



# CUSTOMER DELIGHT

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July 2009

## “The Element” of Community is Customer Service *Lt. George Burton is Making a Difference*

By Rebecca Bolte

It's easy to tell when someone likes what they do and Lt. George Burton definitely likes what he does, and a big part of that is his interaction with people.

“My job is never boring,” said Lt. Burton. “I listen to citizens' problems and try to figure out what we can do to help.”

Burton has been with Hampton since 1985 and in the community relations unit for the past 2 years and its obvious he is happy to be here. He



talked about the teams he has worked with through his time here at Hampton and was quick to give everyone around him credit for the success he has had in Hampton.

“I don't do anything alone - none of us do,” said Burton. “It's about getting together and working as a team to get to the final result.”

And he has a good point. Our one-on-one interaction with our customers is important but what we can do as a team to please our customers can sometimes be even more crucial.

Burton focused on crime prevention and how we have to work as a community to combat criminals or as he referred to it ... “the element.” (If the police department ever made a movie I vote for this title).

He emphasized over and over how working together makes us stronger and it was his role to make sure the community worked with police to make a safer place for everyone. Ties with



neighbors, other localities, our co-workers ... every piece of the puzzle is important.

“The police can't be everywhere,” said Burton. “But we can have a presence everywhere when we work together and take the time to make those very important human connections.”

## We Heard You!

Recently the workforce was asked to participate in a Customer Delight newsletter survey. We sincerely appreciate all the participation and feed back and, as promised, we want to share the results of the survey with our readership. We plan on continuing to publish Customer Delight but will be “tweaking” it to improve the newsletter and better serve our customers needs.



We found that 72 percent of our employees were reading the newsletter on a regular basis and 68 percent of you found the information in the publication valuable to providing customer service. The newsletter team will adjust our articles to hopefully increase this percentage and provide better value each month. Our survey also told us only 56 percent of our readers used the information/tips in the newsletter in daily customer service transactions. Again, this tells us that we will need to adjust our articles and tips to better address customer service in a local government setting.

On the question of whether our organization values exceptional customer service, 78 percent of readers believe that to be true, which tells us that a culture of service is taking hold in the organization as we had hoped would happen! Along those same lines, 68 percent of respondents report that customer service is being talked about in their individual workplaces, which is where it really has to happen to be successful. We all need to work together to get that other 32 percent convinced and onboard!

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## Message from the New Boss

Hampton has a reputation across Hampton Roads as a trend setter and leader - especially when it comes to customer service. I want to encourage you to continue your quest to create the ideal citizen experience; to be a cut above the rest when it comes to responsiveness, friendliness and dedication; and to be the role model for the rest of the region.

I have had the privilege of managing three other Hampton Roads localities: Norfolk, Portsmouth and James City County. Each provides high quality service. However, I had always heard that Hampton was the leader in quality, cost, and innovation. It is obvious that you deserve your reputation. I hope we will always set the standard for our neighbor communities.

You should be proud of the work you have done so far, but there is still much to do. Keep raising the bar for everyone else outside of Hampton and take pride in knowing you are making a difference. Through your efforts, the quality of life in Hampton is hard to beat.



Jim Oliver

## The Winners

*Next Month It Could Be You!*

### Delightful Dollar Winners

- Kathy Fortin - Codes - LDS
- David Boykin - PW Streets
- Walter Council - PW Streets
- Antonio Drummond - PW Streets
- Benjamin Hicks - PW Streets
- Donnie Jaramillo - PW Streets
- Lionel Miles - PW Streets
- Ronnie Rooks - PW Streets
- Robert Smith - PW Streets
- John Williams - PW Streets

**Do you have a customer service challenge?** Don't know how to handle a particular customer situation? Need advice about providing outstanding customer service? **Ask Dee Light!** Dee is our customer service guru and she is here to help you with your customer service challenges! [customerdelight@hampton.gov](mailto:customerdelight@hampton.gov) or 728-2020



## Got Bling?

If not, come to Customer Delight Training! All attendees receive a gold Committed to Excellence pin! Upcoming sessions

will be held on August 20 from 1pm-4pm, September 2 from 9am-noon or 1pm-4pm, and October 7 from 9am-noon or 1pm-4pm.. For more information or to register contact [HRFrontDesk@hampton.gov](mailto:HRFrontDesk@hampton.gov) or 727-6407. All Sessions are held in Human Resources on the 4th Floor of City Hall.



Please Recycle

# Delightful Dollars Program Update

Hampton has always placed a great value on providing top-notch service to our residents and customers – and we proudly call that “Customer Delight.” Because of our commitment to this principle and strategic initiative, the City Manager supports the Delightful Dollar Program, which rewards employees who demonstrate outstanding customer service.

