

RESORTS OF DISTINCTION

The Importance of Customer Service & Resort Activities

2017

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Customer Service Importance

1) Good customer service is a very important part of the success of your park

You would think it would be common sense but teach your staff to “Smile”.

To me it is the perfect way to begin EVERY meeting with a member or their guest. It starts everything out in the warmest, friendliest, most non-confrontational way. Always make your members and their guests feel like they are special VIP’s Treat them like they are family and are welcome every time they come back. **Our members and customers are our most valuable assets and we cannot allow them to be treated in a way that is less than exceptional.**

2) Educate your staff and remind ourselves how important the members are

The members are our future, without them WE DO NOT HAVE JOBS. Members have paid a lot of money for their membership and expect to be treated accordingly. If you have someone on your staff that cannot do this, replace them

3) Emphasize courtesy and friendliness in your staff training

Never allow your staff to greet or treat people like they are being bothered or in an unfriendly manner. We all are in the business of fun and recreation if we don’t set the tone and greet our members and guest every time like we are happy to see them, they won’t be back. **Or worse, they will go to social media!**

4) We as Managers set the tone on how employees treat the members.

As a resort manager the single, most important function of management is to teach. We can positively impact the lives of our staff which will positively impact the vacation and recreation experiences of our members. Employees take their cues from managers and what we do and how we behave it’s critical that these cues be positive. It all comes from the top. If I greet a member as the resort manager and I’m openly happy and glad to meet a member or customer, my behavior and treatment of people is contagious. In many ways the attitude of the whole staff is determined by how I act. If, for whatever reason I treat a member in a less than positive and professional manner, then my staff thinks that is acceptable behavior and they will do the same thing. Employees have to be taught that their number one job is good customer service. Whether they are the grass cutters/ maintenance staff /receptionist, they have to be told that the only reason we have jobs are because of the members.

5) Look at your park through members eyes

Really listen to the members’ complaints and comments. Create a feedback card. Look into the information given back to you. React to it, repair it and resolve it. *Winston Churchill* said, **“Criticism may not be agreeable, but it is necessary. It fulfills the same function as pain in the human body; it calls attention to an unhealthy state of things.”** Take the time to walk around as if YOU just bought a membership at your park, Would you be proud and want to show your friends and family?

Would you recommend a friend or family member to spend money to buy at your park?

- If not, what would you fix?
- What would you change?
- Do not look only at the physical structures. Many times this may be beyond your control due to financial issues.
- Look at the things you can change. Are the grounds clean? Are the rentals clean and repaired? Would you want to spend your vacation in a rental or at a campsite in your park?
- Are you and your coworkers friendly? Do you welcome members and guests or do you or your coworkers act like they are being bothered?
- Use the information you have gathered and act on it
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Unhappy members, equal nonpaying members, equals no jobs for any of us at the resort level. It is that simple.

Member. The definition of a member is as follows: “*somebody who belongs to and participates in a particular group by choice*”. The key word being choice. Our members are our members by their choice, therefore in the big picture can choose to not be our members by the same choice. That decision could be based on many things. Their financial situation, change in family and/or home situations or because of dissatisfaction with us. Unfortunately we cannot control their personal situations but we can definitely control ours and how it affects them. I feel we are always *one member away*. What I mean is that we are one member away from great success or great failure and the way that is determined is largely by the treatment that we give to our customers. Everyone knows the statement that, if you do something right that customer will tell 10 people but do something wrong and they will tell 1,000 people or more now due to social media. That is staggering and powerful. This tells me that we need to work harder to not do things wrong.

When we offered the membership concept to our customers, that offering came with a set of responsibilities on our part. We have the responsibility to provide our customers the best product we are capable of, the most complete customer service and the ability to use their membership to the fullest extent possible. This being said, I feel we need to revisit our concept of a member. A member is a member is a member as far as I am concerned. It should not matter if they belong by contract to Allegany Mountain Resort or any other resort throughout our industry. They are our members collectively. Their happiness and satisfaction is directly based on our performance. And their happiness and satisfaction is a direct factor of our success. Everyone knows that a happy member is a paying member and a paying member is what we all want and need. That is the bottom line, no matter what.

We need to be more open to the concept of keeping “our” members happy. We need to look into ourselves and always ask “How would I like to be treated?” or “Would I be upset if I was told what I just told the member?” It always amazes and baffles me when we receive a customer service

complaint. To me, customer service is absolutely the easiest thing about all of our jobs, just being nice!

