

Delivering World-Class Customer Service

Lessons From the Mouse

Presented at the

**2011 NARPM Annual
Convention and Trade Show**

by
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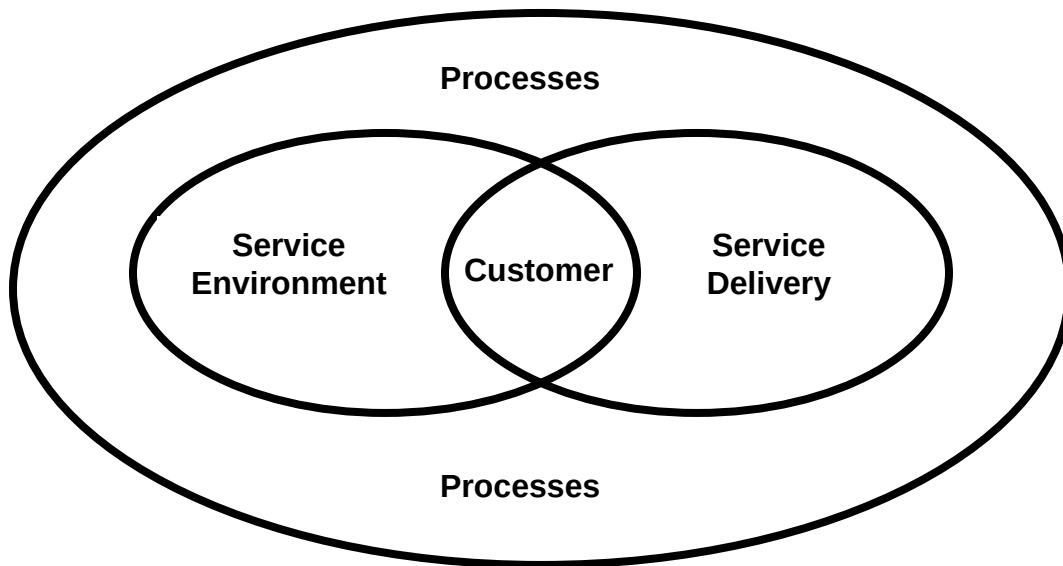
The Customer Experience

Many (most) organizations overcomplicate any initiative they undertake. Because of this over complication, these organizations tend to freeze and never finish what they start. Employees and management become frustrated by the never-ending flow of new initiatives that come and go. This is where the “flavor of the month” reputation begins to haunt any new initiative. **The key is to keep it simple!**

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication”