The Delightful Dollar program recognizes and rewards city employees who are nominated by a customer for:

- Acts that are beyond the employee’s job responsibilities
- Acts that require significant time, effort and/or resources
- Acts that show creativity in finding a solution for a customer

One example is how an employee helped a customer trying to obtain information about property that was critical in settling his father’s estate. This customer was out of town and unable to go to the courthouse to obtain the information. City employee Symphoni Wiggins, on her own time, went to the courthouse and obtained the information and then sent it to the out-of-town customer.

Another example of an employee going above and beyond took place during Bay Days one year. As Bay Days kicked off, the vendor for the main stage found that there was no power for the stage. Daniel Harper in Parks and Recreation went into action and found a generator for the stage. Without his commitment to the customer, some of the contracted music may have not happened.

Not all Delightful Dollar nominations come from our external customers. Many great customer delight stories come from internal customers as well. Have you had the pleasure of being on the receiving end of great customer service from another employee? If so, you can nominate an employee who WOW’d you!

Delightful Dollar nominations can be submitted by:

- Calling the 311 Call Center
- Sending an email to [call311@hampton.gov](mailto:call311@hampton.gov)
- Sending an email to the Customer Delight mailbox at [customerdelight@hampton.gov](mailto:customerdelight@hampton.gov)
- Forwarding letters of appreciation received by a department supervisor to the Call Center

Employees who have been identified by a customer for these special efforts receive a \$25 Visa gift card that can be used anywhere in Hampton that accepts Visa.

In addition to the nomination award of \$25, employees who receive Delightful Dollars throughout the year are eligible for a grand prize drawing held during Customer Service Week in October of each year.

To date, over 350 Delightful Dollars have been presented to city employees who have demonstrated outstanding customer service. Keep up the good work Hampton!

## We Heard You!

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A total of 84 percent of readers reported that customer service is reviewed as part of their yearly performance and that number needs to increase to 100 percent through a recommitment by all! Our team will be working with the City Manager’s Office to address this issue and reinforcement of customer delight as the service standard for our organization.

On the question regarding the availability of customer service skills training, 82 percent of you felt that there were ample opportunities being provided. Again, we would like to have this be 100 percent and we will continue to offer training opportunities to further our organizational commitment to outstanding customer service. Please check out our tools on the Customer Delight web page.

We were somewhat surprised to discover that only 41 percent of our respondents thought that exceptional customer service was being rewarded enough by the organization. Here we see an opportunity to renew our efforts with current programs, like Delightful Dollars already in place, and to add new rewards programs to reinforce our desire to provide incentives to our employees who embody the customer delight philosophy. Our hope is to promote and utilize these rewards programs at the departmental level so that every part of the organization can value and celebrate exceptional customer service.

Readers reported that one of their favorite features was the employee spotlight article where we highlight an employee making a difference – a feature we have always believed to be worthwhile. You also told us that you enjoyed reading quotes from our customers, and articles on improving your customer service skills. Quotes from employees, the higher purpose feature, and the customer service tips offered each month all received positive ratings from our readers as well.

Under the comments question there are a few highlights. Many readers reported that an electronic version of the newsletter would be both beneficial and “green” and we are going to work towards reducing the number of paper copies of the publication we produce. We will never be able to have it delivered 100 percent electronically as many of our employees do not have e-mail or internet access here at work. One very positive comment we received was that the customer delight initiative was setting a great tone for service and our service was seen as superior to other communities due to Hampton’s leadership and the attitude of our employees. This comment speaks directly to our efforts to change the customer service culture of our organization!

The members of the editorial staff of the Customer Delight newsletter work very hard to produce a valuable publication and we do sincerely thank you all for your opinions and comments. We understand that we need to make the newsletter useful, valuable, and have articles and features that fulfill that need. Our plan is to take your comments, opinions, and suggestions and move the publication forward into the upcoming fiscal year. Again thank you so very much for your participation in the survey and we look forward to your continued readership.

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**“I found that the service the City of Hampton provides for the disabled is excellent and I am so glad that I am a member of this community”!**

### Higher Purpose Spotlight



**Tony Taylor  
Public Works - Steam Plant**

I was hired to be a boiler operator at the Steam Plant. Once I began to think about it, I realized my real job was to process and dispose of tons of garbage in a safe, environmentally friendly way. **I am also helping to save the planet.**



### What’s Your Story?

**The job we do and the way we do it matters.** The “smaller” story of our job is only about the tasks that we do and how it affects us as individuals. Our “bigger” story - the one that is wiser and truer - is about so much more: it knows our purpose in the bigger picture. It knows that what we do ripples out and connects to others.

If you want to connect to your higher purpose, come to Customer Delight training. Here’s what our coworkers have said they learned:

- \* ... that I am part of a bigger picture with a purpose
- \* ...that I do make a difference
- \* I learned how my job serves a higher purpose for Hampton citizens
- \* ...that every person’s job matters.
- \* I learned about the value of us all & our greater purpose
- \* ... each and every one of us has a higher purpose.

What is the story you tell about your job? Sign up for customer delight training and let us help you write a bigger story! See session times and dates on the front page of this publication.



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