons.
— This book offers a strategic approach to building a loyal customer base.
- Leland, K., and K. Bailey. 1999. *Customer Service for Dummies*, 2nd ed. Foster City, CA: IDF Books Worldwide.
— The authors provide a very readable review of strategies for excellent customer service.
- Lucas, R. 2011. *Please Every Customer: Delivering Stellar Customer Service across Cultures*. New York: McGraw Hill.
— The author proposes strategies for global positive service for working effectively in an increasingly diverse business environment.
- Rosenbluth, H., and D. Peters. 2002. *The Customer Comes Second*. New York: HarperBusiness.
— This book illustrates the importance of a strong culture of employee support in building a positive environment for business.
- Zemke, R., and C. Bell. 2000. *Knock Your Socks Off Service Recovery*. New York: American Management Association.
— Companies benefit through customer retention. This book shows how to win back the loyalty of customers who have encountered a problem.
- Zemke, R., and J. Woods, eds. 1998. *Best Practices in Customer Service*. New York: American Management Association.
— This compendium of articles is based on a systems approach to business, which defines relationships with suppliers and customers as integral to the organization and its success. Practical strategies are proposed for policy development, training, and practice in customer service.

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THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Preparation for Teen Workshop

1. SCHEDULING

To accommodate your school and teacher, it is important to schedule the introductory workshop at a time and place convenient to the class or group.

2. MEETING WITH THE TEACHER OR ADVISOR

At least a few days before the first workshop, organizers should meet with the teacher or advisor to explain the concepts embodied in the Gold Standard of Customer Relations curriculum.

- a. **Develop a partnership with the teacher/advisor.** Since the Gold Standard is based on partnerships with customers, it is important to establish a partnership with the teacher/advisor so that he or she understands the concepts behind the curriculum.
- b. **Concepts to cover with the teacher/advisor before the first workshop.** The Gold Standard asks participants to think differently about customer service than they may have in the past. Many participants think that customer service is about how the company handles a transaction with the customer, and that quality service involves providing a product to the customer in a clean, friendly environment. While those are important issues, research indicates that the concept of creating a relationship is essential in every part of the business.
- c. **All hands on deck.** Often, participants see the marketing department or the sales department as responsible for quality customer service. In the Gold Standard philosophy, everyone is responsible for creating a relationship with customers and is ultimately responsible for the success of the business. This includes delivery people, janitors, receptionists, and even employees that never directly interact with the customer, such as the bookkeeper.
- d. **Inform teachers/advisors of curriculum content and time needed.** We have found that some teachers/advisors like a copy of the PowerPoint slides while others are comfortable with an outline of what we will cover. Be sure to ask teachers/advisors if there are any specific topics that they want covered in the workshop. Try to work those issues in during the PowerPoint presentation. Requested issues in the past have ranged from a dress code for salespeople to orderliness of the workspace. We encourage you to customize slides so that they are appropriate for the group, perhaps altering some of the art to reflect the specific group.
- e. **After the workshop.** Let teachers/advisors know that this two-hour workshop will not change every participant's behavior. We talk about the power of reinforcement and the necessity of establishing customer relations norms that are rewarded and repeatable. We encourage teachers/advisors to incorporate the customer relations concepts into their teaching. We also encourage teachers/advisors to think of this workshop as something that they might want to repeat annually.

3. MAKE THE WORKSHOP YOUR OWN

Change or rearrange PowerPoint slides that do not fit your delivery style. Go through the script and change wording so it fits you. Add activities to customize the workshop.

- a. **Delivery.** We recommend that two people give the workshop. This is a high-energy program and we have found that two people who work well together are better able to deliver a quality program. Keep your delivery light and fun.

Personal Stories—as you deliver the program, think of your own customer relations experiences. We have provided examples in the script for two of the six keys of customer relations. You do not have to share a personal story for every key, but try to think of at least one or two to share. Try to keep your stories positive and even humorous.

- b. **Material preparation.** All materials are located in the Supplemental Materials section of this curriculum.
 - **Activities:** optional activities are available in the Supplemental Materials section. Suggestions for when to have activities during the presentation are in the Presentation Script. These are only suggestions and the workshop leader should decide whether, and when, to put them in the presentation.
 - **Key definitions:** the cornerstones of the Gold Standard workshop are the six key attributes that are discussed in the presentation. Copy the key definitions and put one on each table. These definitions will be used during the presentation as a small group activity.
 - **Participant note cards:** place these on tables and make them available for participants to use to capture their thoughts during the presentation.
 - **Inspirational quotes:** the atmosphere that we strive for in the Gold Standard of Customer Relations workshop is upbeat and inspiring. Print out several inspirational quotes and scatter them around the room to help achieve the desired atmosphere.
 - **Completion certificates:** given to participants at the end of the program. Ask the teacher/advisor for names so that you can complete the certificates ahead of time.
 - **Evaluations:** essential in determining the effectiveness of a workshop.

4. DAY OF PRESENTATION

- a. **Room set-up.** This is an important part of the successful delivery of the customer relations curriculum. We have found the most successful room set-up is to use several tables scattered around the room. While round tables are best, we often do not get a choice, and sometimes we do not get a choice about set-up, either. Be flexible! Plan for five or six people per table if the tables will accommodate that many. It doesn't matter where people sit, and many young people are more comfortable sitting with people they know.
- b. **Setting the atmosphere.** We have provided a number of inspirational quotes, and you can find more on the Internet. Perhaps you already have some that you find especially meaningful. Copy them on bright colored paper and place them on each table. Also, copy the definition of the six keys of high-quality customer relations. Put one definition on each table as there is an activity related to the definitions.

Copy the participant note cards and place these on the tables. The note cards are for the participants to make notes and take home.

Place toys on every table. We have found that even teachers/advisors have a good time playing with the toys. The toys are an icebreaker, giving everyone something to talk about. Also, toys keep hands busy if people feel out of place. Most importantly, toys move the energy level up, and provide a change of pace from what people might expect at a workshop. Appropriate toys include small balls, light-up balls, or small fish (especially if you are planning to use the "Fish" DVD or video). Dollar stores and online party favor stores are great (and inexpensive) sources of toys. A large supply of colorful pipe cleaners scattered liberally around on the tables encourages people to be creative. We sometimes put candy on the tables, as well.

Supply pens or pencils and colorful markers for people to write their names on their name tags. We prefer that people use only their first names.

- c. **Presentation visibility.** Make sure everyone can see the screen where you will display the PowerPoint slides and the video (if available). It is your choice if you hand out copies of the PowerPoint presentation. We have found that most teachers/advisors want a copy, so it may be best to provide that with the other handouts.
- d. **Large easel and pad.** Set up an easel and large pad of paper. We use the easel for a warm-up activity, and it also provides a great place to keep track of what people say. We provide teachers/advisors with a Word document with everyone's comments within a few weeks of the workshop.



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Checklist for Teen Workshop

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ LCD projector and screen
- ☐ Laptop with PowerPoint presentation
- ☐ Speakers that connect to laptop
- ☐ Extension cord
- ☐ Easel pad and stand

COPIES

- ☐ Inspirational Quotes (print on bright color paper)
- ☐ Key Definitions
- ☐ Participant Note Cards
- ☐ Completion Certificates
- ☐ Participant Evaluations
- ☐ Activities
- ☐ Key Definition activity
- ☐ Vision Statement (optional)
- ☐ PowerPoint Handout (optional)
- ☐ Other_____

OTHER

- ☐ Toys or candy for tables
- ☐ Pens, pencils, markers
- ☐ Nametags



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Script for Teen Workshop

OBJECTIVE: *In this two-hour workshop, participants will learn the values of delivering outstanding service, the six keys of customer relations, and how they can consistently deliver that service. This script is meant as a guide. Please read through it entirely before presenting the material. Learn the presentation and answer any questions you might have before giving the presentation. When presenting, do not read directly from the script. Add any personal experiences you may have that apply. If you have any questions about the content of a slide, review the references. If you still do not feel comfortable with the content of a slide before presenting it, omit the slide from the presentation.*

When using this curriculum it is recommended that you include hands-on activities to keep your participants engaged (see the Supplemental Materials Section for activities). Feel free to use them wherever you feel they fit within the presentation. We recommend doing at least two to three activities to keep the group engaged.



SLIDE 1: THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Introduction: Presenters make introductions; take care of housekeeping items (sign-ins, registrations, location of restrooms, refreshments, etc.).

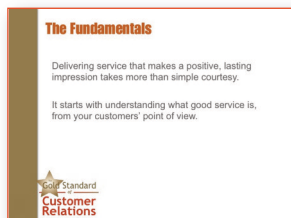


SLIDE 2: WHAT KIND OF JOBS?

What are some of the jobs that you hold right now, during the summer, or you might get shortly after you leave high school?

You are probably not going to be a bank president or CEO of a major company.

We all have to work our way up to these positions and most of the jobs we have will require good customer relations skills.



