



We exist to serve others so they may better serve the world. SM

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Delivering World-Class Service: Personal Service Standards

Escort guests rather than pointing out directions...Never say “it’s not my job”...Answer the phone with a smile...These are all examples of service standards. Companies use them to train their staff. Even while having service standards, for service to become truly a way of life, such standards must be embraced by each individual on the team. **I** must want to escort guests...**I** must want to answer the phone in 3 rings, and **I** must want to offer assistance if a customer appears lost. So in addition to your company-wide standards, challenge your individual employees to think of ways they intend to contribute to your company’s service mission. These

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“personal” service standards are unique to the individual, should reinforce their strengths, and permit them to address their opportunities for improvement.

A few personal service standards I’ve seen are, “I will always think of ways to exceed expectations”, “I will follow up with all customers within 30 minutes”, “I will make each customer feel truly unique”, and “I will find out something interesting about every customer in order to personalize the service”. Like goals, it’s good to write personal service standards down, look at them daily, and share them. Communicate the personal service standards with your co-workers and manager. They can help hold you accountable to meeting those standards and vice versa.

If you are a manager, I recommend you do the following:

1. Begin with yourself. Write your own personal service standards. This is a critical step. As Gandhi said, “Be the change you want to see in the world”. Plus it can seem hypocritical to ask your staff to do something that you are not doing.
2. Lead a meeting or training session on service excellence and why it is important for the team. Explain that providing engaging service is what each employee should commit to doing everyday.
3. Share your own personal service standards with your team, then ask them to help hold you accountable for meeting those standards. Explain that you will do the same for them. After all, service excellence is a team effort.
4. Instruct your team to write their own personal service standards. Encourage them to write specific behaviors.
5. Key Step: Have your employees share their Personal Service Standards with you (their manager) or their immediate supervisor.

6. Keep a file (paper or electronic) that contains each person's personal service standards.
7. In daily interactions, ask individual employees to share their personal service standards with you. Also ask them how they intend to use at least one of the standards that day.
8. During your routine one-on-one meetings (which you should have), review your employee's personal service standards, and provide feedback regarding their performance against those standards.

To assist you, I have developed a pocket-sized card for you to easily write your personal service standards. There is also space to write the "purpose" of your role. Please refer back to the *Function vs. Purpose* article to refresh your memory. This card also features personal commitments that have been adapted from *EngageMe...the voice of your customer*.

As you finish reading this article, commit to writing your own personal service standards. Even if you already provide exceptional service, your personal service standards will serve as inspiration for everyone else. A great hotel executive once told me that success is not something you do in the future...otherwise one would never get there. Success is what you do today, in this very moment, and everyday thereafter. Writing your personal service standards today will assist with your commitment to excellence, and your commitment to engage every customer with your service.

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--September 2, 2008

*Click the links below to access the following:

- Personal Service Commitment card: <http://www.engagemenow.com/order.html>
- Function vs. Purpose article: http://bwenterprise.net/uploads/Function_vs._Purpose.pdf
- EngageMe...the voice of your customer: <http://bwenterprise.net/EngageMe.html>

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