



# CUSTOMER DELIGHT

Deliver To:

Volume 1, Issue 4

<http://cityweb/cd>

November 2008

## Customer Service Week Ends with a Bang!

Many of us had fun during Customer Service Week 2008 this year. ***Racing Our Way Into Customer Delight*** was energizing and a very creative way for us to focus on customer service. Did you make it to Victory Lane with your checkered flag?

During Customer Service Week, all the Delightful Dollar nominations for the previous 12 months were eligible for a grand prize drawing. The winners this year are Cadet T. Steele, HPD (iPOD Nano); George Onks, Facilities (\$35 Olive Garden gift certificate) and Andrew Pasterczyk; Wastewater (\$35 Outback gift certificate). Congratulations and keep up your customer delight efforts, you are making a difference!

This year we ended the week with Employee Fest where we all had a great time enjoying a few laughs, fellowship, food, and fun. The City Manager was on hand to award the first annual City Manager's Exceptional Service Award (a.k.a. "The Customer Service Cup"). This award is presented to the team who best exemplifies, characterizes, and promotes the principles of customer delight through their

daily interactions with the public or other city employees.

Congratulations goes out to the Drainage Maintenance Heavy Equipment Team who won this year's award!

Each year, the City Manager will call for nominations and a panel of judges will review the nominations and make recommendations to the City Manager. This year we had some wonderful nominations – so keep your eyes open for some great teams next year! Watch for more information and guidelines to nominate for next year's competition.

We also want to take a little time to thank all the folks who helped to make the Employee Fest a success.

Thanks go out to Human Resources for coordinating the effort, Parks & Recreation for all they did and the use of Sandy Bottom (what a great location!), and of course our city manager, Mr. Jesse Wallace for supporting everything.

Throughout the week, many pictures were taken of Customer Service Week and the Employee Fest. Be sure to check out all the great photos online at <http://cityhall.hampton>.



*Drainage Maintenance Heavy Equipment Team members Jim Burdette, Pat Ray, Michael Thorson, and Vincent Lanier were this year's Customer Service Cup Winners. Winners not pictured: Michael Booker and Peanut Henson.*

## The Winners

*Next Month It Could Be You!*

### September Delightful Dollars Winners

Travis Saunders - PW Solid Waste  
Wanda Johnson - PW Solid Waste  
Facilities Team of Milton Tucker, Dallas Fairbanks, James Smith, George Onks, Tyrone Little, Ted Hines, James Ridley, Ben Lassiter, James Laffin, Duane Woods, Brian Williams, Rick Blue, Paul Hicks, Mike Hopson, Mike McCarthy, and Micah Gardner

### Customer Service Challenge

DJ Russell, 311 Call Center

### Word Find Winner

Carole Birdsong, Northampton Library



One of the deep secrets of life is that all that is really worth doing is what we do for others.

-Lewis Carol

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOSS

### Customer Service Cup Winners

I would like to thank all employees who attended the Employee Fest on October 12 and helped make it a huge success. I appreciate the efforts of those staff members who have risen to the challenge and make customer service a top priority.

I also want to thank all of those who submitted nominations for the City Manager's Exceptional Service Award, also known as the Customer Service Cup. I am pleased to have presented the Cup to the Drainage Maintenance Heavy Equipment Team at Employee Fest. This team is focused on going above-and-beyond the call of duty on a daily basis. They have a "can do" attitude, and they get the job done no matter what it takes. Congratulations to them and those that support them in the exercise of their daily operations.

In addition to the Cup, which will rotate to a new team every year, the names of the team members will be memorialized on a plaque in city hall. The team also received a monetary token of appreciation.

Again, thank you to all employees for your continued efforts, and keep striving to exceed our citizens' expectations!



### THE WOW FACTOR

*Comments from our Customers*

"The Hampton employee took the initiative to go way beyond what was normal to make the trash collection happen."

### Take-Aways From This Issue

Customer Service Week Wrap-up

Who won the Customer Service Cup?

Ricky Hatcher is Making a Difference

How Can you Win a Turkey?

Customer Service Challenge Could Give You a Free Vacation Day



Please Recycle

# The Secret CODE is Customer Service

## Look Who's Making a Difference

Being a codes inspector doesn't always offer a lot of opportunities to please a customer. The nature of the job often leads to customers being unhappy with codes violations or additional costs for upgrading. However, offering wonderful service and going above-and-beyond will often win over any customer.

Ricky Hatcher, a plumbing/mechanical inspector, did just that when he helped a customer through a permitting situation that could have ended up taking days and causing a lot of frustration. Instead the situation was handled quickly, efficiently, and with wonderful customer care. Ricky took customer service a step further and won over a customer in the process.

The customer came to Codes Compliance needing a mechanical permit. The home owner had purchased the permit to install a dual HVAC system. When the customer called for his inspection, Ricky realized that a gas line had been installed that was not on the initial permit.

The home owner did not inform Permits that the gas line was going to be installed and Permits did not include it on the permit. The home owner assumed that by informing Permits that he was putting in a HVAC system that the gas line would be covered by the permit. It was a miscommunication between everyone.

Ricky decided to fix the permit rather than turn the job down, which would have resulted in added work for the department and not great customer service.

Ricky first called 311, who then called the Land Development Service Center, and when the problem was determined, it was added to the permit. Ricky completed the inspection and the entire situation ended favorably for everyone. Had Ricky chosen to handle this differently, it could have lasted for days and left a sour taste in everyone's mouth.