SLIDE 3: THE FUNDAMENTALS

Delivering service that makes a positive, lasting impression takes more than simple courtesy. It starts with understanding what good service is, from the customer's point of view.

Customer relations go beyond just being courteous. Service providers begin to provide good customer service when they think of customer relations from their customer's point of view.

We have all been customers. Through the course of this presentation, think of one excellent experience you have had as a customer and one

negative experience you have had. How can you provide your customers with the excellent experience every time? What can you do to prevent the negative experience from happening to your customers?



SLIDE 4: WHAT DO YOU SEE?

What do you see in this picture?

Instructor Note: Allow a few minutes for the participants to examine the picture.

You should see a frog.

Point out the frog.

The point of looking at this picture is that when working in customer relations, it is important to look for ways to provide unexpected service for your customers. Look for the hidden opportunities to provide your customers a positive experience.

Your customer service can often directly affect your paycheck, such as when working in a position that is paid on commission or receives income through tips. By looking for ways to provide unexpected service, you are setting yourself apart from other employees and the customer is more likely to be a loyal customer of yours.



SLIDE 5: HOW CAN YOU PROVIDE UNEXPECTED EXPERIENCES?

What opportunities are there in your work where you can provide something extra or special for your customers? Research shows that people are willing to pay a little more for something if they get great customer service. Also, keep in mind that your first jobs will be references for when you finish school and start applying for your career choices. You want excellent recommendations from former employers.



SLIDE 6: CUSTOMER RELATIONS IS ABOUT: ATTITUDE

We all have a choice when it comes to our jobs. We can choose to be in a bad mood and therefore have a bad day and maybe treat our customers poorly, or we can choose to put a smile on our face and have a good day. Choosing to be in a good mood can have a direct effect on how you treat your customers.

Customers do not care what is going on in your life—whether or not you had a fight with your significant other, or you stayed out too late. These things are unimportant to them. However, they will remember if they received poor service from someone with a poor attitude. Sometimes we just have to play the part of someone who loves their job and loves to be there.

Make your customers your number one priority and remember to provide exceptional service to them. This will ensure that they are repeat customers. Repeat customers are what keep businesses going and give you job security. You may not have a job that deals directly with the customer, but your job does have an effect on that customer. If you are a cook at a restaurant you may never actually speak with the customers, but how you do your job determines whether or not they will enjoy their meal and return again.



SLIDE 7: HOSPITALITY HABITS— MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

What does the customer experience in the first six seconds upon entering the business? Is it clean, neat, warm, and inviting? Is the outside neat and inviting? Is it somewhere that people will want to come back to?

Start each interaction with the right attitude; whether it is 8 a.m. or 5 p.m., attitude makes all the difference.

Greet your customers within one minute. People like to be noticed, but it isn't necessary to immediately hover over them unless they have questions or problems that they need help with. Also, in a retail situation, acknowledging customers can reduce shoplifting because they will know you know they are there, and they have been noticed.

Be courteous, smile sincerely, and maintain eye contact. Show a genuine interest in your customers. They chose your place of business to spend their money. It costs you nothing to show appreciation.

Build rapport with your customers. Get to know their names, especially if you have repeat customers (and that is the goal). People are habitual and will frequent places where they feel comfortable.

Always look your very best. Dress for what is appropriate for your clientele. This is where it is imperative that you know your customers. It is always best to lean toward the conservative. Self-expression is a great thing, on your own time. Many companies will have a policy on this.



Optional Activity: Determine what kind of first impression you make on customers, using the First Impressions activity included in the Supplemental Materials section.



SLIDE 8: HOSPITALITY HABITS—KNOW YOUR JOB

It is important to know the full name and spelling of your place of business. Customers will ask you from time to time where you're located and how to spell the name. If you can't answer them, it doesn't look very good for the business.

Also, knowing the address, phone number, and directions for how to get to your business will come in handy. If you can't give directions to your business or the telephone number to a customer, you can't expect them to become customers, can you?

The best thing you can do for the customer is to learn about the products and services that your business offers, as well as how to run equipment. For instance, if you work in a salon and you have no idea what services the salon offers, you won't be of much help to a customer calling to inquire about them.

It is also important to learn policies and procedures for a business. This particularly comes in handy when dealing with a problem customer. You need to be able to answer questions effectively or at least be able to point the customer in the direction of someone who can help them. Giving customers the run around or just saying "Gee, I don't know what to do" doesn't cut it. The customer wants action and wants it quickly.



Optional Activity: A variety of activities could be used here. We recommend the Human Web activity, included in the Supplemental Materials section.



SLIDE 9: HOSPITALITY HABITS—KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

It is important that businesses help each other in small communities. Know how to give easy-to-follow directions to other businesses and attractions within the community. If you aren't familiar with the

community, educate yourself. Visitor bureaus will have maps. If you are working in a portal business (hotels, restaurants, c-stores, or gas stations), you will be asked for directions daily.

The longer travelers can be kept in town, the more money they will circulate. Be able to describe main attractions and major events taking place. Give visitors interest in the community, or give them a reason to come back. Research has shown that travelers spend most of their money in communities two ways: meals and hotel rooms.



Optional Activity: Understand the importance of learning about your community with the Where Can I Get It activity, included in the Supplemental Materials section.



SLIDE 10: HOSPITALITY HABITS—COMMUNICATE CLEARLY

Two essential things you can do in your job are to be observant and listen to your customers. Much of what we say as human beings is nonverbal, so paying attention to your customers' verbal and nonverbal cues can help you better assist them.

You need to recognize the feelings of your customers, especially if your customer is upset. Many times, you can put your customers at ease when they see that someone understands what they are going through. By recognizing these feelings, you will have a better chance of understanding the problem and how to help the customer.

Asking questions can make your job a whole lot easier. You need to be willing to ask the customer questions. Think about being a customer yourself; sometimes we're not clear with the employee about what we are looking for. So as the employee, ask questions until you understand what the customer wants.

Being a reliable employee is very important to your employer. You always want to do what you say you're going to do and do it right the first time.



Optional Activity: Emphasize the importance of listening skills and verbal communication by using the Partner Drawing activity, included in the Supplemental Materials section.



SLIDE 11: HOSPITALITY HABITS— HANDLE PROBLEMS EFFECTIVELY

Listen carefully to the customer's explanation of the problem. Often, people just want someone to listen. After they have been given a chance to vent, then practical solutions can be determined. Do not get into an argument with a customer.

Use common sense to identify solutions when possible. Make solutions quick and effective, but be sure you don't break company policy in doing so. For example, if the policy states no item of clothing may be returned after wearing, then that policy must be followed. It is very important the customer is aware of such policies BEFORE they complete the purchase.

If you can't solve the problem, connect the customer with someone who can, such as a manager. They may have the ability to offer solutions other employees don't. It is important to be responsive to customer concerns. Research shows that 68% of customers quit a business because of an attitude of indifference.



Optional Activity: Emphasize the importance of listening skills and verbal communication by using the Problem Customer activity (included in the Supplemental Materials section) and engage participants by sharing customer relations experiences.



SLIDE 12: HOSPITALITY HABITS— MAKE A GOOD LAST IMPRESSION

Making a good last impression is something we need to always remember to do. It is essential to make sure customers leave happy and satisfied with the service they received. This can be as simple as asking customers if they found everything they were looking for or if all their questions had been answered.

Always thank customers for coming in and invite them back—use their name if you know it. Customers like to feel wanted and appreciated, so do your best to make them feel this way.

Instructor Note: Select a short customer relations video to view. We have found that a video adds value and energy to the presentation. See the References and Resources list for suggested videos.



SLIDE 13: IT REALLY COMES DOWN TO...

Treating others as you would like to be treated!



SLIDE 14: CONCLUSION

This concludes our presentation today. do you have any questions?

We have a short survey we would like you to take. Please do not put your name on it and when you are done, leave it on the table.



Activities

We present five activities below that can be used during your Gold Standard workshop. We suggest that you use activities to: 1) loosen up all participants and make them feel involved, early in the workshop; and 2) re-direct attention when participants appear tired or distracted during the workshop.

ACTIVITY 1: HUMAN WEB

Time

30 minutes

Supplies

Long ball of yarn or string, pillow (size appropriate for the size of web to be built)

What to do

Have the group stand in a circle. Using a ball of yarn or string, hold the end and toss it across the circle. Have the person who catches the ball of yarn toss the yarn across the circle in turn, while taking hold of a piece of yarn. Continue this until everyone is holding onto the yarn. Be sure to remind everyone to keep the yarn tight. This will form a web in the center of the circle. When everyone is holding a piece of the yarn, place a pillow (appropriate for the size of the web) in the center of the web. This illustrates that, if everyone works together, everything is held together and works smoothly.

Then let go of your piece of yarn. Have everyone let go in the order in which the yarn was thrown to them. Slowly, the support for the pillow lessens and the pillow will eventually drop, demonstrating what happens when people start to slack off.