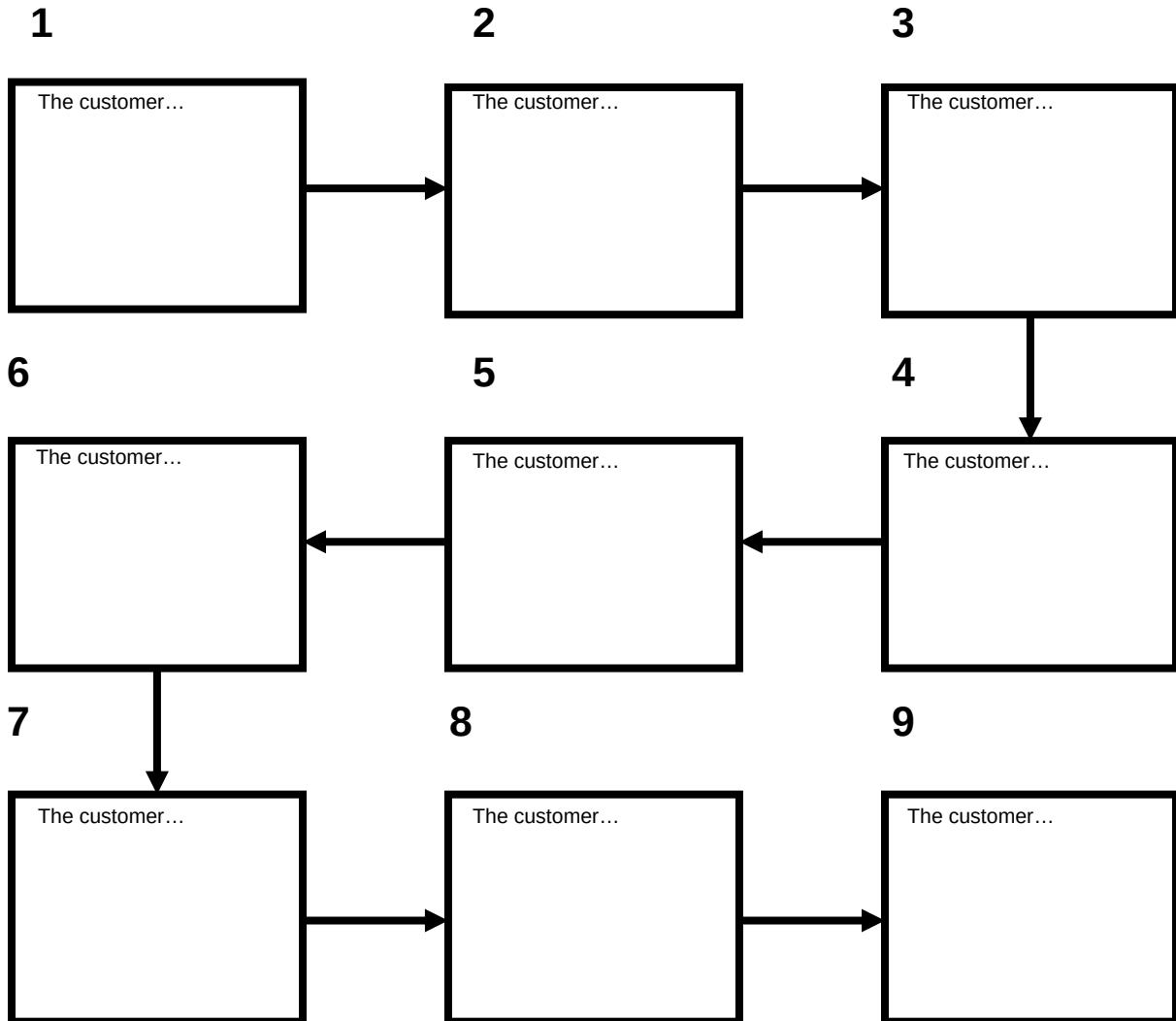
Leonardo da Vinci

The following service model is simple and straightforward. It is easily communicated to everyone in the organization and can provide a foundation or anchor for a service improvement effort.



Service Map

Process Analyzed: _____



Step 1: List process steps in each block

Step 2: Which blocks present immediate areas of opportunity? (List in Step 3)

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Step 3: For each block identified in step 2, describe what would be considered *mediocre* service and what would be considered *excellent* service.

Block Number	Mediocre Service	Excellent Service

Step 4: Choose one or two processes to work towards improving customer service and determine improvement strategies.

Everything Speaks

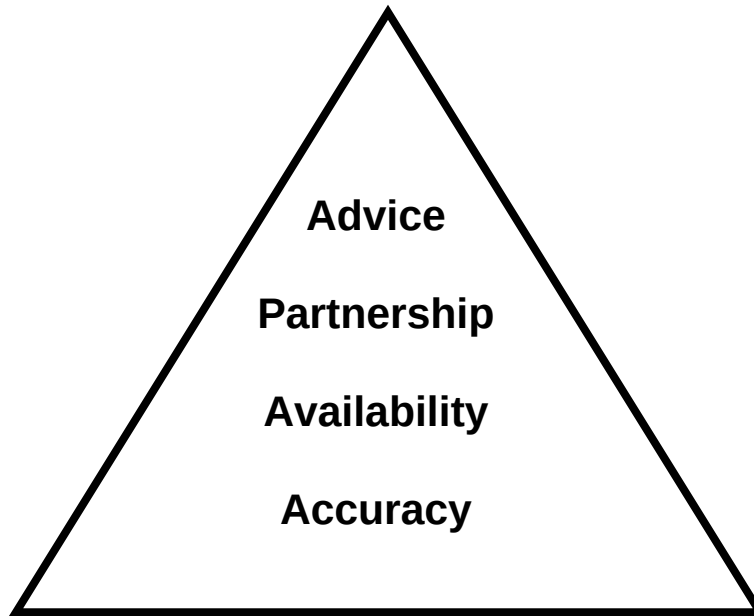
Every detail of the service experience is saying something about your organization. Everything the customer sees, hears, smells, tastes, or touches impacts the experience. Anything that is out of alignment causes a disconnect in the mind of the customer. **Everything Speaks!** They may not consciously notice every detail, but subconsciously clues to your culture are being communicated. What is your service environment saying about your organization?



Be sure to include physical and “attitudinal” elements.

