



CUSTOMER DELIGHT

Deliver To:

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“Taz” Mania Swirls to Customers’ Delight

Annette “Taz” Knox is Making a Difference

Was it the caffeine or perhaps the sugar from a really good donut that has Annette “Taz” Knox so energized? Within minutes the true reason was apparent ... this Hampton recycling technician has a passion for her job and the citizens she serves.

Taz has been with the City for over 20 years and done everything from cleaning ditches to spraying for bugs and mosquitoes. She is proud to work for the City and has been in her current position since the early 90’s.

As we began discussing her request tickets for the day, Taz exclaimed, “I have to get my lists in order so I can plot my course as efficiently as possible.”

The nickname Taz surely fits this little whirlwind of energy. Shooting from one end of the trash can pile to the next, picking up tops and wheels and other pieces of recycle and

trash bins, I thought for sure I saw flashback images of the cartoon Tasmanian Devil. This woman meant business and she wouldn’t let her customers wait one second longer than they had to for her response.

“My customers are my job security and I’ll do whatever it takes to please them.”

And I was amazed at her rushing around piecing together this trash can and that recycling bin. She made a point of doing

all she could to fix the reported problems from her customers without any cost to them. She even went as far as to rescue old trash cans for future use.

When an old trailer park was torn down, Taz was spinning her way around it picking up every last trash and recycling can to reuse. How many businesses do you know who would go to that much trouble to recycle and save money for its customers?



“If I order a new trash can it costs them money, if I can piece one together or find a used one I can clean up, the citizens don’t have to pay a dime.”

With the economy the way it is, it’s good to see someone is always thinking of ways to save money and reduce waste. From quick service, to a positive attitude, to being environmentally and fiscally responsible ... Taz-mania has taken over Hampton in a very good way!



Ready for a Day Off?

Send a short statement (50 words or less) about your job’s “Higher Purpose” to customerdelight@hampton.gov. If your entry is selected for next month’s newsletter, you win! February’s higher purpose winner was Jennifer Steveson, Assessor’s Office:

“When I first started working for the Assessor’s Office, I thought all I was going to do was to value real estate. Now I know that my Higher Purpose is to fairly and accurately assess all of the properties within the City so that no one person is unfairly burdened by taxes.”

The Winners

Next Month It Could Be You!

January Delightful Dollars Winners
Carol Evan, Procurement
Donna Hodges, City Manager’s Office

Higher Purpose Challenge
Jennifer Steveson, Assessor’s Office

Find the Customer Delight Words!

Higher Purpose is about looking beyond the surface of what we do to see how our jobs really matter. To learn more, read the back page article “The Butterfly Effect of Customer Delight.” Or go to <http://cityweb.city.hampton.local/cd/>, click on “What is your Higher Purpose?” and turn up the volume!

Customer Delight Word Search

Find the words from our Customer Delight Training Class. Words may be forward, backward, or diagonal. Good Luck!

E R O I I G T I I E T A
S E U A E I W T L S N E
O R I C D E C I V R E S
P T E A U S M M I I M E
R N I A T S E E F F O C
U W E N I R T X S O M V
P P L X T W A O A W W A
R L I S T E N M M T O L
E E H C A E R U L E W U
H N T R K O R N E A R E
G T U T W L G N A E W R
I A N G R Y E S A L M R
H O N E S T H G I L E D

Customer
WIFM
Angry
Walmart
Delight
Value
Listen
Internal
Smile
Coffee Stain
Pickle
Wow Moment
Attitude
Higher Purpose
Eternal
Taxes
Service
Honest

Customer Delight Training Going Beyond Good to Great!

Upcoming customer service training sessions will be held on:

Tuesday, March 31, 9 a.m.-noon or 1-4 p.m.
Tuesday, May 5, 9 a.m.-noon or 1-4 p.m.
Wednesday, June 3, 9 a.m.-noon or 1-4 p.m.

To register, contact:
HRFrontDesk@hampton.gov or 727-6407

All Sessions held in Human Resources, 4th Floor, City Hall



Please Recycle

In Like a Lion...Out Like a Lamb!

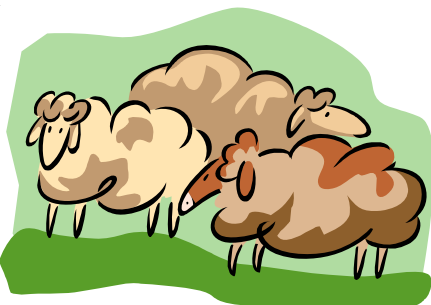
Have you ever had a customer that came at you like a lion? You know the type ...ready to pounce on you, roaring about a problem and demanding you fix it? Customer "lions" can be intimidating and over-bearing.

Customers become upset for many reasons. Sometimes, usually agreeable people happen to have a bad day and if you catch them at the wrong moment, they can take their frustrations out on you. Sometimes they even become unruly and disruptive over what seems to be insignificant issues. Often, these temporarily grumpy customers will end up eventually apologizing to you.