Have a group discussion about what they feel the yarn represents and what the pillow represents. Then have a discussion about the symbolism of the pillow dropping. Ask the group, how can we all prevent the pillow from dropping in the future?

ACTIVITY 2: WHERE CAN I GET IT?

Time

20 minutes

Supplies

Laminated cards with items written on them (see below), markers

What to do

Begin by having groups make a list of the types of customers they see and what these customers need. Then hand out the laminated cards (see below), one per group. The laminated cards list items (such as fly fishing pole, water toys) that the customer would like to purchase. The group will discuss where in their community would be a good place to send this individual for this item (have them try to come up with locally owned business, if it is possible for that community).

Have each group share their item and where they would send the customer, then have them give the directions to that location.

Examples for *Where Can I Get It?*

Make a card for each request from the list below.

Hunting/fishing license	Hiking boots	Laundromat
Alternator	Bicycle tire	Grocery store (local, not large chain)
Swim suit	Stocking hat	Send a fax
Dinner for family of six: short wait time	Art (local)	Mail drop box

ACTIVITY 3: FIRST IMPRESSIONS**Time**

10-15 minutes

Supplies

Note cards for each participant, two photographs of people from magazines or the Internet. The photos should depict two distinctly different people so that participants can have two noticeably different reactions to them.

What to do

Post the first photo in front of the group. Have participants write down their first reaction on a note card. Remind them not to filter their reaction, but to be honest. Post the second photo and have the participants write down their first reaction to that picture on the note card.

As a group, have people discuss their first reactions. Then have a discussion about how our first reactions are not always fair, and how they can change the way they treat people.

ACTIVITY 4: PARTNER DRAWING

Time

30 minutes

Supplies

Copies of house and flower pictures for each person, blank paper, and pencil for each participant.

What to do

Have everyone pair up into groups of two. When this is done, explain to the group that even though we may feel we are listening to what someone is saying, we don't always hear them. This activity will focus on how well people listen to each other. Have one person go to the left of the room and the other person to the right. At these locations, hand each person a piece of paper with either a picture of a house or a flower on it. They are to reconnect with their partners at this time but they are not to show each other their pictures.

Have each group decide who will draw first (Player A) and the other person (Player B) will describe what is on their paper to Player A. Player A is to draw what is being described by Player B. This is to be done with their backs to one another.

After 10 minutes have them switch and now Player A will describe what to draw to Player B. Allow 10 minutes to complete their sketch. When time is up, have them compare pictures of what they drew to what was described to them.

Have a discussion about what they learned while doing this. Ask them what was most difficult about the drawing portion and what was the most difficult about the describing portion of the exercise.

ACTIVITY 5: THE PROBLEM CUSTOMER

Time

25 minutes

Supplies

Laminated card for each group with a problem situation/customer description on it (see below), markers

What to do

Have everyone get into small groups. Hand out a problem situation/customer to each group. Allow 15 minutes for groups to discuss how they would deal with this customer. Have each group give a short presentation of what their situation/customer was and what they came up with as a solution(s).

Problem customer situations

Print a card for each situation below.

A customer is upset and yelling at you. He is making a scene in front of other customers.

A customer is unhappy with the service she has been given, and feels you are not helping. She would like to speak with your superior, who is not available.

A customer calls you on the phone. He feels your company has wronged him and would like you to fix it.

You are a pregnant married woman who no longer wears her wedding ring because of swelling. The customer makes a comment about how unmarried women should not have babies.

You can't find a customer's reservation or appointment.

You suspect a customer of stealing.

The customer approaches the employee and asks her to make an exception for a long-standing rule of the company. The employee lacks the authority to make the exception.

GENEROSITY

1. Characterized by noble or forbearing spirit.
2. Liberal in giving.
3. Marked by abundance or ample proportions.

TRUST

1. A reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, or justice of another person or thing; faith; reliance.
2. Confident expectation, anticipation, or hope.

VISION

1. Something seen in a dream.
2. The act or power of imagination.
3. The act or power of seeing; the special sense by which the qualities of an object constituting its appearance are perceived and mediated by the eye.
4. Something seen.
5. A lovely or charming sight.

TRUTH

1. Reality; actuality.
2. Sincerity; integrity; honesty.

BALANCE

1. A state of equilibrium.
2. A harmonious or satisfying arrangement or proportion of elements.

GRACE

1. Beauty or charm of form, composition, movement, or expression.
2. An attractive quality, feature, or manner.



Teen Workshop

What 3 things will you take away from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.



Teen Workshop

What 3 things will you take away from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.



Teen Workshop

What 3 things will you take away from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.



Teen Workshop

What 3 things will you take away from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Teen Workshop

Inspirational Quotes

Live your life so that your children can tell their children that you not only stood for something wonderful—you acted on it.

—Unknown

If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow.

—Unknown

Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.

—Mother Theresa

By being grateful, people make themselves deserving of yet another kindness.

—Nigerian Proverb

Most of the important decisions are not made by generals.

—Unknown

Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.

—Plato

Doing your best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment.

—Oprah Winfrey

No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave.

—Calvin Coolidge

No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he only had good intentions.

—Margaret Thatcher

To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity.

—Donald A. Adams

The smallest good deed is better than the grandest good intention.

—Joseph Duquet

If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.

—Booker T. Washington

A problem is a chance for you to do your best.

—Duke Ellington

The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said.

—Peter Drucker

Most conversations are just alternating monologues. The question is: is there any real listening going on?

—Leo Buscaglia

What you want to be eventually, you must be everyday. With practice, the quality of your deeds gets down to your soul.

—Frank Crane

We keep moving forward, opening up new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.

—Walt Disney

You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.

—Christopher Robin

We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.

—Winston Churchill

There is no one I cannot teach something to, and no one from whom I cannot learn something.

—Unknown

We advance toward our destiny when we encourage others to reach theirs.

—Paul Wessellmann

You will not be known for the fruit you pick but by the trees you plant.

—Proverb



The purpose of life is to discover your gift. The meaning of life is giving your gift away.
—David Viscott

A person rarely succeeds at anything unless they have fun doing it.
—Robert E. Farrell

You never get a second chance to make a first impression.
—Robert E. Farrell

Customers have only as much power over your mood as you allow.
—Unknown

Motivation is everything. You can do the work of two people, but you can't be two people. Instead, you have to inspire the next person down the line and get him to inspire his people.
—Lee Iacocca

The quality of any product or service is what the CUSTOMER says it is.
—James Balkcom

There is only one boss. The customer. And, he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down simply by spending his money somewhere else.
—Sam Walton

Don't worry about profits, worry about service.
—Thomas Watson, Sr.



Certificate of Completion

has completed the 2-hour introductory course in customer relations



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Evaluation–Teen Workshop

Please answer the following questions by rating yourself from 1 to 5 (1 = don't agree at all and 5 = I very much agree with the statement). Your answers should be based on how you feel now that you have completed the workshop.

1. Customer relations are skills all employees should use.
 - 1 Don't agree at all
 - 2 Disagree
 - 3 Don't know
 - 4 Agree
 - 5 Very much agree
2. By choosing your attitude each day, you determine what kind of day you will have at work.
 - 1 Don't agree at all
 - 2 Disagree
 - 3 Don't know
 - 4 Agree
 - 5 Very much agree
3. The number one priority of all employees in a business should be to take care of the needs of the customer.
 - 1 Don't agree at all
 - 2 Disagree
 - 3 Don't know
 - 4 Agree
 - 5 Very much agree
4. An essential part of customer relations is to know about the products and services you and the business provide.
 - 1 Don't agree at all
 - 2 Disagree
 - 3 Don't know
 - 4 Agree
 - 5 Very much agree
5. It is important to know your community: the activities going on around town and the other businesses that are available.
 - 1 Don't agree at all
 - 2 Disagree
 - 3 Don't know
 - 4 Agree
 - 5 Very much agree

6. Customer relations is about treating others as you would like to be treated.

- 1 Don't agree at all
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Don't know
- 4 Agree
- 5 Very much agree

Please answer the following questions.

7. What did you learn today that you plan to use in the future?

8. What could be done to make this presentation better?



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Preparation for Adult Workshop

1. SCHEDULING

To accommodate your business partner, it is important to schedule the introductory workshop at a time and place convenient to the business. We encourage managers to pay employees for their time in the workshop, and back-to-back workshops can be scheduled so that some employees participate while other staff maintain normal work schedules. At the end of the first workshop, participants can rotate so that everyone participates in the training workshop.

2. MEETING WITH THE BUSINESS OWNER OR MANAGER

At least a few days before the first workshop, organizers should meet with the general manager or owner to explain the concepts embodied in the Gold Standard of Customer Relations.

