

6 Strategies of a Guest-Focused Culture

- a note from the Vision Room Curator: During August we are focusing on Guest Experience in churches, but some of the most powerful learning for churches can occur by reading about customer service - all you have to do is substitute the word "Guest" every time you see "customer." The following content was graciously supplied by Shep Hyken, a customer service and experience expert. Enjoy!

Growing up, in school a D wasn't a very good grade. And, where I went to school, sometimes a D was slang terminology for a demerit, which meant I spent a Saturday morning at school in study hall. Not a great way for a kid to spend a Saturday. However, you and your company will want the following D's, especially if customer service and building a customer-centric culture is important to you. And, I know it is!

The Six D's of Creating a Customer-Centric Culture

Define it. Customer service is part of your brand promise. It is what you want your employees to deliver. It is what you want the customer to experience. Make it clear and make it simple. For example, Ace Hardware, known for their customer service, is known as the "Helpful Hardware Place." They have defined customer service as being *Helpful*, and in their hiring, training and customer interactions, they make it clear that *Helpful* is what they are all about.

Disseminate it. Don't keep it a secret. Just because you've defined the customer service experience, at this point it's just lip service. Now you must train your employees on how to deliver it. The Ritz Carlton hotel chain has laminated cards with their "credo" and several other important core values printed on it. Each employee carries the card with them, and in many cases, has memorized it.

Deploy it. It's time to execute. The employees have been trained. Now it is time to implement and act on the customer service initiative. Everyone must know it and be on board with it – even people who don't have any contact with your customers. They have internal customers who they support. Customer service is everyone's job.

Demonstrate it. Now that everyone knows it and has been trained, everyone must demonstrate it. Leaders must, through their actions, show everyone how it's done. And, everyone else should do the same. Everyone becomes a role model for how to deliver amazing customer service.

Defend it. If you see someone doing anything contrary to what you want the customer to experience, you step in to help. This isn't about reprimanding or calling someone out for doing something wrong. This is a teaching opportunity, and treated as such, creates a culture that comfortably empowers employees to deliver great customer service.

Delight in it! Take pride and delight in the success you have with your customers. Celebrate the success of the company and individuals who have demonstrated amazing customer service.

[Shep Hyken](#) is a customer service expert, professional speaker and New York Times bestselling business author. Copyright ©MMXIII, Shep Hyken



Want to learn how to create an EXCEPTIONAL Guest Experience at your church? [Check out Auxano's Guest Experience Boot Camp, coming to Orlando, FL on April 3-4.](#)