



CUSTOMER DELIGHT

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<http://cityweb/cd>

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Get Engaged with Customer Delight!

Many employees are not familiar with the whole concept of "Customer Delight." First thought of over 10 years ago, exceptional customer service is more than just an attitude or being nice. It's about streamlining service and "unfrustrating" otherwise frustrated customers. It's "the way we do things around here" that keeps us proactive and looking for ways of doing things better. It's about creating a sense of loyalty in our customers – the citizens of Hampton.

Along those lines, a team of employees have been working together to develop a set of programs and activities designed to keep the customer service charge going strong.

One of those activities is this newsletter. In it you will find useful facts and information, practical tips, contests and articles featuring those in our organization that have gone the extra mile in delighting our customers. Please send us your stories!



businesses – both good and bad – can help to show the right way and the wrong way to do things. Participants will be entered above-and-beyond into a drawing to get a free day's vacation! See the back of this newsletter for more information.

Another thing we're working on is a set of training programs. As part of orientation, every new employee will be required to attend a training course designed to educate and reinforce our customer service values in Hampton. This training

will explain what customer delight is, help employees connect with the culture of customer service, learn specific principles and skills, and go through some real life scenarios.

To recognize employees for exceptional customer service, we're giving the Delightful Dollars program a shot in the arm, converting to a credit card-based program and expanding to all businesses in Hampton. This program invites citizens (and other coworkers) to call 311 and tell them about a particular instance of exceptional service so that we can celebrate our success! Those identified through this process will receive a \$25 gift card redeemable at any Hampton business.

To top that, we are introducing the first annual City Manager's Exceptional Service Award, also known as the Customer Service Cup. Once a year, the city manager will make a call for nominations. Employees will be invited and encouraged to nominate a team for their exceptional service. The nomination must be in writing and identify all the members of the team, what department/division they work for, and why they are

deserving of this prestigious award. The winners will be selected by a team of judges and be awarded a trophy and cash bonus. The call for this year's nominations starts now! See message from the city manager below.

Finally, all of these activities and programs are celebrated during the first week of October in a capstone event called "Customer Service Week." In this week-long event, the 311 Call Center takes the lead in reminding employees of the importance of our mission through e-mails, recognizing delightful dollar winners in a special picture-taking ceremony, and announcing the winner of the City Manager's Cup.

Employees are encouraged to become part of the solution and engage in all of the customer delight activities. And there is still more to come. You can find out more information by visiting our new web site at <http://cityweb/cd>. Employees are encouraged to also suggest their own ideas and become part of the customer delight movement! Gung Ho!

"Here is a simple but powerful rule - always give people more than what they expect to get."

-Nelson Boswell

Another feature of the newsletter is the Customer Delight Challenge. We invite and encourage employees to share their personal stories with us so that we can pass them on to others. There is much we can learn from others. Your experiences with other

The Winners

Next Month it Could be You!

July Delightful Dollars Winners

Randy Schaeffer - PW Facilities
Ed Weisenberger - PW Facilities
Gaynell Drummond - Library

Customer Service Challenge

Patricia Neal, PW Admin.

Word Find Winner

Nellie Walton, 311 Call Center



MESSAGE FROM THE BOSS

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

In the first week of October I will be awarding the first annual Exceptional Service Award during our celebration of Customer Service Week. This award is presented to the team who has demonstrated a commitment to provide unparalleled service to our customers, exceed citizen expectations, provide innovative solutions and realize our vision to become a leader in public service.

To nominate a team, please send your nomination to me in writing (via e-mail or hardcopy to City Hall) to include a list of the names of the team members, the team name, division, department and/or section, and a one to two page description of why this team is deserving of the Exceptional Service Award. All nominations are due no later than September 29, 2008 at close of business. More information is available at <http://cityweb/cd>.



Take-Aways From This Issue

Hear what the city manager has to say about the Exceptional Service Award

Read about a co-worker's service experience in *Look Who's Making a Difference*

Learn about the team effort of customer service

Read our customer's comments about you in the "Wow Factor"

An Inspection Correction

Look Who's Making a Difference

Mr. Johnson contacted 311 to express his profound gratitude regarding Kris Bowers assisting him in a problem with his inspection request for that Monday. Mr. Johnson called at 2:30 p.m. to inquire whether or not he was going to get his inspection that he submitted. Kris found his request but a mistake was made by another office and the notes in the request stated the inspection was for a week later. Mr. Johnson was so very upset as he had taken time off from work and was losing salary.

