



# CUSTOMER DELIGHT

Deliver To:

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<http://cityweb/cd>

October 2008

## How Much Are You Worth?

Have you ever stopped to think about how much you are worth to the businesses you visit? If you visit the local convenience store every day for coffee, and again later for a soda and a snack, you may spend an average of \$4 a day at the store. Did you ever stop and think about what that means to that store or the people who work behind the counter?

Let's do the math. Using \$4 per day, multiplied by 260 work days equals \$1,040 a year. Over 5 years the amount equals \$5,200 and in twenty years \$20,800! Think about that for a moment. You will spend over \$20,000 at the convenience store in twenty years. Think of all the things that money could buy, yet you choose to spend it there. Do the store employees show their appreciation for your business? Do they act like you're worth \$20,000?

Let's look at another example. Say you purchase three cars over your lifetime. Each

car costs \$18,000. Because you love your cars so much, over time you also refer four other customers to the car dealership where you bought them; that's \$126,000! Are you worth \$126,000 to the car dealer and the car manufacturer? Do they treat you like a \$126,000 customer? Imagine what else \$126,000 would buy.

Consider some other examples. If you spend \$100 per week on groceries, you are worth \$104,000 to the grocery store over 20 years. To the gas station you are worth over \$41,000 (and rising) a year.

The point is, when you think about it, you pay a great deal of money over your lifetime to companies that – if they want to hang on to you – need to make sure you are treated well. Your loyalty to them is worth literally tens of thousands of dollars. If they don't treat you well you could, and should, move on. There are others out there waiting for the chance to earn your valuable business.

What about our customers? How much are they worth? Let's do the math.

Take the Smiths, a family of four with typical spending habits in Hampton. Mr. Smith also runs a small business. What do you think they are worth?

Adding up typical tax bills (real estate, sales, and property taxes), fees (city garbage collection, sewer/storm water, and telephone/cable fees) and additional amusement taxes, we find the Smiths are paying over \$2,700 in taxes a year as Hampton residents. If you factor in their small business, the Smiths pay an additional \$4,300 in business taxes. In 20 years, the Smiths will have paid over \$54,000 as residents, and adding in their small business, over \$140,000! The Smiths have elected to spend that money *here*, on *our* services that *we* provide. The Smiths are very valuable indeed! Do you treat your customers like they are worth it?

In order to earn customers' loyalty they have to know we care about them, we are here for them, and we understand their issues. Each of us is an advocate for the citizen, looking out for their best interests. When something isn't right it is everyone's job to get it fixed. It's about smile thinking ahead, putting yourself in the customer's shoes, and showing they matter – and matter a great deal!

If customers don't like the services *we* provide, they do have choices. They can move, or more likely, ask for a price reduction (tax cut). We cannot afford to lose our customers and it is in our own best interest to strive for their loyalty.

We are all valuable. Just like you are worth a great deal to the businesses you choose to shop at, the citizens that choose to live and work in Hampton are worth a great deal to us.

You could say it's common sense. If we just treated one another like we all had value, the world would be a better place. But remember that the whole goal of customer delight is to *exceed* the expectations of our

## The Winners

*Next Month it Could be You!*



Dacia Hollis, IT

Customer Service Challenge Winner

### August Delightful Dollars Winners

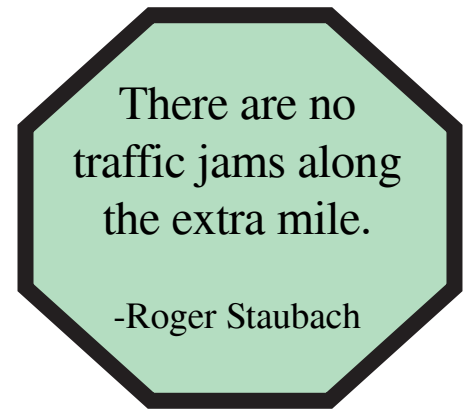
Ed Weisenberger, PW Facilities  
Randy Schaefer, PW Facilities  
Gaynell Drummond, Library

### Customer Service Challenge

Dacia Hollis, IT

### Word Find Winner

Cheryl Rolon, Criminal Justice Agency



customers. We want to wow them. We want them to tell their friends who live in other cities how well they are treated by the city workers in Hampton! We should treat our citizens like they spend tens of thousands of dollars on our product ... because they do!

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOSS

### The Customer Delight Vision

I would like to thank all of you who have engaged in the customer delight initiative with enthusiasm and vigor. It's through your efforts the vision to be the best can be realized.

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. Unfortunately I must select only one from the many deserving teams that were nominated, but I am very proud of the work of our staff and your participation in these efforts proves that you "get" customer service.

I hope to see you and your family at the Employee Fest that is planned for Sunday, October 12 from 1pm until 4pm at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. In addition to the great food, prizes, games, and entertainment, at approximately 3pm I will be announcing the winners of the Cup. Please come out and celebrate with me and with each other. We've got a great team!



