

## Four Disney Secrets that Make Your Welcome Amazing

*Editors Note: During our August focus on Guest Experiences, we are honored to have some of the best voices in the world of Customer Experience provide guest posts for the Vision Room. As you read the content below, simply think "**Guest**" in terms of the "customer" the author is talking about - and you will benefit from the knowledge and expertise of these great minds.*

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The Disney University—a name that carries clout and evokes images of excellence. Mention this highly-regarded institution to any business leader and the question that often follows is:

“How do they develop the world’s most engaged, loyal and customer-centric employees, year after year?”

Although the word “University” is invariably embodied in the title of corporate and organizational training departments around the world, very few of these “universities” have matched Disney University’s level of success for at least two reasons:

1. Many don’t enjoy the levels of leadership support enjoyed by Disney University founder, Van France.
2. Many don’t understand training cannot be limited to ‘Here’s what you need to do, now go do it.’ That’s not good enough. Training needs to instill a spirit, a feeling, an emotional connection.

Van France and his team of strong-willed visionaries created a corporate culture and an organizational DNA well before these words were ever in vogue. They didn’t just go to the store, buy *pixie dust* and start throwing it around. Their tireless devotion to perpetuate Walt Disney’s dream, plus the game-changing business concepts they created, helped build an organizational culture that is respected around the world.

### **Secrets of the Disney University**

What does it take to create legions of amazingly motivated employees, year after year? How does a training organization, any organization for that matter, thrive well beyond the honeymoon period? The message from Van, and the many who worked with him to create the Disney University, is unwavering. Success is predicated on:

- Having a seat at the leadership table.
- Being a valued part of the organizational culture.
- Moving well beyond providing merely short-lived *programs*.
- Being incessantly creative and willing to try new approaches to keep the message relevant,

fresh and engaging.

Many who worked with Van describe his style in the following ways: “Van kept people focused. He kept us from making training programs too esoteric and academic by keeping us focused on practical application, using simple concepts such as, we create happiness, and we know the answers.”

### **Who keeps you focused?**

Excerpt from *Disney U: How Disney University Develops the World's Most Engaged, Loyal and Customer-Centric Employees* Publisher: McGraw-Hill

> [Read more from Doug.](#)

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