- a. **Develop a partnership with the manager.** Since the Gold Standard is based on partnerships with customers, it is important to establish a partnership with the manager so that he or she understands the concepts behind the curriculum. The Gold Standard may require a change of mindset for the manager. More than one meeting may be necessary.
- b. **Concepts to cover with the manager before the first workshop.** The Gold Standard asks managers and employees to think differently about customer service than they may have in the past. Many managers think that customer service is defined by the way the company handles transactions with customers, and that quality service involves providing a product to the customer in a clean, friendly environment. While those are important issues, research indicates that the concept of creating a relationship is essential in every part of the business.
- c. **All hands on deck.** Often, managers see the marketing department or the sales department as responsible for quality customer service. In the Gold Standard philosophy, every employee is responsible for creating a relationship with customers and is ultimately responsible for the success of the business. This includes delivery people, janitors, receptionists, and employees that never directly interact with the customer, such as the bookkeeper. This philosophy is important to convey to the manager. We expect that every employee will attend the Gold Standard introductory workshop.
- d. **Inform managers of curriculum content and time needed.** We have found that some managers like a copy of the PowerPoint presentation while others are comfortable with an outline of what we will cover. At this time, we advise that the workshop organizer ask managers if there are any issues that the manager would like covered; those issues should be included somewhere during the workshop. Examples of issues brought up by managers have ranged from a dress code for salespeople to orderliness in the workspace. While none of these are the core of the curriculum, we find that accommodating the manager's wishes is one way to develop a relationship with that manager and get a sense of what is happening in the business. In fact, we encourage you to customize slides so that they are appropriate for the business. For example, along with adding what the manager wants covered, you might adjust the art to reflect the business. For a golf resort, we used a great deal of clip art that reflected golfing.



- e. **Owners and managers are key.** We have found that some business owners blame employees when customer service does not meet high standards. We want managers to understand that quality service is a top-down philosophy. In the Gold Standard curriculum, managers are the personal role model for the people they employ. Employees see the manager deal with and talk about peers, contemporaries, employees, and customers, and this usually conveys what the REAL rules are in the organization. Likewise, how the manager rewards employees clearly tells them what is important.
- f. **Set clear standards.** We have worked with businesses that do not have customer service detailed in job descriptions and do not set standards with employees for what the manager considers quality customer service. It is vital that managers set clear goals for what is expected of employees when dealing with customers, models that behavior, and rewards the behavior when employees do a great job. The reward does not have to be financial (although that helps). The reward can be a verbal pat on the back, a special parking space for customer relations employee of the month, or extra time off, if that is valuable to the employee. It is important that managers understand what employees value so that rewards are appropriate; and this leads to a manager-employee relationship based on mutual understanding. Relationships within the business are as important as relationship with customers. If the workplace has employees who do not feel valued or do not receive recognition when they do well, customers quickly pick up on the negative atmosphere.
- g. **External customers.** Customer service is also important with those providing a product or service to the business. They deserve the same kind of customer relations as do paying customers. Why? Because they also tell others about the service they received at your business.
- h. **After the workshop.** Let managers know that this two-hour workshop will not solve all of their customer relations problems, nor will it change every employee's behavior. We talk about the power of reinforcement and the necessity of establishing customer relations norms that are rewarded and repeatable. We encourage managers to meet weekly or bi-weekly with employees to review the concepts of the workshop. We also encourage managers to think of this workshop as something that they might want to repeat annually. We remind managers that behavior change takes time. When employees are back on the job, they may forget most of what they learned unless managers encourage and support the application of the new information and skills. Managers create that supportive environment through rewards, "quality control" meetings to remind everyone about workshop concepts and behaviors.

3. MAKE THE WORKSHOP YOUR OWN

Change or rearrange PowerPoint slides that do not fit your delivery style. Go through the script and change wording so it fits you. Add activities to customize.

- a. **Delivery.** We recommend that two people give the workshop. This is a high-energy program and we have found that two people who work well together are better able to deliver a quality program. Keep your delivery light and fun. Personal stories are important. As you deliver the program, think of your own customer relations experiences. You do not have to share a personal story for every key, but try to think of at least one or two to share. We have provided examples in the script for two of the six keys of customer relations. Try to keep your stories positive and humorous.
- b. **Material preparation.** All materials are located in the Supplemental Materials section. These include:
 - **Activities:** optional activities are available in the workshop materials section. Suggestions for scheduling activities during the workshop are given in the Presentation Script. They are only suggestions and the workshop leader should feel free to schedule activities as they wish.
 - **Key definitions:** the cornerstones of the Gold Standard workshop are the six key attributes that are discussed in the presentation. Copy the key definitions and put one definition on each table. These definitions will be used during the presentation as a small group activity.
 - **Participant note cards:** placed on tables and available for participants to capture their thoughts during the presentation.
 - **Inspirational quotes:** the atmosphere that we strive for in the Gold Standard of Customer Relations workshop is upbeat and inspiring. Print out several inspirational quotes and scatter them around the room to help achieve the desired atmosphere.
 - **Completion certificates:** given to participants at the end of the program. Ask the manager for names so that you can complete the certificates ahead of time
 - **Evaluations:** evaluation surveys are essential in determining the effectiveness of a program.
- c. **Customer service video.** Select a short customer relations video to view—this video adds value and energy to the presentation. Two suggestions are “Catch the Fish Philosophy” and “Give ‘em the Pickle.” Both are listed in References and Resources. Find a video that works with your presentation style and audience. Many sources provide discounts to educational institutions.



4. DAY OF PRESENTATION

- a. **Room set-up.** This is an important part of the successful delivery of the customer relations curriculum. We have found the most successful room set-up is to use several tables scattered around the room. While round tables are best, we often do not have a choice, and sometimes we do not have a choice about set-up. Be flexible! Plan for five or six people per table if the tables will accommodate that many. It doesn't matter where people sit. For many, this is the first workshop they have attended on customer service (this is especially true for delivery people, groundskeepers, and janitors) and they are more comfortable sitting with people they know.
- b. **Setting the atmosphere.** We have provided a number of inspirational quotes. You can find more on the Internet or perhaps you already have some that you find especially meaningful. Copy them on bright colored paper and place them on each table. Also, copy the definition of the six keys of high-quality customer relations and place one definition on each table as there is an activity related to the definitions.

Print out and prepare the participant note cards and place on the tables. These note cards are for the participants to use for notes and take home.

Place toys on every table. We have found that even managers have a good time playing with the toys. The toys are an icebreaker, giving everyone something to talk about and toys keep hands busy if people feel out of place. Most importantly, toys move the energy level up, and provide a change of pace from what people might expect at a workshop. Appropriate toys include small balls, light-up balls, or small fish (especially if you are planning to use the Fish DVD or video). Dollar stores and on-line party favor stores are great (and inexpensive) sources of toys. A large supply of colorful pipe cleaners scattered liberally about the table encourages people to be creative.

Supply pens or pencils and colorful markers for people to write their names on their name tags. We prefer that people use first names and no titles. We sometimes also put candy on the tables.

- c. **Visibility.** Make sure everyone can see the screen where you will display the PowerPoint presentation and DVD (if available). It is your choice if you hand out a copy of the presentation. We have found that most businesses want a copy, so it may be best to provide that with the other handouts.
- d. **Large easel and pad.** Set up an easel and pad. We use the easel for a warm-up activity, and it provides a great place to keep track of what people say. We provide managers with a Word document copy of everyone's comments within a few weeks of the workshop.



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Checklist for Adult Workshop

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ LCD projector and screen
- ☐ Laptop with PowerPoint presentation
- ☐ Speakers that connect to laptop
- ☐ Extension cord
- ☐ Easel pad and stand

COPIES

- ☐ Inspirational Quotes (print on bright color paper)
- ☐ Key Definitions
- ☐ Participant Note Cards
- ☐ Completion Certificates
- ☐ Participant Evaluations
- ☐ Activities
- ☐ Key Definition activity
- ☐ Vision Statement (optional)
- ☐ PowerPoint Handout (optional)
- ☐ Other _____

OTHER

- ☐ Toys or candy for tables
- ☐ Pens, pencils, markers
- ☐ Nametags



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Script for Adult Workshop

OBJECTIVE: *Participants will learn the values of delivering outstanding service, the six keys of customer relations, and how they can consistently deliver that service.*

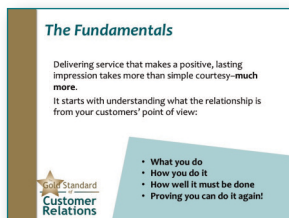
This script is meant as a guide. Please read through it entirely before presenting the material. Learn the presentation and answer any questions you might have before giving the presentation. When presenting, do not read directly from the script. Add any personal experiences you may have that apply. If you have any questions about the content of a slide, review the references. If you still do not feel comfortable with the content of a slide before presenting it, omit the slide from the presentation.