Everything Speaks Distracter	Everything Speaks Commitment

Customer Expectations



Adapted from Gallup Research

	Service Behaviors
Accuracy	
Availability	
Partnership	
Advice	

Service Improvement Meeting

1. Put employees at ease by holding the meeting in a distraction-free environment. Silence phones, etc.
2. State the purpose of the discussion: To identify obstacles that are in the way of creating an exceptional customer experience.
3. Re-emphasize that continuous improvement is not directed at blaming people, but at improving processes.
4. Establish a cooperative environment at the meeting, following the rules for successful brainstorming.
5. Decide on a customer process on which to focus.
 - Ask, "What operational barriers impede our ability to provide an exceptional experience *every* time with this process?"
 - Set allotted time for brainstorming.
 - Record all obstacles on flipchart or worksheet.
 - Encourage all participation, not permitting critical comments.
6. After discussion, select one or two obstacles that are a major source of customer complaints or frustration.
7. Generate as many potential solutions to the obstacle as possible. Often, the solution will be generated on the spot. The key is to keep an open mind and build on ideas. While not every solution presented will be feasible, it's important to respect the contribution.
8. For those solutions that will require time and study to implement, discuss and agree on who will be responsible to work on a solution and others who need to be involved. The more involvement from the team, the greater the resulting buy-in.
9. Set a date to report back on status of obstacle and solution.

Interviewing and Selection

The selection and interviewing process is key for not only ensuring that your organization recruits and hires the best possible candidates. It is also a marvelous opportunity to communicate your culture. **Everything Speaks** during the interview process. Interviewees are picking up subtle (and not so subtle) clues as to what the culture of the organization truly is.

The selection/interview process should _____ the culture of the organization.



Key attributes to look for:

-
-
-

Key things to listen and watch for:

-
-
-

Notes:

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Sample Talent Questions for Current Employees

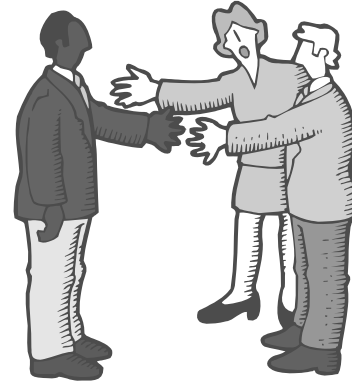
- What part of this job is most rewarding for you?
- When you are a customer, what does a great experience look like to you?
- What tools are of greatest help to you in doing your job?
- What do you think the organization expects of you as an employee?
- What do you think it takes to be considered great at your job?
- What do you find most frustrating about serving our customers?
- What does a leader do to get your best performance?
- What makes you feel successful at your job?
- How do you get everything done that needs to be done in your job?
- What frustrates *you* as a customer?
- What factors need to be in place to motivate you to do your best work?
- What is the best part about serving our customers?
- What role do fellow employees play in your satisfaction at work?
- How would you describe excellent performance in a job such as yours?
- Why is your role important to our organization?



Training

Training should ensure that the employee:

- Is _____ of the organization.
- Understands the _____
_____.
- Understands what is expected.



George Miliotes was the General Manager of the California Grill restaurant from 1995-2001. The California Grill is an upscale restaurant located on the top floor of the Contemporary Resort at Walt Disney World. George is a big believer in training and education. Disney World, of course, is known for training its cast members in the nuances of customer service. George recognized, however, that it is his responsibility to support and supplement the education his cast members received from formal programs such as the Disney University. He spent 15-minutes every day educating all California Grill cast members (front of house and back of house). If he was not there, the Assistant Manager did the training. Three topics were covered in these short sessions; wine, food, and service. Although George has left the California Grill, his influence is still felt. He has trained servers from all walks of life to be wine experts. Every cast member on every shift knows how to describe all menu items in ways that highlight why they are special (menu items vary depending on season). They can describe the freshness of the tomatoes used in a way that literally makes your mouth water. George also focused on customer service issues, which included recognizing performance, providing showmanship tips (how to describe the wine list is truly an art), or anything else he felt deserved attention. The impact of these daily educational moments:

- Beverage sales average 10-15% of total sales in similar restaurants. Wine revenue represents 30%+ of total sales revenue at the California Grill.
- The USA Today food critic wrote that the single best meal he has had in the United States was at the California Grill.
- 65% of the original staff was still there when George left six years later. This is in an industry that averages nearly 200% turnover per year.

Accountability

Accountability tools

Performance Appraisals

Job descriptions

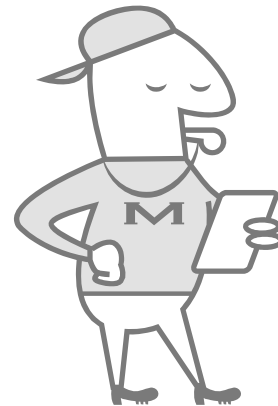
Promotions

Recognition

Coaching

Coaching Employees

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Unleashing Excellence *The Complete Guide to Ultimate Customer Service* 2nd Edition

By Dennis Snow and Teri Yanovitch

Originally published in 2003, this quintessential how-to guide has now been expanded and extensively updated to include the latest tools, best practices, and invaluable lessons learned from companies that have actually applied the authors' comprehensive system for building a first-rate customer service culture from the ground up!