Kris understood how upset Mr. Johnson was and directly contacted Mike Portonova and Ricky Hatcher to see if there was something they could do to help this gentleman. Both inspectors took the time to adjust their schedule to go out and do their respective inspections that very afternoon even though it was late in the day.

Mr. Johnson called the 311 supervisor and profusely thanked the City for helping him. He was very emotional when explaining his situation and he stated that he has never encountered such caring people that would go out of their way to help. This was truly a team effort between Codes and 311 to correct an honest mistake. This resulted in a customer being overwhelmed with emotion and gratitude! This is a great example of customer delight and team effort! Great job!

Customer Service – It's a TEAM Effort!

As a consumer, you are able to recognize when you have received good customer service and when you have not. But as a customer service professional, you might not always be able to recognize when **you** are providing great customer service and when you are not. You may sometimes think you are giving good customer service, but the customer may perceive that service as below expectations.

System: A group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements of a complex whole.

One of the primary reasons we don't recognize our own shortcomings in customer service is that we do not realize that customer service is a **system** that must be maintained and improved. To build an effective customer service system, we must understand what influences that system and how those influences affect customer service.

An outstanding customer service system must be built on sound customer service principles. Without these principles in place, a customer service system cannot reach the level to which most organizations aspire.

Customer Service Principle:
You cannot provide outstanding external customer service until you provide outstanding internal customer service.

Internal customers are folks who receive your personal work output. For example, a parks grounds keeper depends on someone to order equipment or supplies for him/her to complete the work. Or an administrative assistant depends on other staff input to be able to complete a report. Even the City Manager needs information from departments to be able to make decisions



regarding city operations and direction. None of us work alone and we all depend on others both in our departments and outside of our department to get our respective jobs done.

How do you measure up when it comes to providing great internal customer service?

How do you treat co-workers? Do you cheerfully greet and acknowledge co-workers throughout the day? Are you ready to help a co-worker with a problem or find an answer if they have a question? Do you share information and keep your team informed? Are you prepared to jump in and help when someone is out on leave? Are you timely in responding to requests or getting your part of the job completed? Do you have some fun or a little play time in your office or within your team?

These are just simple questions to ask yourself how you are doing with your internal customer service. Working together as a team, treating each other with respect, and yes, having a little fun... directly affects our ability in providing customer delight to our external customers. Having an outstanding customer service system must start on the inside.

What's the Word?

In Customer Service

There is a bonus word somewhere in this edition of *Customer Delight* that refers to customer service. It doesn't quite fit in the sentence it's in but it definitely fits the right approach to customer service. Find that word and you could win a Customer Delight Prize Package! Call 728-2020 or e-mail customerdelight@hampton.gov with your answer to be entered into the contest.

THE WOW FACTOR

Comments from our Customers

"Thank heaven for the people that work for the City, for all that you've done for us and for keeping my garbage picked up. Those guys that do the garbage pick-up are super; they do a super job. And I thank you so much for taking care of our city the way you do."

-Tide Mill Resident

Customer Service Challenge



Submitted by DJ Russell, 311 Call Center

My favorite business is Chick-fil-A at Coliseum Crossing. The reason has nothing to do with the food (although I do like it). It has to do with their customer service. It is fantastic and everyone else knows it too because they are always busy, with lots of people there to order food. However, you rarely wait in long lines because they have enough people to handle the customers, have an organized system to prepare the food (and everyone who works there pitches in to make it happen) and get the product to the customer and in the rare instance when you do have to wait a bit, they almost always give you a coupon for a free sandwich for your trouble.

I will go to their business rather than any other fast food restaurant BECAUSE of their service. I sing their praises to everyone I know and wish other fast food establishments would learn from their example. I once heard their manager speak at a meeting about his success and he admitted that he only hired 1 out of 100 applicants. Each applicant had to be interviewed by a team and if anyone on the team rejected them, they were not hired. Their commitment to hiring workers who are dedicated to customer service shows in their everyday performance and attitude. They don't provide customer service; they ARE customer service.

Tell us your story and you will be put in a drawing for a free vacation day.

**Submit your story to:
customerdelight@hampton.gov
or call 728-2020 by
September 30.**

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