



CUSTOMER DELIGHT

Deliver To:

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What is customer delight anyway?

Customer delight is the reaction you get when you provide exceptional – not just satisfactory – service to a customer. Providing satisfactory service is good; it means you met the customer’s expectations. But, satisfactory service isn’t good enough to win customer loyalty.

Customer loyalty is important because it means a company has a customer who will come back time and time again. Customers don’t give their loyalty to companies that just meet their expectations; they give their loyalty to those companies which consistently exceed them.

To fully understand this, you need only think about your own experiences. Think about the restaurants or stores you consistently visit or that one special place that is your favorite. There is usually something (or maybe many things) the company does to win a special place in your heart. Maybe they recognize you by name when you come in. Maybe they give you special service because you are a regular. But, whatever it is they do, they have won your loyalty because they have delighted you in some way. It is this same positive feeling and sense of loyalty we want to strive for with our customers.

Why is this important for city government?

People are increasingly frustrated with government in general. We live in a very consumer-oriented world where virtually anything a person wants to do can be done 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Banking,

shopping, even getting a college education can all be done when most convenient for the customer.

Hampton has made great strides in this area, offering 24-hour access via our 311 customer call center. But, we have more opportunities for improvement. With the increasing number of two-parent working or single parent families, most people find they



have to take off of work to do business with their city government.

Imagine the frustration a shipyard worker must feel when he has to use his precious leave to get a permit or clarification on a city bill. Such an experience can leave a person very angry at being inconvenienced and yet satisfied because, in the end, his or her minimal expectations were met.

And it is this fact that explains how we can have satisfied customers and yet frustrated taxpayers. It is great when we get high citizen satisfaction ratings but it does not necessarily mean we are making them

happy or engendering a great sense of loyalty.

This is why we can not be contented with mere customer satisfaction and why we must strive for customer delight.

Is it realistic to “wow” government customers?

There are some who would say that customer loyalty isn’t possible in government service; that people will never feel good about paying taxes. While it is probably true that people may not like to pay taxes, we can make them feel like their money has been well spent. We can do that by systematically making our services more customer-oriented, by focusing on the things that customers want most: speed, convenience, high quality and reasonable cost.

Residents may also feel as if their taxes are being appropriately spent if they are treated well when they interact with us. And that’s where we all come in... We all have to do our best to make our customers feel special and appreciated. That doesn’t mean we will always be able to do what they want. But, it does mean taking the time to truly work with them. We can make a difference one resident at a time if we undertake individual efforts to delight customers. This newsletter will help give concrete examples of things we can do without much extra effort or money to “wow” our customers and we’ll tell the stories of the employees who are successful in doing so.

WIN A CUSTOMER DELIGHT PRIZE PACKAGE!

There are two words inserted somewhere in this publication that just don’t fit. Find the words and win a customer delight prize package. Call 728-2020 and tell us where those words are and you will be put in a drawing to win - it’s that simple!

This is just one of the many contests you will see in this monthly Customer Delight newsletter. After all, customer delight is all about having fun and making your customers’ experience, and your time at work, as enjoyable as possible. Let the games begin!



“Isn’t it really ‘customer helping’ rather than customer service? And wouldn’t you deliver better service if you thought of it that way?”

-Jeffrey Gitomer

Take-aways From This Issue

Learn what customer delight is and why it should be important to you

Hear what the city manager has to say about customer delight

Read about a co-worker’s service experience in “Look Who’s Making a Difference”

Find out how to play the Customer Service Challenge contest

Learn what “Delightful Dollars” are and how you can earn and spend them

Read our customer’s comments about you in the “Wow Factor”

MESSAGE FROM THE BOSS

Welcome to the re-inaugural edition of the Customer Delight Newsletter. I say “re-inaugural” because as many of you know, we published a similar newsletter a couple of years ago. In a manner of speaking, this issue of the newsletter is the kick-off to the second half of the game.

Customer service is a top priority of the city manager’s office and we are in the process of reinvigorating our efforts to get the message out, develop and build upon existing programs, and work as a team to continue our reputation as the front runner of customer service performance.

Since our last newsletter, there have been many changes and many new faces added to our organization. In that sense, this should be a great introduction to the concept of customer delight and I think you will find this edition packed with information on the topic that is useful in our everyday challenges.

I encourage all employees to read the newsletter from start to finish when they come out, to be an engaged and active participant in the process, and work as a team and enjoy the experience!

Remember that we are custodians of the public’s trust and tax dollars, and that by exceeding our citizen’s expectations in every day interactions with us, we have a real opportunity to make a difference.



Finding a Needle in a Haystack

Look Who's Making a Difference

Several Public Works employees recently came to the rescue of a distraught Hampton resident who lost a valuable item. Here's her story:

"I wear hearing aids and I realized I had forgotten to put them in when I couldn't hear what a co-worker was saying. They weren't in my purse and I figured out pretty quickly that I had accidentally thrown them away the night before. Then I realized it was trash day and rushed home.

The trash had been picked up about five minutes before I got there, but I was able to locate the truck and talked to the driver, Daryl McNair. I was very upset because the hearing aids, which were fairly new, are expensive and are not covered by our health insurance. I told him what had happened and he was so incredibly polite, sympathetic, and helpful. He immediately called his supervisor and when he couldn't reach that person he called others. He didn't think anything could be done, but told me he would make sure someone contacted me.