SLIDE 1: THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Welcome and introductions. Compliment the company if you received good service when you entered the location, before anyone knew why you were there. If you did not receive good service, say nothing about it, but go right into the next paragraph:

In Extension **(or insert your profession here)**, we all travel a great deal—and, we get to know what quality customer service looks like. To be honest, I often see exceptional service, and now I even find I thank people for providing excellent service. But, I also see bad-mannered and unresponsive people who I am paying for a service or product. If I were to categorize the service I see as I shop and travel, I would place that service into three levels: offensive, mediocre and exceptional. According to your customers, which of the three are you delivering?



SLIDE 2: THE FUNDAMENTALS

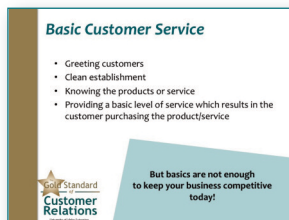
Delivering service that makes a positive, lasting impression takes more than simple courtesy—much more. It starts with understanding the relationship from your customers' point of view. Customer service is understanding what you do, how you do it, how well it must be done, and proving you can do it again!

Today, we are going to talk about how to deliver the exceptional service that we all want to receive, but often do not. We are going to let you in on the secret of how to deliver that exceptional service that makes a lasting impression. But first, we would like to ask you what you think are the fundamentals of good customer service.



ACTIVITY: Use an easel and pad to write down responses from the audience. If no one speaks up, you may have to ask someone directly. After 8-10 responses, place the pad to the side. We have found that most responses are positive so we can reward the audience and tell them that they already know many of the qualities of good service.

Now that we have seen some of the fundamentals of exceptional customer service, we must learn how to deliver it every day and in every encounter.



SLIDE 3: BASIC CUSTOMER SERVICE

This slide shows the attributes many companies consider the basics of customer service. While all of these are essential, delivering exceptional service takes much more than this.

We categorize these traits as good basic customer service. All of these serve a purpose and some, like greeting the customer and knowing your product or service, are more important than others. In our current economy, these basics are not enough. You must deliver exceptional service if you expect to not only sell enough to stay in business, but sell enough so your business thrives and has enough customer loyalty to withstand the pressures of the years ahead.

I am here today to talk about more than the basics. We will talk about what we define as the essentials of exceptional service.



SLIDE 4: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

Delivering exceptional customer service takes much, much more than the basics. Delivering exceptional service is more than remembering the golden rule—treat your customer as you would like to be treated.

The golden rule is a good place to start in service, because it helps you put yourself in your customers' shoes and look at your business from their point of view. However, it is not a good place to stop, because delivering exceptional service takes more.

After the next slide, please throw something at me if I slip up and say Customer Service. I want to talk to you about Customer Relations. You all have been provided with things to throw, so use them.....

I really want you to take home the idea of customer relations (*repeat*):

relations, instead of service. This means developing a relationship with every customer who enters your front door or your back door, comes via the computer terminal or over the phone, sends a request by mail or sends their husband in to your store to buy mascara. Each customer is there to fill a personal need.

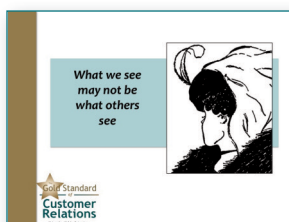
It is your job to develop enough of a relationship to find out what that need is, and fill it.

That is much more than ringing up the sale, putting the mascara in the bag, and taking his money. It may be listening as he asks you if this shade is the darkest they sell as his wife wanted the darkest black/brown mascara. You may then say, "Yes, it is the shade I think she wants, and you are a good husband to do this for your wife—most men would not." It happens that I witnessed that exchange in a store recently, and I think that man will be back when he wants something else because the cashier made it a personal relationship of sorts, not just a sale.

Instructor Note: All the customer relations stories are provided as examples. Make the presentation your own and insert your own personal stories.

Maybe because of our technical environment where everyone can communicate without ever seeing the other party, people long for a personal touch. The cashier in that store provided it.

If you learn nothing more today, please take away this message: if you establish a relationship with customers instead of taking a basic service approach, you will be miles ahead of your competition. Yes, this takes more work, but people have learned tricks—some I can pass on to you today.



SLIDE 5: WHAT WE SEE MAY NOT BE WHAT OTHERS SEE

Today is all about challenges, and our first challenge to you is to shift your thinking or your paradigm. I want you to change your paradigm from customer service to customer relationships.

To help you make a paradigm shift, look at this slide. What do you see? Is this an old woman or a young one? When we first look at the picture we may see one or the other. As you looked for the second image you had to shift your perception or paradigm. That is, you had to look below the surface.

The same thing is expected in delivering exceptional customer relations. Delivering this “wow” experience is about looking below the surface and finding what the customer needs—it is about developing a relationship with the people who are the essential part of EVERYTHING YOU DO.

So, look below the surface. What do your customers value?



SLIDE 6: CUSTOMER RELATIONS ADVANTAGE

When your company focuses on customer relationships instead of just selling a product or service, you look for what the customer expects from the product or service and then you provide it.

According to research, customers do not really buy products or services. Instead, they buy the improvement in their life or the BENEFITS they EXPECT to get from those products or services. It is every employee’s job to figure out what that benefit is and to not only meet, but to surpass the customers’ expectations.

Companies that focus on the delivery and improvement of benefits have a competitive advantage over companies that only focus on the product or service and neglect what benefit each customer is looking for from that product or service.



SLIDE 7: WHY CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Bullet 1. Customer relations quality is based on a customer’s ideal expectations. Ideal expectations are very difficult to change. Every customer who enters your business—either through the front door, via the telephone or email, or even the back door customer, wants and deserves star treatment. Customers talk to you, not to a company. Customers think of themselves as people, not as customers, and it is not enough to serve customers, you have to truly **care** about them.

Bullet 2. So why did we choose the phrase “Customer Relations?”

Think about how language structures our environment. Often times just a word itself will invoke strong opinions or feelings. What does the word “service” mean to you?

Instructor Note: You may choose to capture the responses on the pad on the easel.

For example, we have strong opinions about those who work in public **service**. People are drafted into the **service**.

The word service is related to the words servant and servitude. In Latin, the root word “servus” means slave—a very loaded word.

When we say or think the word “service,” all of our previous experiences and beliefs about the word surface. For employees, those previous connotations may KEEP them from delivering a customer-caring experience.

When put together, the connotation of the word service, and often the location of the customer service department, it makes one wonder why on earth would anyone ever go into customer service.

Bullet 3. Now imagine you are a new employee hired to provide the Gold Standard of Customer Relations. During your orientation, you learn about the company's vision, mission, and values, and you hear something you CANNOT BELIEVE YOU ARE HEARING.

You hear:

“At this company we don’t have a customer service department. In fact, we don’t provide customer service. We see the customer as the reason we are in business. Our only motivation is to create happy customers. In order to do that, we don’t want you to do customer service. We would like you to see your job as customer CARE. That means that you will create a relationship, actively and vigorously, with everyone with whom we do business.”



SLIDE 8: SIX KEYS OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

To provide that kind of relationship, we have divided the Gold Standard of Customer Relations into six attributes. We pulled these six attributes from the histories of successful businesses—businesses that weathered economic storms and continued to do things better than other companies. Companies who remained in business while those who offered gimmicks and made promises they could not keep went under.

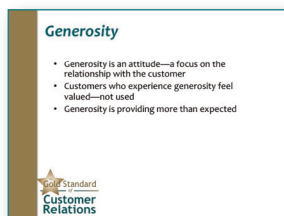
We then researched literature on business in general and again found these six attributes (or keys) to be at the heart of the customer relationships of companies that deliver the “wow” treatment you want for your customers.

- Powerful relationships are anchored in an attitude of generosity—a “giver” perspective that finds pleasure in extending the relationship beyond just meeting a need or requirement.
- Powerful relationships are grounded in trust. Partners don’t spend energy looking over their shoulders, but instead take a leap of faith and rely on the relationship.
- Powerful relationships are bolstered by a joint purpose, or vision. While this purpose is rarely “written down,” each partner has a vision of what the association could be, and a commitment to take the relationship to a higher plane.
- Powerful relationships are coalitions laced with honesty. Truth and candor are seen as tools for growth, rather than devices for disdain. Partners serve each other straight talk mixed with compassion and care.
- Powerful relationships are based on balance. Pursuit of equality, however, should seek stability over time rather than absolute encounter-to-encounter equilibrium.
- Powerful relationships are grounded in grace. The spirit of partnership has an artistic flow that gives participants a sense of familiarity and ease.

Source: Chip R. Bell. 1994. Customers as Partners. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Pub., Inc., pgs. 5–6.



Activity: Using the key definitions found in the Supplemental Materials section, form six groups (one for each definition). Have each group discuss instances where that key was demonstrated in customer relations. As you talk about each key in the upcoming slides, ask that group to share. Allow 5-7 minutes for activity.