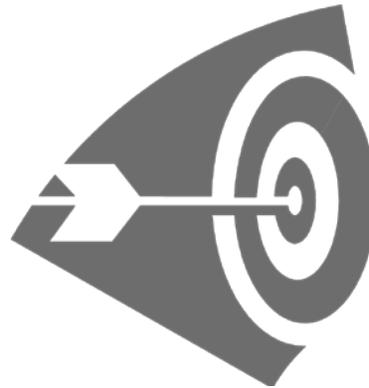
I feel that every now and then we all need to be reminded of why we are employed. The Members....period. End of statement! Without them none of us would have a job. We are all here to service and/or provide service to our members, not the other way around. At times I feel we have a tendency to shift our roles to what would be more convenient to us (employees) although it may not be in the best interests of the member. I feel it's human nature to want to do this and usually a swift kick in the butt can turn it around but it is a shame that we allow ourselves to get complacent in the first place. We need to try and remove "No" from our vocabulary and replace it with "let me see if I can help you" or "possibly we can do it this way" or even "I'm not sure but I'll see if we can fix it this way". It is definitely easier to say no right away. It does not require any extra work or effort. But we need to work to create a positive environment by our vocabulary and body language instead of the easier negative one.

I am not naïve to think that we will always be able to make the member and customer happy but we need to always try. And yes, there are definitely times that we will have to say "No" but at least we can do it with a smile.

I have several quotes on my wall that have meaning to me for one reason or other. My newest one states the following, "*There are two ways to establish a competitive advantage; do things better than others or do them differently.*" This is a very common sense way to be successful. Do it better or do it differently. We have the great opportunity to do both. We can do it better by providing the best product out there and do it differently by also providing the best customer service. In today's consumer environment, I feel people accept poor customer service as the norm. This is wrong. If you are in a job that requires direct contact with the customers, then you better well give the absolute best service possible. No excuses or reasons not to.

I challenge everyone here to pledge to strive harder to assist our members and do everything to make their involvement with our parks the best experience ever. Our energy and focus is the key to the success of our parks.

Hitting the Target for Member Customer Service Success



We must strive to hit the target every time for customer service satisfaction. We know that may not be possible; however it is critical to your organizations success that if you miss the target, you go for another try. We may not be able to satisfy every member every time, however to wholeheartedly attempt to take care of that member can make all the difference.

“Perceived reality is all there is.” Tom Peters

Top 10 Customer Service Aspects

Be a Good Listener

Take the time to identify customer needs by asking questions and concentrating on what the customer is really saying. Listen to their words, the tone of voice, body language, and most importantly, how they feel. Beware of making assumptions - thinking you intuitively know what the customer wants. Effective listening and undivided attention are particularly important.

Identify and Anticipate Needs

Members don't buy products or services. They buy good feelings and solutions to problems. Most members' needs are emotional rather than logical. The more you know your members, the better you become at anticipating their needs. Communicate regularly so that you are aware of problems or upcoming needs.

Make Members Feel Important and Appreciated

Treat them as individuals. Always use their name and find ways to compliment them, but be sincere. People value sincerity. It creates good feeling and trust. Think about ways to generate good feelings about doing business with you. Thank them every time you get a chance.

Body Language Is Key

When speaking with a member, be sure that your body language conveys sincerity. Your words and actions should be congruent.

Understanding Is Crucial

Help members understand your systems. Your organization may have the world's best systems for getting things done, but if members don't understand them, they can get confused, impatient and angry. Take time to explain how your systems work and how they simplify transactions.

Appreciate the Power of "Yes"

Always look for ways to help your members. Look for ways to make doing business with you easy. Always do what you say you are going to do.

Know How to Apologize

When something goes wrong, apologize. It's easy and members like it. Deal with problems immediately and let members know what you have done. Make it simple for members to complain. Value their complaints. As much as we dislike it, it gives us an opportunity to improve. Even if they are having a bad day, go out of your way to make them feel comfortable.

Give More Than Expected

Since the future of all resorts lies in keeping members happy, think of ways to elevate yourself above the competition.

Get Regular Feedback

Encourage and welcome suggestions about how you could improve. There are several ways in which you can find out what customers think and feel about your services. Listen carefully to what they say.

Treat Employees Well

Employees are your internal customers and need a regular dose of appreciation. Thank them and find ways let them know how important they are. Treat your employees with respect and chances are they will have a higher regard for members. Appreciation stems from the top. Treating customers and employees well is equally important.

Resort Activities

Activities are the fun part of the resort business.

The most important aspect of a great activity program is the correct staff

- The staff must be able to have fun, participate in the activities offered, be very organized and have creativity
- They must have a great personality and be at ease when working with members of all ages
- I would recommend a more mature supervisor who can handle and supervise high school and college student staff members.
- Timeliness and organization are keys to any successful event

New ideas are sometimes the hardest step in any activity program. It is easy to always do the same old things.

