Achieving the Gold Standard: How Exceptional Customer Service Creates Family Friendly Schools

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Achieving the Gold Standard:
How Exceptional Customer Service Creates Family Friendly Schools

National Youth at Risk Conference
Savannah, Georgia
March 4, 2015
Welcome!

- Pam Pajerski - Principal, Cumming ES
- Katy Gunter - Parent Involvement Coordinator, Cumming ES
- Natalie Sanfilippo - Title I Lead, Cumming ES
- Jennifer Williams - Quality Work Facilitator, Cumming ES
- Todd Smith - Principal, Midway ES
- Daisy Tremps - Parent Involvement Coordinator, Midway ES

**Purpose:** To learn from the best practices of two award winning Title I schools and the Ritz Carlton to ensure that all parents are welcomed into their schools. Through small, but influential changes, we will begin making education work for all Georgians.
What is the Family-Friendly Schools Partnership Award?

- Annual awards that recognize Title I schools for their exceptional commitment to fostering welcoming environments that encourage families to become active partners in improving student achievement and success
- Timeline
- Mock Walk-Throughs
- Four factors are considered when assessing a school’s welcoming environment:
Physical Environment

● “The physical appearance of the school building and surrounding areas such as the main entrance, halls, parking lots, signage and landscaping”
Physical Environment
Physical Environment
Personal Contact

“The visible interactions between school staff and families and/or community members, such as acknowledging parents or guests in the school, friendly greetings from front office staff, or public recognition for parents and community members who volunteer and contribute to school and student success”
Personal Contact
Communication

• “The way that the school keeps families and the community informed through sources such as a welcome letter, up-to-date school calendar of events and holidays, a staff directory, announcements on social media websites or a school map for visitors. Information for parents should be provided in various languages and should be easy to understand”
Cumming Elementary Online Parent Resource Center

Welcome to Cumming’s OPRC! Thank you for stopping by. We hope you find this website a valuable source of information to help in supporting your child’s academics. Check back often to find wonderful videos, articles, and tools to ensure your child succeeds to his or her highest potential!
Communication
School Practices and Policies

“The opportunity for families and community members to provide feedback, actively contribute by serving on committees that address policies and procedures, or participate in parent organizations that are inclusive of the entire school community”
School Practices and Policies
School Practices and Policies
Midway Elementary
PRESENTATION | Creating Welcoming Environments
CREATING WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS

Poor Service Experiences
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
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What is your WORST customer service experience?
Creating Welcoming Environments
What are the benefits of creating a welcoming environment?

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CREATING WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS

- Make students want to learn
- Make parents want to participate and volunteer
- Make school staff enjoy their jobs
- Make community members want to invest in the school
- Improve parent-school communications
- Make the school a place of trust, safety, and resources to students, parents, and the community at large
CREATING WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS

“The evidence is consistent, positive, and convincing: When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.”

CREATING WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS
for parents, students and the community

- General Service Principles
- Set the Stage
- Finish with a Flourish
- Workplace Manners
GENERAL SERVICE PRINCIPLES
IMPORTANT COMPONENTS OF GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Do not overcomplicate service
- The most important word in service is “always”
- Do not underestimate the importance of psychology in service
- Pick up on “tells” in order to connect with people quickly
- Take the initiative and practice one extra degree
THE POWER OF “I”...
Taking personal ownership

The Story of...

**Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody!**

There was an important job to be done and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it. **Anybody** could have done it, but **Nobody** did it. **Somebody** got angry about that, because it was **Everybody’s** job. **Everybody** thought **Anybody** could do it, but **Nobody** realized that **Everybody** wouldn’t do it. It ended up that **Everybody** blamed **Somebody** when **Nobody** did what **Anybody** could have done.
HANDLING SERVICE ISSUES....
...is an Art Form

- Let the individual vent
- Do not become defensive
- Use Appropriate body language
- Speak softly and be patient
- Ask open-ended questions
- If you hear it, own it
- Do not play the “Blame Game”
- Make the resolution fit the problem
SET THE STAGE
FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Strong impressions are made in the first five seconds of meeting someone
- People will judge you on your facial expressions, your grooming, gestures and even the way you sit or stand and carry yourself
- The language you choose also reflects upon your school
- How you say something is as important as what you say
WHO WOULD YOU RATHER WORK WITH?
PROFESSIONAL GROOMING

Avoid anything exaggerated or overdone such as:

- Clothing & Jewelry
- Hairstyle & Fingernails
- Makeup, Cologne & Perfume

Your work attire should be:

- Appropriate... professional
- What message are you sending?
What are the benefits of when employees are positive?