SLIDE 9: GENEROSITY

Ask the generosity group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where generosity was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

- Generosity is defined as kindness, warmth, a welcome. It is how you would treat a guest in your home.
- Generosity means smiling and greeting or acknowledging customers as soon as possible when they enter the store. Researchers have learned that this acknowledgement not only makes customers feel more valued and more likely to purchase, but it also makes it less likely that they will shoplift since they know that you know that they have been seen.
- Generosity means answering the phone within two or three rings. We know offices get busy, so it is best to have a system in place for everyone, even the managers, to answer phones when things get hectic.
- Generosity means answering the phone and greeting customers with a smile in your voice and in a warm way—even when things get hectic and the last person you waited on was Attila the Hun! Some have found it effective to place a small mirror near the phone so they can see their smile to remind themselves to let the customer “hear” their smile.
- Generosity means providing a welcoming, clean area for clients to wait. Current magazines and reading material should be available. Clear out the clutter in your waiting area and provide a few comfortable chairs. A few books for small children are welcome by parents. Provide signs for the locations of public restrooms and make sure they are clean.

But most importantly, generosity is an attitude—an attitude that this relationship with the customer is the most important thing I have on my to-do list.



SLIDE 10: THINK ABOUT IT...

Think of a business in your community that does a superior job of showing generosity as we have defined it. What does it look and feel like? What are some of the special things that business does to make you feel welcome?

Instructor Note: All the customer relations stories are provided as examples. Make the presentation your own and insert your own personal stories.

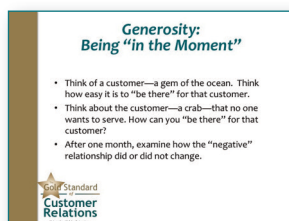
Sample Personal Customer Relations Story:

I never expected to get outstanding customer service at a gas station. In these days of debit cards and self-service pumps, one need not interact with anyone to fill the tank, wash the windshield, get a receipt, and be on your way. But I learned that even a gas station can deliver WOW customer relations. I moved to Clark Fork because I fell in love with a house that was for rent there. I still got my gas in Sandpoint because it was cheaper, but one day, I was on my way at 7:00 a.m., and if you knew me you would know that is a rare time for me to be out of bed, much less on the road. But, I had to be in Moscow by 10:00 a.m., and already things were not going well.

I was nearly out of gas. I pulled into Hayes Gas Station across from the high school in Clark Fork. It was well below freezing, close to zero. Yet, within seconds, someone was out the door, filling my tank, and washing my windows. He noticed a certain college basketball team's logo on my back window, and before I knew it we were talking about the latest recruits and the team's chances to go to the NCAA tournament. All the time I lived in Clark Fork, I never got gas anywhere else.

Not only did the owner or an employee fill my tank even though it was self-serve, they got to know me. One day, as I was preparing for yet another race to the airport, I noticed I was out of windshield washer fluid. It seemed the gas station was also out. Hayes went to his truck, found a half full jug of fluid and put it in my car—no charge. Hayes could not have made much margin of profit on my gas purchases, but I will say that the whole time I lived in Clark Fork, I never bought gas anywhere else. He knew generosity, and how to deliver WOW service.

Now, think of a business that is unfriendly. What do they do that earns that title? Why do you shop there despite their unfriendliness? How does it make you feel to shop there, and if you had an alternative, would you use it?



SLIDE 11: GENEROSITY: BEING "IN THE MOMENT"

Bullet 1. As we mentioned earlier, we are presenting a series of challenges to you and here is your second. Think of a customer you like and enjoy, and think about a gift you might give him or her. The gift

doesn't have to be expensive; it could be a thank you note. A thank you—especially one that is hand written—carries a great deal of power in these days of instant messaging, Facebook, and email.

Bullet 2. Now, select a customer you don't particularly like and don't enjoy working with. Think of a gift you might give him or her. This one is harder. But, we often associate one negative experience with a customer with all future interactions with that customer. When we see him or her coming in the door, we can become defensive even before that customer has uttered one word. Perhaps you could thank that customer, too. Even if it is a note that says "we appreciate your business," you will be amazed at the power it will carry.

Bullet 3. After one month, examine both relationships and see if they have changed.



SLIDE 12: TRUST

Ask the trust group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where trust was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

Generosity or hospitality forms the basis of quality customer relationships. The next five keys are more difficult to accomplish, but when carried out, they move your customer relations effort into the "wow" category.

- Trust in relationships makes customers feel valued. When you trust your customers, employees, co-workers, and managers, it is like you are reaching out to them as partners in the ultimate success of your business. Trust produces trust. If you express trust to customers they will trust you back.
- According to the research, if you make a mistake (and mistakes do happen) trusted customers are more tolerant, accepting, and more forgiving. They will even defend you to others when errors occur. They might say to someone they hear complain about a mistake you made, "This is not their normal way of doing things."
- Customers see quality service. In many cases, customer demands for service are taking priority over price. They will reward those who treat them with respect and trust with repeat business. According to the book *The World is Flat* by Thomas Friedman, "There is no

future in vanilla for most companies in a flat world...the future belongs to those who know how to make the richest chocolate sauce, the sweetest, lightest whipped cream, and the juiciest cherries to sit on top, or how to pull them all together into a sundae” (p. 104). What Mr. Friedman is saying is that in the competitive, global economy, you have to provide something outstanding for your customers. Many companies are outsourcing to the cheapest labor source, and can outsource almost anything to meet customer needs 24 hours a day. Therefore, you have to have something the others don’t have—outstanding customer relations can provide the human touch customers seek.

Two points to remember about trust:

1. Make service guarantees easy to explain—no fine print on forms. Make it easy for the customer to collect. Your guarantee could be as simple as: “We promise that you’ll be happy with our service or product.”
2. Trusting employees, colleagues, and bosses is the beginning position for trusting customers.

Instructor Note: All the customer relations stories are provided as examples. Make the presentation your own and insert your own personal stories.

Sample of personal trust story:

One bright sunny, winter day my younger sister and I were driving from Boise to our home in north central Idaho. We had finally made it through Boise and into a small town slightly north of Boise, when we decided to stop for a snack. We pulled into a convenience store, only to be greeted with a large prominent sign on the door that stated, “Only one teenager allowed in the store at a time, no purses, backpacks, or bags of any sort allowed in the store. Must purchase an item to use the restroom, and cash only.” At the time my sister and I were 20 and 17.

What a message to send! Unfortunately this town was quite a long distance from the next gas station. We were forced to patronize the store. But that is something I will always remember. The experience colored my perception of the business (one I will never patronize again), and my perception of the community.



SLIDE 13: TRUST IS A TWO-WAY STREET

Most customers, most of the time, are honest. We know that from experience—and from research, as well. Customers are not, however, always right—and neither are we. Everyone makes mistakes, gives wrong information, misunderstands directions, or simply understands a situation differently than was intended. Our perception is our reality. What we believe we have said, and what customers say they heard, are not always the same.

In this short workshop, we don't have time to go into all the steps you can go through to manage an angry customer, or the benefits of responding to customer complaints. But, understand that companies that respond effectively to customer complaints are more likely to keep that customer. The problem is that most people do not complain when something goes wrong. And, that is a loss for the business.

How many people do you think happy customers tell about your service? Research shows that they only tell 5–7 people.

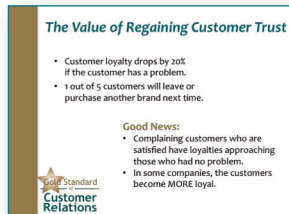
Now, how many people does an unhappy customer tell? He or she tells 14–20 people! In a small town, that can be deadly to your business. And, in these days of the internet, if your customer is really angry and sends a mass email to 100 people who then email another 50 people—well, you can imagine what has just happened to your company's reputation.

For businesses that get no complaints about their service, no news is NOT good news. Of all the customers you serve, surely someone has had a negative experience. You want to fix it to the customer's satisfaction, not ignore it or not hear about it.

Some simple things you can do to find out about unhappy customers include:

1. Have delivery people leave a card with the manager's name and phone number so that customers can call with complaints.
2. Make it easy for customers to complain. Call them after the sale to ask if everything was to their satisfaction. Ask open-ended questions. Open-ended questions require more than a yes or no response.
3. Ask the customer how your business can make it right. You will

be surprised how little customers expect. They will not ask for the moon, but often ask for a small thing—even just an apology.



SLIDE 14: THE VALUE OF REGAINING CUSTOMER TRUST

Research indicates that for every unhappy customer who complains to a business, there are 26 other customers who are just as unhappy but not willing to tell you. But remember, they tell others. This negative word-of-mouth discourages potential customers from ever giving you a chance. So for every complaining customer, there are possibly 26 others who have either had a negative experience or heard about one and thus will not/no longer do business with you. But your business never gets a chance to hear about it and take corrective actions.

