



What was old becomes new again

I am just reading Employees First, Customers Second, by Vineet Nayar. This seems like a bold and audacious idea, but like a 70s hairstyles what was old becomes new again.

In 1992 I read The Customer Comes Second: Put your people first and watch them kick butt; by Hal Rosenbluth CEO of Rosenbluth Travel. Hal had guided his company to an unprecedented 1500% growth in the previous 10 years. His unique approach to putting employees first began on their very first day. Instead of mundane details new employees spent their first day with a senior leader being introduced, **celebrated** and acclimated to the new environment. Within the first quarter, all new employees came to world headquarters in Philadelphia or London to learn about the company and more importantly have fun.

New employees not only learned about the company's history, philosophy, goals and objectives, but they **experienced service** in an afternoon tea served by officers of the company. New employees were allowed to ask any question they liked and participate in skits and games to learn how to create a positive story from every service experience. Their goal was not to move service from bad to good or good to exceptional, but from exceptional to outstanding.

These success stories were music to my ears as I had created my own version of the process I branded "Service Camp" while working for the Coeur d'Alene Resort when it was named the number one travel product in America by Condé Nast magazine. Service Camp was **designed to be an experience instead of training**. Music rocked as the big screens flashed images of both team members and guests creating "moments to remember".





Randy Morgan CSP



Instead of the typical employee handbook – that most barely read and is remembered by few - new team members were given old-fashioned flash cards highlighting not only the Resort services and activities, but surprising facts about the community and its history. This wide range of information not only helped break down interdepartmental barriers, but gave team members the tools to interact with Guests in meaningful and memorable ways. More importantly, the immediate and self testing feedback (remember how you used to make a pile of cards for the answers you knew and those you didn't) made new team members experts at information that had previously taken "experience" to attain. This not only enhanced the experience for the Guests, but it gave Team Members tools to help them feel good about themselves in the process.

The power of this one idea should not be underestimated. It is the difference between pushing employees and creating experiences that pull them. What tools, skills, resources, and freedom do you give your employees that make **them** feel special in their interaction with your customers? If you don't know, ASK. If your employees can't think of anything "off the top of their heads" you have a wonderful opportunity.

I just saw an interview on Sunday about Zappos. One thing they did to make their employees special was to NEVER restrict the amount of time an employee can spend on the phone with a customer (the record call length was five hours and twenty five minutes). Employees are encouraged to "be themselves" and enter into the shoe buying experience with the customer. I wish these guys weren't so good. If they keep this up I may have to rent a POD just to store all of my wife's shoes.





Randy Morgan CSP



Best of all we rediscovered the power of play. By creating a playful learning atmosphere, we reminded each other of the importance of taking ourselves lightly and our jobs seriously. We believed that the way our Team Members served our Guests was a direct reflection of the way they treated themselves.

See how transparency and “reverse accountability” rocketed HCLT to the number one spot on India’s best employer list.



Morgan Systems International

Copyright 2010 all rights reserved

randy@randymorgan.com 1-800-893-9002