Other unruly customers act this way because they think this kind of behavior will get them what they want. If customers believe that unruly behavior will bring immediate, positive results they will use this behavior to get attention. Unfortunately, we often reinforce this behavior by paying special attention to our 'customer lions.' Don't forget the customer who complains quietly like a lamb, they also deserve the same attention!

Whatever the reason for a customer to "roar" at you, following a few steps can help turn your Lion into a Lamb.

1. **Recognize the customer is not angry at you personally.** Remember, they are upset about the situation or the organization - try not to take it personally.
2. **Acknowledge the customer's feelings and that the problem exists.** You don't have to agree or even take the blame. Say something like, "I can understand why you're upset; let me see what I can do to help." If you made a mistake – apologize and take ownership to correct it.
3. **Really listen and keep the lines of communication open.** Ask good open ended questions, get to the heart of the problem, and let them talk with minimal interruptions.
4. **Tell the customer what you CAN do – not what you can't.** This is not the time to give ultimatums – it will only upset them more or close down the conversation. Telling a customer "you can't" only frustrates them. Offer options or alternatives and try to get the customer to offer what they think the solution is and work from there.



5. **Stay in control of your emotions.** This is not always easy when you have a lion in front of you. However, you have a better chance at resolving the issue if you respond in a calm, confident, polite way. You never know who's watching you as you respond to unruly behavior in a professional manner.

Practice using these steps to help you handle unruly customer lions. As you become more confident, you will be able to tame your customer lion and have them walk out like a lamb!

How to Become a Lion Tamer

"In like a lion, out like a lamb," is an old phrase that exemplifies March weather. The beginning of March is usually chilly with remnants of winter weather (the lion) and by the end of March spring has sprung (the lamb).

In customer service circles, the phrase has a similar meaning. A "ferocious" customer enters the door complaining, angry, yelling, or maybe even making a scene (the Lion). But with proper handling and care, the customer can exit cheerful, satisfied, and calm (the Lamb).

How do you do it? The first step is to think of this Customer Lion as a challenge. This is what separates those who have a reputation for great customer service from those who are simply going through the motions. In order to have truly excellent customer service skills, you have to be motivated by that challenge.

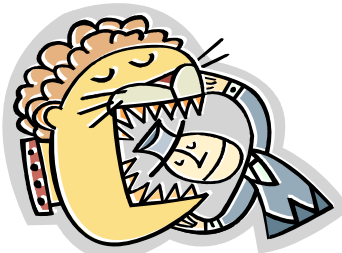
For example, think about the football player who is motivated to score the touchdown. When they have accomplished their goal, they feel a great sense of personal satisfaction. The same is true when the cop finally catches a criminal he has been pursuing, or the feeling a teacher gets when the student finally lights up and declares, "I get it now"! They feel that sense of satisfaction one feels when something meaningful has been accomplished.

In the same way, people who provide truly exceptional customer service – "Lion Tamers" as we like to call them – are strongly motivated by a sense of accomplishment when they have turned a Lion into a Lamb. They delight in taking on the toughest customers, and see it as a challenge, which in turn makes them really good at delighting their customers.

In this and many other issues of this Customer Delight Newsletter, you have read about many methods and tips on how to provide exceptional service. But going through the motions is not enough if you want to be considered a true Lion Tamer.

As you are dealing with tough customers, think of it as a challenge and see just how successful you can be ... are you up to the challenge?

Do you have a Lion to Lamb story? Send them to us at customerdelight@hampton.gov or leave a message at 728-2020 to be eligible for a paid day of vacation!



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Please Recycle

The Butterfly Effect of Customer Delight

Does the flap of a butterfly's wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas? Sounds crazy, but some wise geeks (*REALLY* smart science and math people) have argued that there may be something to the idea!

It's called the butterfly effect — a term used in Chaos Theory to describe how tiny changes can affect big, complex systems - like weather patterns. So, scientists argue, the wing movements of a butterfly may influence wind strength and movement throughout weather systems, and in theory, could cause tornadoes halfway around the world! This is what makes predicting weather so unpredictable.

How does this relate to customer delight? The butterfly effect has also been used to explain how seemingly small human actions can have huge consequences (good or bad). So *DO NOT* think that the job that you do is unimportant! The job you do and the way you do it matters. Whatever your job for the City, you have the power to better the quality of life in the City of Hampton.

What is the Higher Purpose of Your Job?

Walt Crockett used to think all he did was survey property, but he also helps to revitalize Hampton through new construction. And doesn't that help to bring in revenue so the City can provide valuable services? And doesn't that improve the quality of people's lives? You bet it does!

Can you see how what you do has a butterfly effect - a HUGE impact - on the City? So what is *YOUR* Higher Purpose?



Higher Purpose Spotlight

Walt Crockett, Engineering Services

"I was hired to do survey work for the city. The more I thought about it I realized that my real value to the city was that I am a member of a team that works to revitalize Hampton through construction of new facilities."

Send your "Higher Purpose" to customerdelight@hampton.gov and you will be put in a drawing for a free vacation day!

THE WOW FACTOR

Comments from our Customers

"The City of Hampton's inspection office is an absolute pleasure to deal with."

-Awny Pendergrass