The good news is, if you find a way for customers to bring you their complaints, research tells us those customers will become at least as loyal as people who have never had a problem. This is because until there is a problem, “service” and “quality” are just words. Once the customer has a problem and you resolve it to the customer’s satisfaction, he or she gets that “wow” feeling about your service. Every Nordstrom and Fed Ex story of excellent service is a recovery story. Customers who have complained and received a satisfactory resolution have a higher sense of loyalty than those customers who had no problems.

According to Technical Assistance Research Programs, if customers complain and are satisfied, their loyalty approaches that of customers with no problems. If they are not satisfied, loyalty decreases by 50%.



SLIDE 15: TRUST

Our challenge to businesses: Declare a 60-day trust period, when managers and employees identify areas where “we don’t trust you” messages are sent to customers or employees.

Create a customer-focused company; one where people are encouraged and rewarded for pleasing the customer before pleasing the boss, for doing the “right” thing, even if (while they are learning) they may make mistakes. Create an environment where employees feel safe to share, to learn, and to experiment.

Providing outstanding service means giving employees a number of ways to meet the customers’ needs. It means drawing on the uniqueness and creativity of all the people working for your company.



SLIDE 16: VISION

Ask the vision group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where vision was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

A vision is a powerful image of what an organization intends to become. By painting an inspiring picture of its future condition, a vision statement enables an organization to move to an improved, more advanced level of world-class customer relations. A vision of world class customer relations must focus on employees and customers.



SLIDE 17: DEFINING YOUR VISION

A customer relations vision statement should stress the importance of quality customer relations and spells out your company's basic commitments.

A vision statement is a declaration of purpose, values, and direction. It is long-term, and general in nature. Adapt your general vision statement to include specific strategies and tactics so it can easily become part of the everyday way your company does business. If you already have a vision statement, you may want to make sure that it talks about your commitment to both customers and employees.

Optional Activity: If the business does not have a vision statement, ask small groups to come up with one sentence to describe one company goal in customer relations. Have each group read their statement and see how they can combine statements to form a customer relations mission statement.



SLIDE 18: COMPANY CUSTOMER RELATIONS VISION "MUSTS"

According to Hal Rosenbluth and Diane Peters in their book *The Customer Comes Second*, excellent performance delivered to customers comes from your employees. Employees deserve recognition, public commendation, and a clear standard for your company's definition of world-class customer relations. Rosenbluth and Peters tell managers to celebrate and have fun with employees. In order to please your customers, you must please those who serve your customers. Delivering world-class service to your customers is not a luxury, but an investment in your business' future.

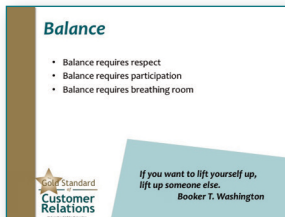


SLIDE 19: TRUTH

Ask the truth group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where truth was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

The truth building block of a successful relationship values **frankness**. Truthful companies are **dependable**. The path to truth in customer relationships includes the **courage** to ask for criticism as well as the **consideration** to right wrongs. Truth may sometimes cause relationships to temporarily feel uncomfortable, but in the end, truth makes a relationship healthy. By being truthful with customers, you nurture a healthy, long-term relationship.



SLIDE 20: BALANCE

Ask the balance group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where balance was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

Bullet 1. Each customer deserves respect. I read a story recently that illustrates the respect element of customer relations.

Instructor Note: All the customer relations stories are provided as examples. Make the presentation your own and insert your own personal stories.

Sample Customer Relations Story:

A teller in a Spokane bank refused to validate a customer's parking ticket because the customer had not made a transaction at the teller's window—and the customer looked like he had just come in from plowing a field with his bare hands. He wore dirty jeans, a flannel shirt, and work boots caked with dirt. The customer asked to see her supervisor. The supervisor also refused to validate the parking ticket. After all, why should the bank validate a parking sticker for someone who hadn't deposited any money and who looked so scrubby? As the customer turned to leave, he said to the teller and her supervisor, I will talk to the manager about this. The teller and supervisor were not concerned. They felt they had treated the customer with the respect due someone who did not deposit any money and who looked so dirty.

As it turned out, that customer did talk to the manager, and he withdrew over ten million dollars he held in various accounts in that bank.

*So, the teller and the supervisor learned a very valuable lesson. Never judge anyone by the way he or she looks. That customer in the dirty jeans and flannel shirt may have more to invest in your business than you could imagine. Remember, no one customer is more important than another—**each** customer is the most important to your business.*

Bullet 2. Give employees the power to make decisions, on the spot. Doing so empowers them to provide a top notch customer experience. At the same time, be open with your customers about what is going on in your company. Involve them in the decision making in small ways that will make them feel like partners in your business. For example, “We are really swamped today, and I appreciate that you have waited patiently for us to get to you,” even if that wait was only five minutes.

Give customers options: we can deliver the washing machine today, but that would mean our delivery would be late. Tomorrow we could come at a time more convenient to you.

Or, let them know that it costs extra for you to have a driver deliver after five, and that to keep your prices competitive you need to keep deliveries within a certain time frame. If you are going to miss a delivery, or not be able to provide what you said you could, let your customer know and ask them what alternatives they think should be made.

Bullet 3. Some customers are uncomfortable with the closeness and partnership we are advocating. They want to buy a new jacket and get out of the store. “Feel out” each customer and look for signs that you are getting too close. Some might interpret a helpful employee as one who does not trust them and is following them around the store to make sure they don’t steal something. Others may want the attention to seek advice about a purchase. Look for clues in people’s facial expressions and body language. We can hide what we feel in our language, but it is much more difficult to hide what we feel in our body language.



SLIDE 21: THE FOUNDATION OF BALANCE: MUTUAL RESPECT
Our Challenge: Look at your policies and procedures. Are they getting in the way of quality?



SLIDE 22: GRACE

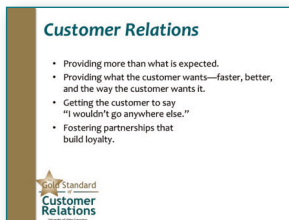
Ask the grace group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where grace was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

Great customer partnerships make the purchasing experience appear seamless and filled with flow and polish. Graceful customer relations have an “at home” feeling.

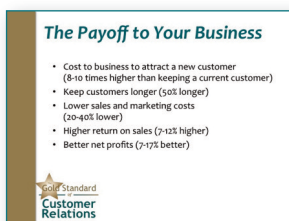
Graceful customer relations providers learn their customers’ standards for great service and try to exceed them.

Instructor Note: Select a short customer relations video to view. We have found that a video adds value and energy to the presentation—see the References and Resources list for a couple of suggested videos.



SLIDE 23: CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Remember, quality relations are customer-defined and each customer defines them differently. Also, note that the customer doesn’t give you very long before he or she makes a judgment about your business. Research shows that customers form an impression of an employee in the first 20 seconds, and apply that impression to the entire company! The person you employ to work the front desk, answer the phones, and greet the customer has incredible power to make or break that first encounter with the customer. That employee should be rewarded well. He or she may also need an opportunity to recover from negative experiences with customers before dealing with the next customer with the positive attitude you would like to see.

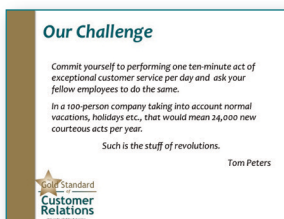


SLIDE 24: THE PAYOFF TO YOUR BUSINESS

Creating the kind of customer relations we are talking about has a payback for your business. Quality customer relations lead to customer satisfaction, which leads to loyalty. Loyal customers not only stay with you, they increase their business with you, eventually developing a relationship that helps keep your customer loyal and unlikely to be lured away by the competition with the promise of a lower price.

Business organizations such as the American Management Association have quantified the pay-back to businesses of developing customer loyalty. The experts estimate that it costs a business 8 to 10 times more to attract a new customer than it does to keep a current customer.

According to the American Management Association, creating partnerships such as we have talked about today help businesses keep customers longer, lower sales and marketing costs, provide a higher return on sales and lead to better net profits.

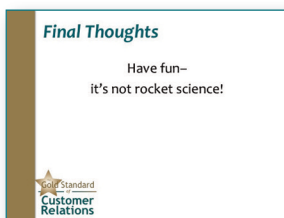


SLIDE 25: OUR CHALLENGE

Our final challenge to you:

As best-selling author Tom Peters says, "Commit yourself to performing one 10-minute act of exceptional customer service per day and encourage your colleagues to do the same. In a 100-person company, taking into account normal vacations, holidays etc., that would mean 24,000 new courteous acts per year. Such is the stuff of revolutions."

*This quote is from
Tom Peters, In Search of Excellence. 1982.
New York: Harper & Row.*



SLIDE 26: FINAL THOUGHTS

Have fun. Throw a fish or throw a pillow. Take some risks, have some fun, and just maybe your customers will have fun, too.

Instructor Note: Ask for questions.



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Activities

We present five activities below that can be used during your Gold Standard workshop. We suggest that you use activities to: 1) loosen up all participants and make them feel involved, early in the workshop; and 2) re-direct attention when participants appear tired or distracted during the workshop.