### Take-Aways From This Issue

Remember who pays your salary

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

Read about a co-worker's delightful experience with a business

Find out how everyone contributes to customer delight

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



Please Recycle

# Customer Service Challenge

Submitted by Dacia Hollis, IT

About a month ago, my dentist referred me to an orthodontist for my daughter. I was told that “I would be truly impressed by this office.” This was an extreme understatement!

**WOW factor #1:** When I first made the call to set up the consultation appointment, I noticed there was this lightheartedness about the staff that was out of the ordinary, I almost felt at home talking over my daughter’s fears about the thought of getting braces. About 2 days later, I received a letter thanking me for the opportunity to allow them to consult my family and they looked forward to our first appointment; along with what looked like an admission ticket outlining the details of the upcoming appointment. This act of kindness and added fun certainly made me feel even more comfortable before I even stepped foot in the door.

**WOW factor #2:** The day of her appointment, I had all of my other children with me, including a 2-year-old. Immediately, I was welcomed not only by just saying “hello,” but

## THE WOW FACTOR

Comments from our Customers

“Two men from Hampton’s Sewage Department arrived on site 45 minutes after my call with a ‘can do’ attitude and performed the sewage line clean out process in less than 25 minutes.”

the staff came from behind the counter and greeted each one of us individually, making sure they asked each one of our names and what we had done this summer. That “WOWED” me to no end...I almost forgot that we had never been there before by the time introductions were over. They then told us that their office was “kid-friendly”... and it showed; they had an entire area just for play for little ones...it was amazing to see this knowing that all of their patients had to be older than the toys that were displayed. Just to know they understood the needs of the entire family, not just the patient, was impressive.

**WOW factor #3:** After my daughter was seen, I was consulted by the office manager as to what my options would be based on my insurance coverage. Not only was she thorough, she took her time to explain each thing slowly and in simple terms to make sure I understood everything that was in front of me. She then did something that I have never experienced; for everything that my daughter had to have done, it would cost \$4,200...she then explained that based on my coverage, I could probably have the same services done for much cheaper and that I should not use them, but explore what works better for my family and me financially because they never want to see a family placed in a financial burden. From that moment on, I didn’t care how much I had to pay, their unique ability to make me feel as if we mattered was the only thing that I was willing to pay for; I signed the contract.

**WOW factor #4:** The first section of my daughter’s braces was applied a few short weeks later and that night the orthodontist called me, thanked me once again for the pleasure to serve our family, checked on my daughter to make sure she was comfortable, and left her home number in case we needed to reach her for anything. Her outreach was impeccable!! Based on this experience, I have referred her to three additional people and I will continue to do so anytime someone asks me if I know a good orthodontist. By far, this was the best customer service I, as well as my family, have received thus far.

## Customer Delight – Everyone Contributes!

So, you don’t think you need to have good customer service skills because you do not work with the public on a routine basis? Wrong answer!

When we hear the terms customer service representative, customer advocate, or similar title, we generally think of someone who works directly with customers in person or on the phone. Although they have more contact with our external customers than some of us, *all* of us impact customer service in some way within our organization.

Let’s say a front desk person is responsible for providing forms to the

**Customer Service Principle:**  
*Everyone has the responsibility of projecting a “we care” attitude.*

All employees project one of three attitudes – *negative, neutral, or positive*. Projecting a neutral attitude can be as damaging to customer relationships as projecting a negative attitude. Walking by a customer and not even acknowledging their presence with a simple hello or a smile projects an uncaring attitude. A simple smile does not cost anything – not even a minute of your time.

While it is true that some employees have a great deal of interaction with customers, *everyone* has a responsibility of projecting a “we care” attitude. You may not have direct contact with customers – but either your work output impacts the customer or you may have casual contact with customers passing by on the street or in a city building. We all need to strive at having our customers walk away thinking, “They really do care.” How are you contributing to Customer Delight?

## 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 the word and you could win a Customer Delight Prize Package! Call 728-2020 or e-mail [customerdelight@hampton.gov](mailto:customerdelight@hampton.gov) with your answer to be entered into the contest.



public, but someone in another office is responsible for designing and printing those forms. The person responsible for printing or designing those forms directly impacts customer service if the customers cannot read those forms or properly fill them out. This could result in customer complaints – not about how they were treated by the front desk – but about the form itself.

For some employees, customer contact may be “casual.” Consider a customer that is in the lobby of City Hall and looking at the building directory. Clearly, the customer does not know where they need to go. An employee approaches the elevator (hint – employee is wearing a city logo polo shirt), and the employee’s body language appears to be in a hurry, avoids eye contact and ignores the customer and gets on the elevator. That employee probably just gave the customer a negative impression. At a minimum...that employee passed up the *opportunity* to make a positive impression on this customer.

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**Dacia received a day off of work for her submission. Tell us your story and you could win a free vacation day too. Submit your story to: [customerdelight@hampton.gov](mailto:customerdelight@hampton.gov) or call 728-2020 by October 24.**