



GuestRelationsTraining.com

Enhancing Guest Relations for Sports and Entertainment Venues

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Ruby Newell-Legner is considered the pre-eminent Customer Satisfaction Expert in the Sports & Leisure Industry today.

For over 2 decades Ruby has been helping organizations make exceptional customer service a way of life.

Customers form 10 impressions in the first 5 seconds. What first impression are you leaving with them? And more importantly, what perception is your staff leaving with them?

What Drives Fan Loyalty?

By Ruby Newell-Legner, CSP

A new study adds to the growing body of evidence that talent management has a profound impact on an organization's bottom line. Talent Management is the process that involves hiring, orienting, training and developing the employee from recruitment to retirement.

The question is "what are leaders in the sports and entertainment industry doing to engage their employees in promoting fan loyalty?" That is the bottom line. If we want to create an experience for every guest that keeps them coming back for more, we have to take a look at what influences that environment.

The study conducted by IBM and Washington-based Human Capital Institute shows that while 84 percent of organizations know that workforce effectiveness is important to achieving business results, only 42 percent of those surveyed found managers devote sufficient time to people management.

The study, *Integrated Talent Management*, was based on research with 1,900 individuals from more than 1,000 public and private organizations around the world. The study focused on talent management practices such as understanding future workforce needs and effectively deploying talent to deliver maximum benefit to an organization.

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SOFTEN Your Approach for a Positive Impression

By Ruby Newell-Legner, CSP

Everyday we communicate through our gestures, body language, posture, facial expression and eye contact.

In the service industry it is important that we really pay attention to these non-verbal messages. In any face-to-face interaction, we can easily send the wrong message to a customer if we don't acknowledge the power of those non-verbal cues.

To help participants in my training programs learn the simple reminders of positive communication, I teach them the SOFTEN technique. I think Mae West sums it up best in one of her famous quotes.

"It's not what you say; it is how you say it. It's not what you do; it's how you do it ...but most importantly, it's how you look when you say it and you do it."

Please see *SOFTEN* on page 2

Ruby's Clients Include:

**Allen County War
 Memorial Coliseum
 AmericanAirlines Arena
 Amway Arena
 Aramark
 Arrowhead Stadium
 BC Place
 Billie Jean King National
 Tennis Center
 Canad Inns Stadium
 Centerplate
 Dodge Arena
 Dolphin Stadium
 E Center
 General Motors Place
 Heinz Field
 Mellon Arena
 Qwest Center Omaha
 Ralph Wilson Stadium
 RCA Dome
 Rexall Place
 Scotiabank Place
 United States Tennis
 Association
 US Indoor Soccer
 Association**

“Your reputation is only
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Ruby Newell-Legner, CSP

SOFTEN from page 1

The SOFTEN technique can be used in a variety of situations - when you are developing rapport with a guest or calming an upset customer. The acronym is a great reminder that will help you improve just about any relationship.

S stands for Smile

A smile is an expression of welcome. When you smile, it displays a good attitude, a sense of humor, a caring approach. In the service business, a smile is required for you to succeed.

O stands for Open Posture

Open posture demonstrates your open-mindedness and closed body posture makes it appear as if you don't care or don't want to listen.

If you cross your arms, you risk making the other person feel like you are tuning them out.

F stands for Lean Forward

Leaning forward slightly shows you are attentive and anxious to assist your customer. Now don't go overboard and get in their face, I am just recommending that you lean forward a little bit. Just lean forward about 2 inches. The goal is to subliminally say "I'm here for you..." That lean forward will let them know that you are eager to help.

T stands for Tone of Voice

A clear, audible, and enthusiastic voice is recommended to send a positive professional message.

Remember, your tone of voice says a lot about what you are trying to communicate.

E stands for Eye Contact

Eye contact provides important social and emotional information; people, perhaps without consciously doing so, probe each other's eyes and faces for positive or negative mood signs. Eye contact shows that they have your undivided attention.

When you engage with another person's eyes, you connect with them on another level.

N stands for Nod to Acknowledge

Nodding your head shows that you are listening and that you want to hear everything they have to say. I have to confess that sometimes I nod my head to keep my mouth out of trouble. It helps me close my lips. It is a little self-reminder that it isn't my turn to talk yet.

The SOFTEN Technique is so simple and easy to remember. Just memorize the simple acronym S-O-F-T-E-N.

Remember - Your reputation is only as good as the impression you leave with every patron. Use the SOFTEN technique to enhance your dialogue with each individual you serve. In our business, positive communication is everything.

Fan Loyalty from page 1

Here is what that means to us in the sports and entertainment business. If we want to create an experience that turns every fan into a season ticket holder, we need to turn significant attention to the people responsible for creating that experience.

