



Nancy Hightshoe Seminars

LifeSkills

By Nancy Hightshoe

Customer Service - Myth or Magic

For every professional field - business, associations, education, government - our competition is steadily becoming better at exactly the same skills, processes and techniques were honing and sharpening. Their advertising and promotional materials are frequently terrific. Often the products or services we offer are very similar. Studies consistently show that it is much more cost-effective to retain customers than to keep replacing them with new clients.

Successful businesses have learned the lessons in that old round sung at Girl Scout campfires:

Make new friends, but keep the old; One is silver, the other gold.

How do we keep our long-time customers (both internal and external) while adding those new clients we need to penetrate untapped markets and take advantage of sudden, unexpected opportunities?

How do we build that loyalty to us, to our business and to our products and services?

Customer Service. Yes, we all know that customer service is the correct answer, but what does customer service really mean? How do we model it in our businesses for our employees to learn and practice? How do we build trust so that our clients will rely on us?

Remember the scene from "Pretty Woman" when Julia Roberts (who is earning her living as a lady of the evening) arrives at the exclusive dress shop, but is put-down by the sales women because she, obviously, didn't meet standards? Julia returned several hours and several thousands of dollars' worth of clothes later and simply said, "You ladies work on commission, don't you?"

Good Point!

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"The Lady Was A Cop"

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Nancy Hightshoe is an accomplished speaker, coach and consultant. She is an expert in:

- Professional and Personal Effectiveness

- Safety, Security and Survival.

Nancy's Background:

• Business and Life Strategies Coach

• Police Officer, Detective and Entrepreneur



When my niece and nephew, Kim and Rich, were 7 and 9, one of my clients gifted me with a trip to the Horse Museum in Lexington, Kentucky. We got up early one day to drop in on a racing stable and watch the thoroughbreds being exercised in the early morning mist. (Hint: If you look like you're supposed to be there, you can go almost anywhere – even with two children in tow! Note: I think the terrorists already know this.)

We met a gorgeous chestnut named Making Memories. What a wonderful name! What a terrific idea!

Phrased a bit differently, Tom Peters, who has researched and written on successful businesses and individuals since he published In Search Of Excellence in 1982, has recently written a trilogy, The Work Matters. In the volume, The Brand You50 - Fifty Ways To Transform Yourself From An "Employee" Into A Brand That Shouts Distinction, Commitment, And Passion!, Mr. Peters encourages creating WOW Experiences for our customers.

How can you be better at Making Memories and creating WOW Experiences for your customers?

In life, the difference between the Winners and the Also Rans is frequently a collection of often repeated actions which stand in the way of our success.

The Law of the Slight Edge states that you do not have to work twice as hard to be twice as good as you currently are or as your competition is. It's the little bit extra, done on a consistent basis, that makes the difference. Minor adjustments in your behavior patterns and habits can translate into the achievement of significant rewards.

As an example of that little bit extra done consistently, in the 1998 Winter Olympics held in Nagano, Japan, the Women's Luge Team won by 2/1000th of a second.

That translates into 1.6 of an inch over a 3-mile course!

Take a moment to ask yourself 3 questions before we turn to some how-to suggestions. You might want to jot down your answers to get a better idea of where your organization is in the continuum from okay to excellent.

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- Has spoken throughout the United States and in 17 foreign countries

- On-camera expert for St. Louis NBC affiliate

- Represented a Fortune 100 corporation as their media spokesperson

- Master's Degree in Human Relations and in The Administration of Justice; Bachelor's Degree in Psychology

- Designed one of the first Personal Assault Investigative Units in the country

- Cleared 85% of her felony assault crimes cases (national average is 49%)

- Recognized POST-certified continuing education instructor (Police Officers Standards and Training)

- Named to the *World Who's Who of Women*

Nancy's Commitment and Philosophy

My background in personal courage

- both as a police detective and entrepreneur

- is reflected in all my presentations.

Visualize a WOW Experience for your customers. What does it look like? How would you describe it?

What Best Practices are you currently doing that create a positive, memorable experience for your clients? What are you doing right?

How are you shooting yourself in the foot? What must you improve upon to build customer loyalty?

DESCRIBING YOUR WOW EXPERIENCE

In describing a WOW Experience, my favorite phrase is “Don’t worry. I’ll take care of it.” Other descriptions: Exceeded my expectations! Unique! Spectacular! Fun! Perfect! Better than I had imagined! Easy!

Your goal is create a relationship where your clients trust you to Deliver the Goods - then you do just that with commitment, creativity and a gracious manner..

BEST PRACTICES

Never give your customer an excuse to go to your competitor!

Address problems immediately - a problem is just an opportunity in disguise.

Be honest; Exemplify integrity

Value Added – What do you do or offer which differentiates you from other similar organizations? Do not assume your customers, clients or staff realize your Value Added Services. When talking with potential clients, we not only tell them what we will do to create a WOW Experience, we email them ValueAddedOpportunities.pdf which prospects can easily forward to the other decision makers. A copy of that pdf is attached. With everyone’s busy schedules and the impact of the internet, many decisions seem to be made at 2 AM. We want our clients to have our value added information available to them whenever they will be choosing a speaker.

Build relationships - it is always easier to do business with a friend than an acquaintance.

My philosophy of personal responsibility and purpose resonates throughout all of my programs.

Each seminar participant comes away with new skills and ideas on how to approach every challenge with creativity, resourcefulness and tenacity

- all qualities even more essential for success in today’s world.

Future issues of *Life Skills* will include a wide range of topics from Nancy Hightshoe Seminars.

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Recommend alternatives and watch for anything the customer may have forgotten. You will be their hero!

Be their personal consultant: Help them think of things they need or may be forgetting

Deliver the goods! Do what you say will do!

Be genuinely interested in providing your service or product to each individual client

Encourage your colleagues and staff to be innovative, creative thinkers. Include everyone! The newest intern may see the perfect solution to an old problem because he or she is looking at it with new eyes.

These are just a few suggestions. You will come up with others which relate specifically to your product or service and your organization.

SHOOTING YOURSELF IN THE FOOT

How to avoid tripping yourself up? The quick answer is to avoid following the above suggestions. Which of the Best Practices are you doing? Which ones could you implement within the next week? The next month? An insightful observation came from a recent audience member; “I was busy with a project when my sales person came to me with a question. I answered and brushed it off quickly. We lost the business. Later I realized that it appeared to my potential client that I just wasn’t all the interested in their issue – or their business. That’s a mistake I won’t make again!”

As Helen Keller said, “Life is either a daring adventure - or nothing at all.”

What memories will you be creating for your customers? How will working with you be a WOW Experience? How can you make Customer Service a daring adventure in your organization?

This idea of Making Memories also adds a delightful sparkle to your relationships and responsibilities with your family, friendships, civic and faith communities!

Practice on your family and friends – your business will improve; your family and friends will love the adventures!

Go on out there and WOW your customers, clients and prospects!

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*Post Office Box 11846
Saint Louis, MO 63105
Nancy@NancyHightshoe.com*

 *Nancy Hightshoe Seminars*

*(314) 865-2944
Country Code: +1
www.NancyHightshoe.com*