- Take advantage of the wealth of information available to you on the internet.
 - The following sites may help give you some new ideas
 - www.theideabox.com
 - www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com
 - www.kidactivities.net
 - www.holidayinsights.com
 - www.kidspot.com.au/things-to-do/activities
 - www.pinterest.com
 - <https://funfamilycrafts.com>
 - Did you know that April 28th is National Pretzel Day? That the first week of June is National Fishing Week and the last week of June is National Camping Week or that June 1 is National Donut Day and July 18 is Cow Appreciation Day. All of these great tips are just a few that are listed on Fun Family Crafts. I've included a printout of these great ideas for your convenience.
 - The information available is unlimited
- Email other resorts and campgrounds and ask for a copy of their calendar of events. I have included a copy of Allegany Mountain Resort 2017 calendar of events plus my email address. If everyone forwards a copy of their activities to me I will send out a copy to everyone.
 - (michelle.holt40@yahoo.com)

- Subscribe to Books and Publications. Craft magazines and books are a great way to get new ideas. Below are a few suggestions
 - Craft Ideas Magazine
 - Crafts N Things
 - Pack-O-Fun
 - Kids Crafts 123
- Try something new! If the idea sounds like a fun event, give it a try. Brainstorm with members and fellow staff. You will be amazed on the suggestions. So many people have fond memories of something they did as a child that you could build off.
- Some interesting ideas are:
 - Nite at the Races: <http://www.anightattheraces.com>
 - A great evening of fun for those who enjoy horse and dog races. Very easy program. Kits include everything to play including play money (optional).
 - Women's Getaway Weekend:
 - This is one of our most successful events we are on our 5th year. I've included our program from 2015 so you can see the size of the event.
 - Craft Cabin:
 - We have a building that is designated as a craft cabin. It is open daily and allows kids to make a craft of their choice. We have all of the craft supplies organized and the kids get to pick what they want to make for \$1.00. Great rainy day location.
 - Adult Crafts:
 - We are so lucky to have a member, Beth that is wonderful at Adult Crafts. She offers the crafts about 9 times a season for \$5.00 and does wonderful items. This is one of our biggest participation events. She can have 50 to 75 people every time she holds the event. This year she is adding a teen craft. I've attached a copy of her schedule also.
 - Bingo:
 - Every park does Bingo. We mix it up with Candy Bar Bingo and new last year was an over 21 Bingo that the price to play was a bottle of beer. Lots of fun!
 - Carnivals:
 - All ages enjoy a good summer carnival. We set up the little carnival games; have popcorn, hot dogs, cotton candy and snow cones. Please

we rent an inflatable obstacle course or bounce house. The kids win tickets for little trinkets. A good source for the prizes are:

- Rhode Island Novelty, Oriental Trader, Dillon Importing or go to Amazon.com and search through them. Great options for prizes.
- Newsletters and Flyers
 - If you don't do a weekly newsletter, then you really should. It's a great way to keep your members informed, great tool for sales department and increases your attendance at activities.
 - We target to have ours done and printed by Wednesday so that people coming for the weekend have it upon check in.
 - There are some great programs to assist in putting together a great newsletter. We use "the Print shop Deluxe". It was \$34.86 at Sams Club and can be installed on multiple computers. We also love the graphics for all of our signage.
 - Purchase a laminator. It makes everything look so neat and crisp.
 - Use colorful paper when you can. It just enhances everything you produce.
 - Camera: you can never have too many pictures. However, make sure if you are photographing people, that you have their permission to use their images.

SPECIAL DAYS AND HOLIDAYS

<https://funfamilycrafts.com/special-days-and-holidays/>

JANUARY

1/1 – New Year’s Day
1/5 – National Bird Day
1/6 – Bean Day
1/8 – Bubble Bath Day
1/15 – Martin Luther King Day (2018)
1/18 – Hat Day
1/18 – World Snowman Day
1/19 – Popcorn Day
1/20 – Penguin Awareness Day
1/28 – International Lego Day
1/29 – National Puzzle Day

FEBRUARY

Black History Month
National Cherry Month
National Wild Bird Feeding Month
2/2 – Groundhog Day
2/3 – National Carrot Day
2/14 – Valentine’s Day
2/20 – President’s Day (2017)
2/27 – International Polar Bear Day
2/28 – Mardi Gras (2017)

MARCH

3/1 – National Pig Day
3/1 – Peanut Butter Lover’s Day
3/2 – Dr. Seuss’s Birthday
3/17 – St. Patrick’s Day
3/18 – Johnny Appleseed Day
3/20 – First Day of Spring