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YOUR ATTITUDE IS CONTAGIOUS

- Increased productivity
- Protect your school’s reputation
- Spread a positive attitude
- Have better safety records
Fish Philosophy

Fish Philosophy
Make Their Day
Be There
Play
Choose Your Attitude
HOW YOU SAY SOMETHING IS AS IMPORTANT AS WHAT YOU SAY
What are some of the words and phrases to be avoided in the workplace and why?
PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU SAY

Please avoid...

What you *say* is also a reflection on your school and its mission

- What’s up?
- Huh? What did you say?
- There’s nothing I can do
- It’s the computer’s fault
- That’s how we do it here
- But...
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES

That could never happen here!...
I am so sorry you had that experience.

You need to...
Can you provide me with...

It is school’s policy...
Let me see what I can do to help you.
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES

I don’t know...
Please allow me to find out for you.

No!...
What I can do is...

Calm down!...
I can see you are very upset...

That’s not my job...
I will find someone who can better assist you with...
ALL FIVE SENSES
FINISH WITH A FLOURISH
TRUST AND CONFIDENCE
are the building blocks to creating
stakeholder loyalty and engagement
SHOWING APPRECIATION
is another important building block to creating loyalty and engagement
THE LAST IMPRESSION: ACTIVITY

- Is your last interaction as good as the initial impression?
- What elements are needed to create a lasting impression?
What elements are needed to create a lasting impression?

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<th>Face-to-Face</th>
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WORKPLACE MANNERS
WHAT IS ETIQUETTE AND WHAT ARE MANNERS?

“Etiquette really is about treating people with consideration, respect, honesty and understanding.”

“Manners are the tools that will let you accomplish this with ease, simplicity and confidence.”

~ Peter Post – Business Etiquette Author
ACTIVE LISTENING

- An important component of excellent customer service is active listening, which is a hard skill to master.

- What is **ACTIVE** listening?

- What are the reasons why we do **NOT** actively listen?

- What are the reasons why we **SHOULD** actively listen?
ACTIVE LISTENING LEADS TO TRUST.

There are 3 magical words to connect quickly with people

“TELL ME MORE”
WORKPLACE CONVERSATIONS

What topics are not appropriate to discuss at work?
TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

1. Answer within three rings...and with a smile
2. Introduce yourself
3. Use your school and/or department name
4. Use the caller’s name... if you have it
5. Ask permission to place a caller on hold and always offer additional assistance
VOICEMAIL ETIQUETTE

Always keep in mind that voicemail is not private

- Speak slowly, clearly, keep it brief and to the point
- Leave your name and repeat your phone number twice
- Do not say it is urgent unless it is
- Provide the caller with an alternative on how to reach you
- Return calls within 24 hours
SPEAKERPHONE ETIQUETTE

- Do not use a speakerphone to check your voicemail if others can hear it
- Only use a speakerphone for conference calls
- When you do use a speakerphone, **always** introduce everyone in the room
- Always close doors for privacy
- Ask permission to place a call on a speakerphone if necessary
Subject: **EMAIL ETIQUETTE**

- Be very, very careful – email is not private
- Use a salutation at the beginning and at the ending of the message
- Be concise, and to the point
- Do not use all caps as it appears that you are shouting
- Use proper punctuation and capitalization
- Enable automatic spell check and proof read
- Never send an email if you are tired, stressed or angry
Nothing will destroy your credibility quicker than if word gets out that you cannot be trusted with confidential information.
What is the most important thing you’ve heard today?
Let’s Tweet!

- Answer one of the questions using a Twitter account and less than 140 characters:
  - What is the most important thing you’ve heard today?
    - One thing I learned is...
  - What is something you might take back to your school?
    - I will take back...
  - A challenge I have is...

#NYARgoldstandard
Cumming Elementary
Questions
Thank You