About 20 minutes later, Paulette Vierra called and told me to call Judy Jordan at the Steam Plant. I called Judy who explained they had gotten approval for the driver to empty the trash on the floor of the Steam Plant instead of in the pit so I could look for my hearing aids. She said I could bring help,

but staff would not be able to help. I was so grateful and told Judy I didn't feel like it was the City's responsibility in any way for my mistake and really appreciated the opportunity to at Customer Delight least try to find them. My husband left work to help and when we got there, Judy greeted us with shovels and clean gloves. Her supervisor wanted us to know it was almost impossible to recover anything like this, many others had tried.

Darryl brought his truck in. His job was done and he was off for the day, but he insisted on staying and helping us. For hours he helped dig through hundreds of pounds of garbage. I found the bag, which was a miracle in itself, but also found the hearing aids - a little smelly but intact. Nobody could believe it and they were so happy for us. Judy even called me a couple days later to find out if they still worked. They do!

This was just an amazing experience because of the city employees who helped us. They really cared and they really did whatever they possibly could to help me get my hearing aids back. I think in a lot of other cities, the truck driver would have said, "Sorry, there is nothing I can do." And honestly that is exactly what I was prepared for, but I should have known better - this is Hampton after all!"

WIN THE CUSTOMER SERVICE CHALLENGE

This is your customer service challenge ... should you choose to accept it there could be a vacation reward in your future.

While reading the opposing article Finding a Needle in a Haystack, what experiences with businesses did it remind you of? Tell us about a business you love. What does that business do to delight you? What have they done to win your loyalty?

There is a lot to be learned from watching customer service wherever you go. We can copy many of the extras businesses use to wow customers. We will devote a future edition of the newsletter to sharing our experiences with great customer service and we'll reward one lucky city worker with an extra leave day to be used by the end of the fiscal year. Anyone who submits a story will be entered into the contest. We'll draw one employee's name from a box of all the entrants and announce the winner in the edition with all of the stories.

To enter, send a written answer to the question (customerdelight@hampton.gov) no later than August 29. Or, if you prefer, call the Customer Delight hotline at 728-2020, and tell us about your experience over the phone. To be entered into the contest, be sure to leave your name, department, and phone number.

Anonymous stories will be accepted - but prizes cannot be awarded without contact information.

Make the Grade in Customer Delight!

Customer Delight Training

Need training in customer service? Want to increase your skills and knowledge in providing customer delight? Need help in leading your team to outstanding customer service? You don't have to go far or spend a lot of money!! Human Resources (HR) is leading the way in Customer Delight training with recent training opportunities for city employees.

In an effort to support the city's customer delight strategic initiative, HR is coordinating various customer service training opportunities. One learning opportunity was a Lunch & Learn session conducted by Tammy



Hopson of the 3-1-1 Call Center in coordination with HR. Get the 3-1-1 on *Customer Service* covered topics such as:

- The Customer Service Chain
- Job satisfaction through your performance
- Recovering from Customer Service Mistake

Another session focusing on leadership was conducted by Cynthia

Laurrell (HR) and Liz Nisley (3-1-1). *Leading Your Team to Customer Delight* included topics such as:

- Practices of exemplary leaders
- Questions that lead to higher performance
- Developing service standards
- Tools for developing individual customer service performance

Customer Delight is more than just 'being nice' to customers. It is important that we all continue to fine tune our skills, learn new ones and take a hard look at our "processes" that serve our customers to be sure that those processes are also customer and user friendly.

Do you want to make an A+ in customer delight? Watch for more learning opportunities in the future!

Managing Editor & Designer - Rebecca Bolte

Contributing Writers - Tami Back, Rebecca Bolte, Mary Bunting, John Eagle, and Liz Nisley

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THE WOW FACTOR

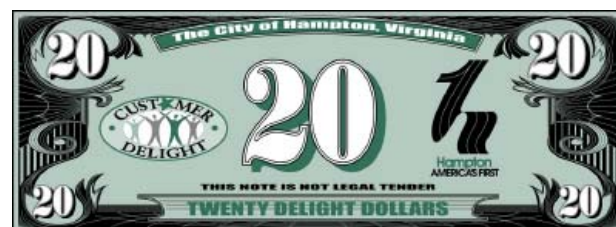
Comments from our Customers

"I want to thank the people at Public Works. You guys are doing a fantastic job and I appreciate you 100%!"

New Changes to Delightful Dollars!

Delightful Dollars is an employee incentive program which is designed to acknowledge outstanding customer service efforts by City of Hampton employees.

Citizens are encouraged to call 311 to report instances of outstanding customer delight provided by city employees. Based on the extent of the outstanding act performed, employees could be rewarded with Delightful Dollars – now up to \$25 in value! These Delightful Dollars



are also now presented in the form of a debit card making it even easier to redeem at local Hampton businesses.

Outstanding acts of service include acts that are beyond the employee's job responsibilities, acts that require significant time, effort and/or resources, and acts that show creativity in finding a solution for a customer.