Filled with vital information, this second edition of *Unleashing Excellence* literally walks you through every aspect of the nine leadership actions required to compete in a global marketplace where products and services are becoming increasingly commoditized and the Internet provides dissatisfied customers with a powerful forum.

Nothing is left out of **Unleashing Excellence: *The Complete Guide to Ultimate Customer Service***. If you've been searching for a blueprint for building a customer service program, you'll find it here. The book's chapters include:

- The "DNA" of Service Excellence
- Creating a Service Improvement Team
- Developing Your Service "Non-negotiables"
- Communicating the Service Strategy to Your Team
- Service Training and Education
- Interviewing For Service Excellence
- Developing Effective Service Measurements
- Recognition and Reward Systems
- Implementing a Service Obstacle System
- Building a Culture of Accountability

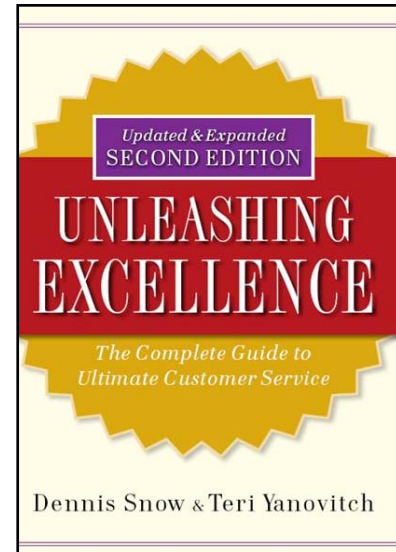
Praise for Unleashing Excellence:

"Customer service is key to the success of any company. I recommend Unleashing Excellence to any company needing a 'how to' and 'can do' manual to implement service excellence in their organization." —**Richard A. Nunis, Retired Chairman, Walt Disney Parks & Resorts**

"If your organization is not fully committed to service excellence, don't read this book. If you are fully committed, then you **MUST** read this book. It provides all the nuts and bolts of how to create and sustain a service culture." —**Pamela Paulk, Vice President, Human Resources Johns Hopkins Health System**

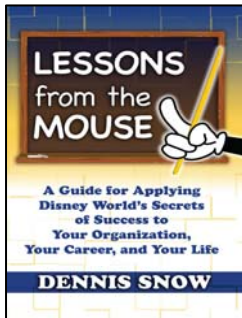
"In the restaurant business, achieving and maintaining excellent customer service is of paramount importance. Unleashing Excellence is a must read that would benefit any industry. It gives step by step guidelines that can be implemented with ease and invaluable insights that will help encourage your customers to keep coming back for more instead of leaving before the first bite." —**Fred DeLuca, President and Co-Founder Subway Restaurants**

Available now in bookstores or at Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com



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Available at online bookstores or www.snowassociates.com



Lessons From the Mouse *A Guide for Applying Disney World's Secrets of Success to Your Organization, Your Career, and Your Life*

What can a mouse teach you? When that mouse has been delighting and entertaining hundreds of millions of people for decades, it turns out there is plenty to learn! Dennis Snow's book, **Lessons From the Mouse** provides ten no-nonsense, practical principles that anyone, anywhere can apply. He entertains while he educates with chapters like "What Time is the 3:00 Parade?" Is Not a Stupid Question."

The mouse is very candid here – no Disney pixie dust blinds the reader. Backstage snafus, onstage errors, and occasional chaos emerge in all their drama, humor, or irony. At its heart, though, **Lessons From the Mouse** presents ten lessons that guide readers in applying excellence in their own organizations, careers, and lives. The ten lessons include:

- Never Let Backstage Come Onstage
- What Time is the 3:00 Parade? Is Not a Stupid Question
- Little Wows Add Up
- Have Fun With the Job – No Matter How Miserable You Feel
- Don't Be a Customer Service Robot
- Pay Attention to the Details – Everything Speaks
- Never, Ever Say, "That's Not My Job" – Don't Even Think It!
- Everyone Has a Customer
- Figure Out What Ticks Off Your Customers – And Do Something About It
- Take Responsibility for Your Own Career

Available at www.snowassociates.com

Creating a Culture of Service Excellence (DVD)

Dennis's customer service presentation is now available on DVD. This informative 45-minute DVD covers topics like:

- Looking at your organization through the "lens of the customer."
- Paying attention to the details because "everything speaks."
- Delighting your customers by creating "little wows."

Featuring a keynote speech presented before a live audience, the DVD includes the service principles and stories that bring the principles to life. The content is designed to be entertaining, informative and practical. Use this DVD to:

- Provide content for in-house training programs.
- Introduce new employees to the service standards they are expected to demonstrate.
- Revitalize a company's focus on customer service.
- Re-familiarize employees with the key drivers of a service-driven organization



Notes



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