APRIL

International Guitar Month
National Frog Month
National Garden Month
4/1 – April Fool’s Day
4/3 – Find-A-Rainbow Day
4/8 – Zoo Lover’s Day
4/11 – Passover (2017)
4/16 – Easter (2017)
4/18 – Pet Owner’s Day
4/21 – Kindergarten Day
4/22 – Earth Day
4/23 – Home Run Day
4/28 – Arbor Day (2017)
4/26 – National Pretzel Day

MAY

American Bike Month
Flower Month
National Duckling Month
National Photo Month
National Strawberry Month
National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
Transportation Month
1st Week -Teacher Appreciation Week
2nd Week – National Pet Week
Last Week – National Backyard Games Week
5/1 – May Day
5/2 – National Teacher Day (2017)
5/4 – National Weather Observers’ Day
5/4 – Star Wars Day
5/5 – Cinco De Mayo
5/5 – Space Day (2017)
5/8 – National Train Day
5/12 – Kite Day
5/13 – Tulip Day
5/14 – Mother’s Day (2017)
5/15 – Dinosaur Day
5/19 – Circus Day
5/19 – Peace Day
5/29 – Memorial Day Observed (2017)

JUNE

Great Outdoors Month
Zoo and Aquarium Month
1st Week – National Fishing Week
2nd Week – National Clay Week
4th Week – National Camping Week
6/1 – Donut Day
6/8 – World Oceans Day
6/12 – Magic Day
6/14 – Flag Day
6/15 – Fly A Kite Day
6/18 – Father’s Day (2017)
6/18 – International Picnic Day
6/21 – First Day of Summer
6/23 – National Pink Day
6/24 – U.F.O. Day

JULY

National Picnic Month

7/1 – Canada Day

7/2 – World UFO Day

7/4 – Independence Day

7/7 – Macaroni Day

7/12 – Paper Bag Day

7/14 – Barn Day

7/14 – Bastille Day

7/18 – Cow Appreciation Day

7/20 – Moon Day

AUGUST

1st Week – National Clown Week

2nd Week – National Apple Week

8/1 – Sports Day

8/3 – National Watermelon Day

8/6 – Friendship Day (2017)

8/10 – S'mores Day

8/10 – Snoopy's Birthday

8/11 – Play in the Sand Day

8/17 – Archeology Day

8/19 – National Aviation Day

8/22 – Be An Angel Day

8/24 – Strange Music Day

8/26 – National Dog Day

8/30 – Frankenstein Day

SEPTEMBER

National Chicken Month

National Honey Month

National Rice Month

3rd Week – National Farm Animals Awareness Week

3rd Week – National Flower Week

4th Week – National Dog Week

9/4 – Labor Day (2017)

9/9 – Teddy Bear Day

9/10 – National Grandparents Day (2017)

9/11 – Patriot Day

9/13 – National Peanut Day

9/15 – Make A Hat Day

9/16 – Collect Rocks Day

9/16 – Mayflower Day

9/18 – Mushroom Picking Day

9/18 – National Play-Doh Day

9/19 – Talk Like a Pirate Day

9/21 – Rosh Hashana (2017)

9/22 – Elephant Appreciation Day

9/22 – First Day of Autumn

9/23 – Checkers Day

9/30 – Yom Kippur (2017)

OCTOBER

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

National Apple Month

National Clock Month

National Dessert Month

National Pizza Month

National Popcorn Popping Month

International Dinosaur Month

10/3 – Look at the Leaves Day

10/5 – World Teacher Day

10/7 – World Card Making Day (2017)

10/9 – Columbus Day (2017)

10/9 – Thanksgiving Day in Canada (2017)

10/12 – Farmer's Day

10/11 – Fossil Day (2017)

10/21 – Sweetest Day (2017)

10/30 – National Candy Corn Day

10/31 – Halloween

NOVEMBER

Aviation Month

International Drum Month

Peanut Butter Lover's Month

11/5 – Guy Fawkes Day – Bonfire Night

11/5 – National Donut Day

11/6 – Basketball Day

11/7 – US Election Day (2017)

11/7 – Hug-a-Bear Day

11/7 – Magazine Day

11/9 – Parade Day

11/10 – Sesame Street Day

11/11- Veteran's Day

11/11 – Canada Remembrance Day

11/15 – America Recycles Day

11/16 – Button Day

11/17 – Take A Hike Day

11/23 – Thanksgiving (2017)

DECEMBER

12/3- Advent begins (2017)

12/7 – National Cotton Candy Day

12/8 – National Brownie Day

12/12 – Poinsettia Day

12/13 – National Cocoa Day

12/20 – Games Day

12/21 – First Day of Winter

12/25 – Christmas

12/25 – Hanukkah Begins

12/26 – Kwanzaa Begins

12/27 – Visit the Zoo Day

12/31 – New Year's Eve