



# Creating a Climate of Excellence in Customer Service



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# Patricia Clason

For over thirty years, Patricia Clason has traveled across the continent doing speeches, workshops and media appearances as a professional speaker, trainer, consultant, writer, and coach giving over 4,000 presentations for corporations, associations, government agencies and non-profit organizations. Now the Director of the Center for Creative Learning, which offers programs for personal and professional development at offices in Milwaukee, Madison, and Detroit, Patricia has written many articles, training programs and personal growth seminars and is a sought-after guest for radio and television.

The focus of her work is on alternative methods of teaching and learning that produce high quality results. Her search for the best in the technology of human resource development has taken her as a student on many adventures through traditional and some not-so-traditional training programs.

An important aspect of Patricia's presentations is that she addresses the psychological perspectives and principles behind the practical tools that she teaches. As a result, audiences are often entranced with her and excited about using these new ideas.

Patricia often receives letters and phone calls from the participants in her programs, thanking her for the insights and inspiration she has shared in these presentations. One of the reasons people are so enthused about what they hear is that Patricia shares personal and real stories, so people know that her practical wisdom comes from experience, not just books and good ideas. Her diverse background makes her a competent presenter for spouse groups, schools, parents and personal growth groups, as well as business-related meetings and training.

Her business background ranges from executive secretary to food store manager, office manager, and licensed insurance agent. Currently she is the owner of the Center for Creative Learning and Accountability Coaching Associates. As a consultant and business coach she works with large and small companies, as well as individuals, in the areas of start-up, marketing, and management skills and career building.

Patricia was the first to receive the Registered Corporate Coach designation from the National Association of Business Coaches (now the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches). *Ask the Coach*, Patricia's Q & A column on career coaching appeared regularly in *Employment Times* and is currently on *MilwaukeeJobs.com*. Her articles are also often printed in business and trade publications and in online newsletters.

As the host of *A Sign of the Times*, an interview format television show for Warner Cable for five years, she had the opportunity to introduce people to the cutting edge technologies in all areas of life. Currently she is using her experience from hosting the radio show "A Woman's Point of View" to host her new show on BlogTalk Radio on the internet.

A member of the boards of several non-profit organizations, Patricia is active in both charitable and civic organizations.

To keep all this together, and still have time for her family and herself, Patricia must truly practice what she teaches in the areas of communication, time management, and motivation, as well as business marketing, management, emotional intelligence and ethics.

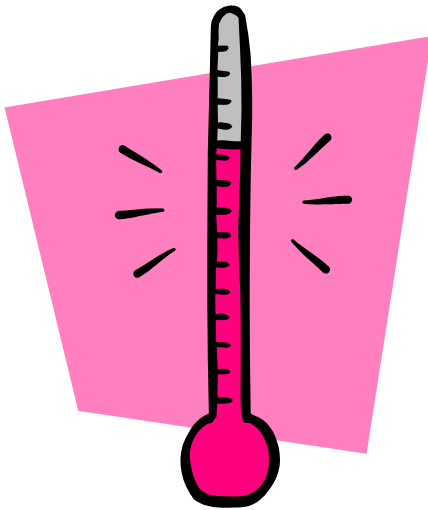
PRINTING IS PERMITTED FOR YOUR PERSONAL USE ONLY. NO PERMISSION IS GIVEN FOR DISTRIBUTION TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND THE WLA CONFERENCE.

**Excellence is not  
doing one thing 100% better than others,  
Excellence is doing 100 things 1% better!**

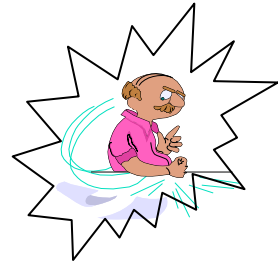
*Consciously or unconsciously, every one of us  
does render some service or another.  
If we cultivate the habit of doing this service deliberately,  
our desire for service will steadily grow stronger,  
and we will make not only our own happiness,  
but that of the world at large.*

Mahatma Ghandi

## *Emotional Temperature*



Reactive



Proactive



Apathetic



*Quit  
Taking  
It  
Personally*



# *Handling the Customer*

1. Smile
2. Opening remarks
3. Offer help
4. Listen
5. Set a positive tone
6. Don't "ignore" the customer
7. Body language
8. Use their name
9. Bring it to a conclusion
10. How else can you/the library help them?
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.

*Excellence is in the details.  
Give attention to the details  
and excellence will come.*  
**Perry Paxton**

# *Seven Steps for Handling Challenging Conversations*

## 1. Listen

- Eye contact
- Take notes
- Concentrate

## 2. Express Honest Empathy

- “I can see that this is a real problem.”
- Admission if necessary
- It’s more how you say it, than what you say

## 3. Get Agreement on the Question

- Be specific
- “Is there anything else we should resolve?”

## 4. Cushion Your Responses

- “I understand how you feel”
- “You are important to us”
- “We’re really sorry.”
- “What can I do to make it right?”
- “It sounds like we really made a big mistake.”
- “Based on what you have told me...”

## 5. State Your Action

- Be as specific as necessary

## 6. Get Final Agreement

- “Would that satisfy your needs?”
- “Will that correct the problem?”

## 7. “Thank you!”

# *Telephone Tips*



1. Answer with name, agency and offer of assistance
2. Speak in a clear, distinct voice
3. Use the customer's name
4. Acknowledge, appreciate, confirm
5. Don't interrupt
6. Be Positive
7. Summarize what you heard
8. Don't leave them in the dark
9. Best time to call back
10. CALL BACK!!!

***We are what we repeatedly do.  
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.  
Aristotle***

# *Top Ten List of What Not to Do!*

## **DON'T...**

1. Argue
2. Get emotional
3. Crowd or push people
4. Get into side issues
5. Use jargon
6. Tell them, just show them
7. Blame others in your organization
8. Over-promise
9. Deny mistakes
10. Neglect individuals who are part of a group

*If you are going to achieve excellence in big things,  
you develop the habit in little matters.  
Excellence is not an exception,  
it is a prevailing attitude.*  
**Colin Powell**

# *Action Plan*

## **Internal Customers:**

Who are they?

What do they expect of you?

What can you do differently?

## **External Customers:**

Who are they?

What do they expect of you?

What can you do differently?

*Excellence is to do a common thing in an uncommon way.*

**Booker T. Washington**

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*Excellence is doing ordinary things extraordinarily well.*

**John W. Gardner**

(American Writer and Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, 1912-2002)