

and decision-making processes? How can I improve my performance in these areas?

7. Instill confidence and assuredness in the mission, despite daily challenges, obstacles, and inevitable changes. Questions to ask: What is my internal response to challenge or change? Do I perceive these as nuisances or opportunities? What message do I communicate to others when a challenge or the need for change occurs? Do I demonstrate calmness and confidence? Do I emphasize our combined ability to deal positively and constructively with the issues while remaining focused on the vision and goals? Do I provide the guidance, support, and encouragement required to navigate through rough spots and overcome obstacles? In what specific ways can I do this more effectively?

8. Form complementary alliances with others. Questions to ask: In what skill and knowledge areas am I strongest? In what areas am I least skilled and knowledgeable? In what ways can I best employ the strengths of others to compensate for my weaker areas? In what ways can I offer my strengths to assist others? How can we best combine our skills and knowledge to accomplish our mutual objectives and goals?

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Service to Others

We receive in the same measure with which we give, so we must serve others in the same way we would like to be served.

Within our daily occupations, our chosen avocations, and our personal relationships we encounter many opportunities to serve others. Whether this service is direct or indirect, public or private, compulsory or voluntary, we alone determine the character of our service. Poor, grudging service often leads to undesirable outcomes. Excellent, willing service usually leads to rich rewards, both tangible and intangible.

Current occupational trends indicate an ever-increasing growth in sales and service-related occupations. Successful salespeople and service providers understand that the high visibility inherent to these jobs can work either for or against them. They are committed to giving outstanding service and work hard to acquire the necessary skill sets. Employers recognize employees who consistently provide superb service and score high in customer satisfaction and are typically generous with accolades, promotions, and salary increases.

In addition, these employees earn customer loyalty and trust, the respect and admiration of coworkers, and the satisfaction of a job well done.

Dedicated service to our family members, friends, and community brings a special type of compensation. Whether performing necessary household tasks, helping a family member, assisting a friend or neighbor, or volunteering in a school or nursing home, we contribute our time and energy to help others. In return, we might receive a smile, a hug, a word of thanks, or just the knowledge that we have made a difference. These lasting treasures may not increase our financial worth, but they will improve our self-worth and our worth to others.

To evaluate and improve your service attitude, follow the *Steps to Success* and learn from the *Mistakes to Avoid*.

Mistakes to Avoid:

- ***Resent dealing with the public, but remain in a service-related job.*** Result: Grow bitter rather than better in your occupation.
- ***Avoid learning how to better deal with difficult people.*** Result: Engage with problematic people at their level; become defensive and argue with them. You may win the argument, but you will probably lose or damage the relationship.
- ***Adopt an arrogant attitude toward those you serve.*** Result: Impress others with your pompous superiority; this may distract them from your inferior service.
- ***Think about your own needs while serving others.*** Result: Your words may say, "How can I serve you?", but your attitude screams, "How can you serve me?"
- ***Fail to listen with the intent to understand and assist.*** Result: Assume you know what others want or need.
- ***Believe you are more important than those you serve.*** Result: Act as if you are the most important person in the room, and possibly end up being the only person in the room. Shout "Me, me, me!" and watch others flee, flee, flee!

Steps to Success:

1. **Establish personalized contact and rapport with each customer/individual you serve.** Questions to ask: Have I introduced myself properly? Have I put the individual at ease? Have I asked how I can help? Have I given this individual my full attention? Have I communicated a genuine desire to help? Have I respectfully called them by name and maintained appropriate eye contact? (Note: Steady eye contact is not equally valued in all cultures!)
2. **Ask the customer/individual how you can assist, and then listen objectively to the response with the intent to understand.** Questions to ask: Have I asked the customer what is needed or expected? Have I checked my understanding by restating what I have been told? Am I receptive to what is being said? Are there any barriers to understanding (e.g., defensiveness, anger, language, bias, culture, etc.)? If so, how can I mitigate or overcome these?
3. **Determine how to achieve customer satisfaction while upholding company/organizational policies.** Questions to ask: Have I asked the customer to describe his or her expectations? How can I best address these needs or expectations to satisfy the customer and meet company requirements? What are the relevant organizational guidelines? Who is the appropriate authority for additional guidance or assistance?
4. **Present the possible solutions.** Questions to ask: Does the proposed solution meet customer expectations? Have

I provided them with options? Does my response address the needs to the customer's satisfaction?

5. **Strive to provide the totality of the customer experience in compliance with corporate policy and expectations.** Questions to ask: Have I used my skills to the best of my ability to meet customer/individual requirements? Have I represented my organization/company services and products in accordance with corporate policies? Have I requested and responded thoughtfully to customer feedback? Is the customer satisfied with the product or service? Am I satisfied with my behavior, attitude, and knowledge?

- 1.) What is a big mistake?
Why?
- 2.) Name a good step. Why is it important? Do you think?