

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



810 What We Have Here is a Failure to Communicate

Among other courses I offer, I train companies in customer service, so I'm always on the lookout for stories to support the key points I work on. I'm Jerry Roberts and I picked up a story that shows how choosing the right talent to face the public really is something to think about. That's coming next, on The Extra Point.

It's an Internet story and I cannot vouch for its authenticity. That said, I have no doubt it or something like it has happened countless times. What follows are the words of a customer at Walmart, who is using one of the self-service checkout devices. She scans and bags the items, while the Walmart employee, the "monitor," observes.

Monitor — "Why are you double-bagging all of your groceries?"

Customer — "Excuse me?"

Monitor — "You are wasting our bags!"

Customer — "If you don't like the way I'm bagging the groceries, feel free to come on over here and bag them yourself."

Monitor — "That's not my job!"

Customer — "Okay, then I will bag my groceries how I please, if that's all right with you."

Monitor — "Why are you using two bags?"

Customer — "Because the bags are weak, and I don't want the handles to break or the bottoms to rip out."

Monitor — "Well that's because you are putting too much stuff in the bag. If you took half of that stuff out, and put it in a different bag, then you wouldn't need to double bag."

Customer — (Just staring at the monitor for 10 seconds) "So you want me to split these items in half, and put half of them in a different bag so that I don't have to double bag?"

Monitor — "Exactly."

Customer — "So I would still be using two bags to hold the same number of items."

Monitor — "No, because you wouldn't be double bagging."

Customer — (Trying to suppress a huge laugh) "Okay, so here I have a jug of milk and a bottle of juice double-bagged. If I take the milk out, and remove the double-bagging, and just put the milk in the single bag and the juice in that single bag — I'm still using two bags for these two items."

Monitor — "No, because you are not double-bagging them, so it's not the same number of bags."

Customer — (Looking around at 10 other customers who are clearly enjoying the show) "Is this like that Common Core math stuff I keep hearing about?"

Monitor — "Never mind...you just don't get it."

The customer then said the monitor went back to her little podium, so she could continue texting or playing games on her phone, or whatever it was she was doing before she decided to come over and critique her bagging skills.

What do we learn here? First-grade math skills do have lifetime value? Next, don't put anybody in front of customers who ever says — or even thinks the words — "that's not my job."

(Con't.)

Third, all of your advertising, all of your marketing, all of the effort and money you spend to get people through your doors, is riding on your front line workers...how well you've chosen them and how well you've trained them.

Think about that.

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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For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com