Ricky's approach was not only customer service, but customer delight! Ricky's attitude should be commended and offered as a prime example of what we, as an organization, are attempting to accomplish.

"I think we need to go the extra mile when we are out in the field to please the customer," said Ricky Hatcher.



## Customer Service Challenge

Submitted by DJ Russell, 311 Call Center

Recently, I had a bad experience with a business that reinforced what good customer service should be and the impact that bad customer service has on customers. I had ordered an appliance which came in and was picked up without difficulty. However, a week later I was still getting reminder calls to pick up my purchase. So, I decided to contact the store. I figured a quick call would solve the problem.

In this day of automation, I expected to get a recording instead of a live person and I was not disappointed. I then had to figure out which department I needed and announce it to this recording to be connected. No problem so far since I knew which department I wanted before I called. If I hadn't known, I could have listened to a long listing of departments, hoping that the department I needed was there. How much easier for the customer if a live person had been available to help me, saving me time and frustration. But that is not the goal of these recordings. The goal is to save the store money by not having a live person available.

The store must have decided to save additional money by having no one available to answer the phones in the departments. The phone just rang and rang, with no way to get back to that recording or a live person. So, I hung up and redialed. This time, I took a chance and said "Operator" when that recording came back on. I actually got a live person, "Nice Lady Number One" and I then proceeded to explain that I was trying to reach someone in Merchandise Pick Up but the phone just rang and rang. "No problem," she said. She then connected me to the very same department, Merchandise Pick Up, with the very same result – the phone just rang and rang.

By now, I was getting genuinely annoyed and redialing for a third time. I snap at the recording, saying Operator again. I do realize that getting angry at a recording is not the brightest thing to do but I am getting nowhere and my "quick call" was turning into a 15 minute process with the clock still ticking.

When a male voice comes on, I try to be calm and nice, since I know my problem with this process is not his fault. I tell him again for the second time what I am trying to do. I tell him where I called, with a quick "Please don't connect me to Merchandise Pick Up," in case he makes the same mistake as Nice Lady Number One. He informs me he will page the manager for me. Finally, I think I am going to get this resolved but why should it take the manager to fix this problem, not to mention three phone calls and now close to 20 minutes?

The phone starts ringing and I anticipate what I am going to tell the manager when abruptly...

**Wondering what happened? Did DJ drive to the business and start throwing chairs to get their attention? Did she get her problem resolved?**

**Don't wait another minute to find out what happened. Visit the customer delight website at <http://cityweb/cd> and read the rest of the story.**

**Submit your own story by November 17 and you will be placed in a drawing to win 8 hours of vacation just like DJ did.**

**Submit your story by e-mail to [customerdelight@hampton.gov](mailto:customerdelight@hampton.gov) or by calling 728-2020.**

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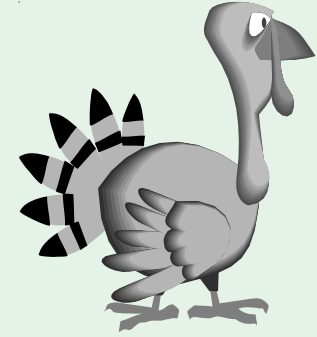
Published by the Information Technology Department

*Customer Delight* is published monthly. For more information or topic ideas, call 727-6876 or e-mail [rbolte@hampton.gov](mailto:rbolte@hampton.gov).



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## Who's Your Turkey?



Have you ever walked into a business and no one acknowledged your presence?

**"Gobble! Gobble!"**

Have you ever asked a sales person for some assistance only to be told, "That isn't my job"?

**"Gobble! Gobble!"**

Have you ever been hung up on when trying to resolve a problem with a business?

**"Gobble! Gobble!"**

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you have met the turkeys of customer service.

They are a sneaky bunch. They pop up and gobble at you on those days when you are completely stressed out. You left work late, the kids are screaming, the car broke down and the man at the towing company hung up on you.

**"Gobble! Gobble! Gobble!"**

You know these folks, they are those guys and gals you have to beat over the head to get their attention. They fight you every step of the way for anything you request, or maybe they don't even acknowledge you or avoid you all together. You probably have a few examples and faces rolling around in your head while your blood pressure rises thinking of them.

So here's the \$1 million question, are you ever a customer service turkey? When was the last time you gobbled at a customer? Come on, be honest with yourself. There was that one guy who just drove you up the wall telling you how to do your job and waving his finger claiming he pays your salary. You had a bad day, you couldn't take it, and maybe you didn't go out of your way to exhaust every option in fulfilling his request. It happens, we all have bad days.

But think about that time you had a bad day and someone made it a little better by helping you out. The tow guy saw how stressed you were and took you by Chick-fil-A on the way to your house which filled your empty belly and quieted the kids. It would make all the difference wouldn't it?

Remember that example the next time you deal with that, well, "turkey of a customer." Maybe he's having a rough day and a little extra effort from you might just make both of your days a little better.

So let's keep the turkey on the table (or on a City Hall ledge) and out of customer service. The only "gobbling" going on should be at your Thanksgiving feast.

## The Turkey Challenge

Submit your example of a customer service turkey experience and you could win a turkey for your Thanksgiving feast. Please submit your stories by **November 17** to [customerdelight@hampton.gov](mailto:customerdelight@hampton.gov) or by calling 728-2020. Submissions will be placed in a drawing for the prize turkey.