



Contents

Special Features xi

Acknowledgments xiii

Foreword by Horst Schulze xv

Introduction:

The Only Shop in the Marketplace 1

Chapter One:

The Engineer on the Ladder: Reaching for the Highest Level of Service 4

Function Versus Purpose 5

First Steps First 6

Chapter Two:

The Four Elements of Customer Satisfaction: Perfect Product, Caring Delivery, Timeliness, and an Effective Problem Resolution Process 7

A Perfect Product 8

Delivered by Caring People 9

In a Timely Fashion 11

With the Support of an Effective Problem Resolution Process 12

Chapter Three:

Language Engineering: Every. Word. Counts. 14

Establish a Consistent Style of Speech 15

Create a Lexicon of Preferred Language and Phrasing 15

Choose Language to Put Customers at Ease, Not to Dominate Them 17

Concentrate Your Language Efforts on the Key Customer Moments: Hellos, Good-Byes, and the Times When Things Fall Apart 18

Shut Up Sometimes: The Artie Bucco Principle 20

Words Have Their Limits 20

Show, Don't Tell (And Don't Ever Just Point) 21

Phone and Internet Language and Communication Pointers 21

Chapter Four:

Recovery! Turning Service Failures Around 26

The Italian Mama Method 26

The Four Steps to Great Service Recoveries 27

The Elements of Follow-Up 32

Use Your Own Experience to Prepare You 36

Who Should Handle Customer Complaints? 39

Subtle is Beautiful: Service Recovery Below the Radar 41

Write-Offs Lead to Write-Offs 43

Chapter Five:

Keeping Track to Bring Them Back: Tracking Customer Roles, Goals, and Preferences 45

Principles of Noting and Sharing 46

Principle 1: Keep Your Systems Simple 46

Principle 2: If It's Important to Your Customer, It Belongs in Your System 48

Principle 3: The Information You Gather Needs to be Available in Real Time 51

Principle 4: Preferences Change; Assumptions are Tricky 52

Principle 5: Moods Change: Track Them 53

Principle 6: Don't Blow It with a Wooden Delivery 53

Principle 7: Using Technology to Ask for Information? It's a Fine Line between Clever and Creepy 54

Surprises Are Hazardous—Online and Off 56

Fear Not: Don't Be Deterred from Collecting Information—Thoughtfully 58

Chapter Six:

Building Anticipation *Into* Your Products and Services: Putting Processes to Work for You 59

Get Your Company to Think Like a Customer 60

Mr. BIV and the Art of Eliminating Defects 62

Don't Kill Mr. BIV's Messengers 64

Systematically Reducing Waste to Add Value—For You *and* Your Customers 66

Why Efficient Processes Can Transform Service 68

Stamping Out Waste? Don't Crush Value by Accident 70

Process-Based Anticipation on the Internet 73

Using Tools to Gather Information About Your Customers' Experience 75

Process-Based Solutions Become People Solutions 79

Chapter Seven:

Your People: Selection, Orientation, Training, and Reinforcement 84

We Are Already Our True Selves: Select for Traits 84

Keep the Hiring Bar High 88

Develop Selection Discipline 89

Create a Powerful Orientation Process 90

Use Orientation to Instill New Values, Attitudes, and Beliefs 90

Defining an Employee's Underlying Purpose 91

The Orientation Process Begins Sooner Than You Think 92

On Day One, Nothing Is Tangential 92

- Build a Brand Ambassador 93
- Training Employees to Anticipate—*Carefully* 94
- Reinforcement: The Daily Check-In 98

Chapter Eight:
**Leadership: Guiding the Customer-Centered
Organization 101**

- Service Leaders Matter Because People Power Service 101
- Five Characteristics of Great Service Leaders 103
- Moral Leadership 105

Chapter Nine:
**What's Worth it, and What's Not? Pointers on Value,
Costs, and Pricing 108**

- What Does Loyalty-Enhancing Service Really Cost? 108
- Gilding the Lily 110
- “Compared to What?”: Value Is Relative 111
- Pricing Is Part of Your Value Proposition 112
- Don't Charge a Customer for Performing the Heimlich 113
- Money Isn't Everything, But Money Issues Matter—Especially
How You Present Them 114

Chapter Ten:
**Building Customer Loyalty Online: Using the Internet's
Power to Serve Your Customers and Your Goals 115**

- The Internet's Double Edge 115
- Opinions: Everybody Has One. Evangelists: Every Company
Needs Them. 118
- The Internet Can Promote Commoditization. Avoid This
Through Individualization. 119
- Long Copy/Short Copy 119
- Online, the Window in Which to Show You're Extraordinary
Can Be Small 120

Amazon.com: A Brilliant Company, but Not the Most Realistic Model to Emulate 125

First Time Online: A Nuts-and-Bolts Case Study 127

Chapter Eleven:

Hello/Good-Bye: Two Crucial Moments with a Customer 131

Timelessly Time-Sensitive 132

Don't Rush Your Hellos and Good-Byes on the Telephone 135

Serving Disabled Customers Is a Responsibility *and* an Opportunity, from the Moment You Welcome Them at Your Door 135

Turn Your Receptionist into a Predator (Who Kills with Kindness) 138

It's Google—Not You—Who Decides Where Visitors Enter Your Site. Be Sure They're Greeted Properly Anyway 139

Taking Control of Good-Byes 141

The Hazards of Subcontracting Hellos and Good-Byes 142

Good-Bye for Now from the Authors—With Resources and Assistance for Your Journey 144

Appendixes 145

Appendix A:

Oasis Disc Manufacturing: Customer and Phone Interaction Guidelines and Lexicon Excerpts 147

Appendix B:

CARQUEST Standards of Service Excellence 153

Appendix C:

Capella Hotels and Resorts "Canon Card": Service Standards and Operating Philosophy 155

Notes 159

Index 162

Special Features

- Designing the Defects In 9
- Reset Customer Expectations You Can't Meet 12
- It's Not You. It's Them, *Plus* Their Background, *Plus* You 19
- Adding a Real Human Touch to a Mass Email Takes Less Time Than You'd Think 25
- Preemptively Unwad Your Staff's Shorts 28
- The Language of Service Recovery 30
- How Should You Compensate a Customer for a Service or Product Failure? 34
- Setting Up the Ritz 46
- How to Track Customer Preferences on the Internet—Without Intruding 57
- Eliminating Defects by Reducing Handoffs: Learning from Lexus 64
- Why Benchmark *Manufacturing* Companies? 67
- Borrowing from Xerox 69
- Service Alfresco 73
- Six Survey Blunders: How to Alienate Customers Fast 77
- Steering a Company Is Easier with a (3-D) Dashboard 78
- Volume Is No Excuse: Let's Get the Process Started 82
- Everyone's an Expert 94
- The Passion for Training 95
- The Cynics Among Us 103
- Leadership Throughout the Ranks 106

- Finding Gold in De-Gilding 110
- Managing Public Feedback Online 116
- The Finishing Touch for “Perfect” Websites: Human Contact 121
- Online, the Golden Rule Is *Permission* 124
- Less Can Be More with Preconfigured Software “Solutions” 129
- Which Level of Service Do You Provide? Letting Them Know from
“Hello” 133
- The Customer May Come in Contact with You Earlier Than You
Expect 134
- A Good-Bye Gaffe 142
- When a Botched Welcome Isn’t Your Fault, You Still Need to Fix
It 143