ACTIVITY 1: HUMAN WEB

Time

30 minutes

Supplies

Long ball of yarn or string, pillow (size appropriate for the size of web to be built)

What to do

Have the group stand in a circle. Using a ball of yarn or string, hold the end and toss it across the circle. Have the person who catches the ball of yarn toss the yarn across the circle in turn, while taking hold of a piece of yarn. Continue this until everyone is holding onto the yarn. Be sure to remind everyone to keep the yarn tight. This will form a web in the center of the circle. When everyone is holding a piece of the yarn, place a pillow (appropriate for the size of the web) in the center of the web. This illustrates that, if everyone works together, everything is held together and works smoothly.

Then let go of your piece of yarn. Have everyone let go in the order in which the yarn was thrown to them. Slowly, the support for the pillow lessens and the pillow will eventually drop, demonstrating what happens when people start to slack off.

Have a group discussion about what they feel the yarn represents and what the pillow represents. Then have a discussion about the symbolism of the pillow dropping. Ask the group, how can we all prevent the pillow from dropping in the future?

ACTIVITY 2: WHERE CAN I GET IT?

Time

20 minutes

Supplies

Laminated cards with items written on them (see below), markers

What to do

Begin by having groups make a list of the types of customers they see and what these customers need. Then hand out the laminated cards (see below), one per group. The laminated cards list items (such as fly fishing pole, water toys) that the customer would like to purchase. The group will discuss where in their community would be a good place to send this individual for this item (have them try to come up with locally owned business, if it is possible for that community).

Have each group share their item and where they would send the customer, then have them give the directions to that location.

Examples for *Where Can I Get It?*

Make a card for each request from the list below.

Hunting/fishing license	Hiking boots	Laundromat
Alternator	Bicycle tire	Grocery store (local, not large chain)
Swim suit	Stocking hat	Send a fax
Dinner for family of six: short wait time	Art (local)	Mail drop box

ACTIVITY 3: FIRST IMPRESSIONS**Time**

10-15 minutes

Supplies

Note cards for each participant, two photographs of people from magazines or the Internet. The photos should depict two distinctly different people so that participants can have two noticeably different reactions to them.

What to do

Post the first photo in front of the group. Have participants write down their first reaction on a note card. Remind them not to filter their reaction, but to be honest. Post the second photo and have the participants write down their first reaction to that picture on the note card.

As a group, have people discuss their first reactions. Then have a discussion about how our first reactions are not always fair, and how they can change the way they treat people.

ACTIVITY 4: PARTNER DRAWING**Time**

30 minutes

Supplies

Copies of house and flower pictures for each person, blank paper, and pencil for each participant.

What to do

Have everyone pair up into groups of two. When this is done, explain to the group that even though we may feel we are listening to what someone is saying, we don't always hear them. This activity will focus on how well people listen to each other. Have one person go to the left of the room and the other person to the right. At these locations, hand each person a piece of paper with either a picture of a house or a flower on it. They are to reconnect with their partners at this time but they are not to show each other their pictures.

Have each group decide who will draw first (Player A) and the other person (Player B) will describe what is on their paper to Player A. Player A is to draw what is being described by Player B. This is to be done with their backs to one another.

After 10 minutes have them switch and now Player A will describe what to draw to Player B. Allow 10 minutes to complete their sketch. When time is up, have them compare pictures of what they drew to what was described to them.

Have a discussion about what they learned while doing this. Ask them what was most difficult about the drawing portion and what was the most difficult about the describing portion of the exercise.

ACTIVITY 5: THE PROBLEM CUSTOMER**Time**

25 minutes

Supplies

Laminated card for each group with a problem situation/customer description on it (see below), markers

What to do

Have everyone get into small groups. Hand out a problem situation/customer to each group. Allow 15 minutes for groups to discuss how they would deal with this customer. Have each group give a short presentation of what their situation/customer was and what they came up with as a solution(s).

Problem customer situations

Print a card for each situation below.

A customer is upset and yelling at you. He is making a scene in front of other customers.

A customer is unhappy with the service she has been given, and feels you are not helping. She would like to speak with your superior, who is not available.

A customer calls you on the phone. He feels your company has wronged him and would like you to fix it.

You are a pregnant married woman who no longer wears her wedding ring because of swelling. The customer makes a comment about how unmarried women should not have babies.

You can't find a customer's reservation or appointment.

You suspect a customer of stealing.

The customer approaches the employee and asks her to make an exception for a long-standing rule of the company. The employee lacks the authority to make the exception.

GENEROSITY

1. Characterized by noble or forbearing spirit.
2. Liberal in giving.
3. Marked by abundance or ample proportions.

TRUST

1. A reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, or justice of another person or thing; faith; reliance.
2. Confident expectation, anticipation, or hope.

VISION

1. Something seen in a dream.
2. The act or power of imagination.
3. The act or power of seeing; the special sense by which the qualities of an object constituting its appearance are perceived and mediated by the eye.
4. Something seen.
5. A lovely or charming sight.

TRUTH

1. Reality; actuality.
2. Sincerity; integrity; honesty.

BALANCE

1. A state of equilibrium.
2. A harmonious or satisfying arrangement or proportion of elements.

GRACE

1. Beauty or charm of form, composition, movement, or expression.
2. An attractive quality, feature, or manner.



Adult Workshop

What 3 things will you take away from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.



Adult Workshop

What 3 things will you take away from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.



Adult Workshop

What 3 things will you take away from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.



Adult Workshop

What 3 things will you take away from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.



Inspirational Quotes

Live your life so that your children can tell their children that you not only stood for something wonderful—you acted on it.

—Unknown

If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow.

—Unknown

Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.

—Mother Theresa

By being grateful, people make themselves deserving of yet another kindness.

—Nigerian Proverb

Most of the important decisions are not made by generals.

—Unknown

Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.

—Plato

Doing your best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment.

—Oprah Winfrey

No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave.

—Calvin Coolidge

No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he only had good intentions.

—Margaret Thatcher

To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity.

—Donald A. Adams

The smallest good deed is better than the grandest good intention.

—Joseph Duquet

If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.

—Booker T. Washington

A problem is a chance for you to do your best.

—Duke Ellington

The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said.

—Peter Drucker

Most conversations are just alternating monologues. The question is: is there any real listening going on?

—Leo Buscaglia

What you want to be eventually, you must be everyday. With practice, the quality of your deeds gets down to your soul.

—Frank Crane

We keep moving forward, opening up new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.

—Walt Disney

You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.

—Christopher Robin

We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.

—Winston Churchill

There is no one I cannot teach something to, and no one from whom I cannot learn something.

—Unknown

We advance toward our destiny when we encourage others to reach theirs.

—Paul Wessellmann

You will not be known for the fruit you pick but by the trees you plant.

—Proverb

The purpose of life is to discover your gift. The meaning of life is giving your gift away.
—David Viscott

A person rarely succeeds at anything unless they have fun doing it.
—Robert E. Farrell

You never get a second chance to make a first impression.
—Robert E. Farrell

Customers have only as much power over your mood as you allow.
—Unknown

Motivation is everything. You can do the work of two people, but you can't be two people. Instead, you have to inspire the next person down the line and get him to inspire his people.
—Lee Iacocca

The quality of any product or service is what the CUSTOMER says it is.
—James Balkcom

There is only one boss. The customer. And, he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down simply by spending his money somewhere else.
—Sam Walton

Don't worry about profits, worry about service.
—Thomas Watson, Sr.



Certificate of Completion

has completed the 2-hour introductory course in customer relations



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Evaluation–Adult Workshop

Thank you for attending this workshop on customer relations. So that we may continually improve the workshop, would you please take a few minutes to answer the following questions?

This evaluation asks you to answer the questions based on your opinions now that you have finished the workshop. Then we would like you to think back to before you took the workshop and answer the questions again. If you have any questions, please ask before you complete the evaluation.

Please answer the following questions by rating yourself from one to five (one = I don't agree at all, and five = I very much agree with the statement.)

	After the Workshop					Before the Workshop				
	Don't agree at all	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Very much agree	Don't agree at all	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Very much agree
Understanding the six keys of customer relations helps our business develop a partnership with customers. Customers who are treated as partners are more likely to be loyal to our business and recommend us to others.										
I understand that messages of distrust in our business can hurt our business and make staff and customers feel unwelcome and undervalued.										
I can find ways to regain the customer's trust when we make mistakes because I know that customer will be at least as loyal as a customer who has never experienced a mistake.										
Developing a partnership with customers through the six keys of customer relations differs from traditional customer service and is more effective in developing loyal customers.										
Our company has a vision statement for customer service and I keep it in mind as I interact with customers.										
Treating customers as partners in the success of this business has financial rewards for the business.										
I can choose to have a good day, be kind to customers, or I can choose to be unhappy and unkind to customers, other employees and internal partners.										

