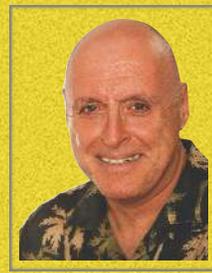


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 635 The Mindset for Improving Customer Service

Some ideas today on improving customer service. We all need to think about it. I'm Jerry Roberts and that's next on The Extra Point.

Customer service is important for every organization. Monopolies, like government agencies, should never treat customers in such a way that they think about that monopoly. Small companies can come off looking like big companies, by providing impressive service. Conversely, big companies can look like small companies with poor and uninspired service.

If true service evaluations were based on a uniform one-to-five-star basis, five stars being best, how many stars would yours get? Take a moment and focus on that. How many stars would your average customer give you?

Did you choose five stars? What would five-star service look like? There's no one way, but the words that pop out of my head right now as I write, are these: five-star service happens when someone takes complete ownership of my experience.

They made a decision on the experience I'm going to have, and I feel it. My confidence level rises and I just know I'm in the right place with the right product or service. But there's more.

The transaction goes well, but it doesn't have to be perfect. You see, I know if it isn't perfect, you're going to step up and smooth out the rough spots for me. Again, it's that confidence you've breathed into me with your attitude. But, there's still more.

More? I've taken ownership of your experience. Check. I saw to it that the transaction went down easy. Yeah, there were a couple of issues in the system but I took care of them. Check. You're happy. What more could there be?

There's another level organizations can get to. In our customer service course, CSI:Guam, we

talk about it, give examples of how to do it, and explain clearly what the objectives are. While I can't give those details here, I can ask a question.

Does how you serve the customer separate you from your competition, and make you the company they think of first when they think of what you sell? Again, does how you serve your customer separate you from your competition, and make you the company they think of first when they think of what you sell?

If you're not driving (you have to give disclaimers these days), close your eyes. 1. When you think of where to buy groceries, what company comes to mind first? 2. When you think of where to get a great dinner for your family, which restaurant comes up first? 3. When you want to buy a gift for someone special, where do you go to buy it?

If you're like most people, three distinct establishments came into your mind just now. There are reasons for that, and service is possibly one of them.

Here's an idea to leave you with if you want to improve your service. Include your customers in the discussions. Customer input isn't all you need, but it's an important part of the process. They know you and have seen the good and maybe the not so good. Their experiences can help focus you on strengths and weaknesses, and give you a basis to start with.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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