To me, a successful talent management initiative focuses on the following:

- 1) **Leadership** – Leadership thrives when they know who they are, what they stand for and what their true mission is for the overall organization. The most successful leaders I have worked with clearly understand all these things. Their vision is clear, they communicate it to their staff at all levels and then they create an environment to let it all happen. Sometimes it means just getting out of their employees' way so they can bring the vision to life.
- 2) **Recruitment** – From the Web site presence for job postings, to the introduction of potential employees to the organization, the mission of exceptional customer service is apparent and elaborated upon with every position. Individuals are chosen if they are willing to work with the public and embrace the excitement of promoting a positive event for every visitor. Applicants for all positions understand how important their role will be in creating a legendary guest experience.
- 3) **Training** – Time and energy is invested in setting up front line employees to succeed. They are enlightened by the big picture of customer service and given the nitty gritty details that can help them succeed. This includes answers to Frequently Asked Questions, specifics about the venue and every event; appropriate attire, body language, and voice tone, as well as coaching on what to say when predictable situations arise.
- 4) **Supervision** – Most front line supervisors have not been trained properly and I see this as one of the major roadblocks to any organization's mission to build a customer centric culture. Supervisors need to understand the importance of clarifying expectations for their staff and make sure that message is received. Supervisors need to know the best way to motivate, coach, discipline and reward their employees to promote positive performance on the front line. A confident, well trained supervisor will empower their employees for service recovery on the spot.
- 5) **Succession Planning** – Succession planning enables any organization to identify talented employees and provide education to develop them for future higher level and broader responsibilities. Succession planning helps you "build bench strength." With good coaching and development, employees are ready for new leadership roles as the need arises, and when someone leaves, a current employee is ready to step up to the plate. Succession planning works toward the goal that there are highly qualified people in all positions, not just today, but tomorrow, next year, and five years from now.

So, what is your organization doing to engage your employees in promoting fan loyalty? Remember, season ticket holders are created one positive experience at a time.

Call Ruby today at 303-933-9291 to learn how to design and implement your staff development and recognition program. After presenting over 1900 programs in nine countries, Ruby has the experience and expertise to set your staff up for a great season.

6 No Fail Strategies for Raising the Bar in Guest Relations

1. Hire the right staff - it takes a special person to work in Guest Relations.
2. Give Guest Relations Staff the tools - and the information - to excel at their job.
3. Invest in well-planned training for staff - and make it fun - to ensure guests and staff are comfortable.
4. Reinforce great service. If you want to improve it, measure it and reward it.
5. Clarify your customer service standards for each staff member's role.
6. Acknowledge and reinforce good behavior - you'll keep staff around.

Call Ruby at 303-933-9291 to schedule a *free* 30-minute consultation session on planning your training.

Client Spotlight

“ *Congratulations to the Orlando Magic for an Overall Service Rating of 90.5%!*

“The Orlando Magic are very happy with our reward and recognition program and they have achieved an Overall Service Rating of a 90.5%! This is remarkable and the best rating we have seen in over 70 Sports & entertainment Venues for the first 50 Shops. I feel your training program really helped "jump start" enthusiasm for service.”

Jim Smith, President, Service Solutions, Mystery Shopping and Consulting Services, www.servicesolutionsi.com

“Best customer service training session I have ever attended. I strongly recommend to my team and others!”

Mike Redlick, Executive Vice President, Memphis Grizzlies, Memphis, TN

“One word comes to mind: phenomenal! Ruby's enthusiasm and energetic personality contributed greatly to our training session's success at this year's tournament. You have a knack for garnering people's attention and motivating them to a whole new level.”

Michael Zanca, US Open Special Projects, New York, NY

“Ruby has given us a road map to reach our goals and objectives in a professional positive manner.”

James Bricker, General Manager, Dodge Arena, City of Hidalgo, TX

“The program was very motivational and thought provoking. Ruby causes you to really look within yourself. I liked how challenging the program was which is good for us as individuals and the organization as a whole.”

Jim Bell, Vice President of Finance, Winnipeg Football Club

For additional resources and to sign up for Ruby's *FREE* Electronic Newsletter "Great Customer Service for Leisure Professionals" visit GuestRelationsTraining.com



Specializing in Guest Relations Training for the Sports and Entertainment Industry

Ruby's training sessions are perfect for:

- ▶ Event Staff
- ▶ Security Personnel
- ▶ Parking Lot Attendants
- ▶ Ticket Sellers
- ▶ Concessionaires
- ▶ Catering Employees
- ▶ Ushers
- ▶ Housekeeping
- ▶ Merchandise Sellers
- ▶ Ticket Takers
- ▶ Supervisors & Front-Line Staff

RubySpeaks

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