

THE FORT HOOD CUSTOMER SERVICE NEWSLETTER

September 23, 2011



“THE GREAT PLACE” “THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY BEGINS AT FORT HOOD” SEPTEMBER 2011

This month's newsletter is dedicated to all the great customer service that's being shown out on the streets of "The Great Place." We are extremely proud of our Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) and we want others to know what our customers are saying about them.

"The good folks in the Catering Office were extremely helpful in assisting me with scheduling the NCO Induction Ceremony for the Warrior Transition Brigade. **Ms. Sara Oum** and her staff were very patient, courteous and professional as they provided me great assistance in finding the right date and location for this important ceremony. I just wanted to express my thanks to Ms. Oum and her staff and I hope this comment gets back to them."

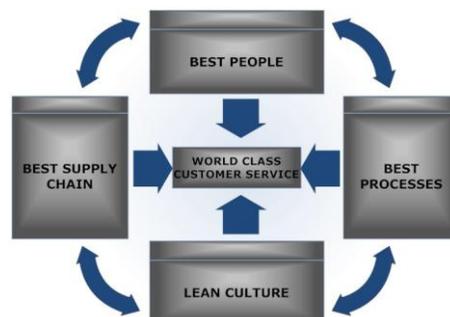
"**Tanya McAlister**, Office Mail, is commended for an excellent customer service. A package, containing medical information, was mailed to a Soldier's home address. We were notified, the same day the package was mailed, the Soldier was leaving town and needed documents contained in the package. When we explained the situation to Ms. McAlister, she went above and beyond, found the package, and made sure it was returned to CRDAMC. On behalf of my customer, a Soldier, I would like to express my sincere thanks for a job well done."

"I had a challenge of obtaining a GIS grid/Map of underground utilities for the upcoming RPPD audit. **Joseph Battinelli** simply provided me with a fresh perspective to solve my challenge. Joseph took time out of his hectic schedule to walk me through Micro-station which afforded me the ability to move forward and overcome my challenge. Thanks to Joseph, the challenge was executed professionally and well. Thanks."

"**Katy Morgan** has been extremely helpful in supporting DIV WEST G6 wireless section to accomplish a reduction in the number of blackberry devices being used within the organization and on Ft Hood. The Commanding General of DIV WEST explored many options and chose reducing wireless services as a cost saving move. Katy's ability to directly suspend, move, and to reactivate numbers was instrumental in allowing us to accomplish our set goal. Katy's assistance has allowed us to reduce our annual contract cost from \$755,000 down to approximately \$382,000. I personally appreciate her attitude knowledge of the job and her work ethics."

"Each year the Recycle Program participates in Earth Fest and ensures it is a huge success. The recycle management (**Jaycee Turnquist, Rufus Walker, Pollyanna Reedy, Hector Nunez, Wayne Stanford, and Edel Sarrosa**) and employees (**Martha Miller, Daisy Bacon, Kyle Keaton, Sabrina Schmidt, Sonya Swoish, Edward Wright, Curtis Mitchel, Fono Tunupopo, Jason Jones, Mitchell Douglas, Ellis Robinson, Tony Carradine, Ray Washington and Craig Hutton**) went above and beyond to educate the students, set up, clean up, collect recyclables, serve food, and any other tasks needed to support the event. With more than 18,000 people and 1,700 students, it really took the amazing support of the entire Recycle Program to make this event go smoothly. Major kudos to the Recycle Team!"

"The DPTMS Deployment, Readiness and Ceremonies Branch was in need of a narrator for our Civilian Recognition Ceremony. We asked **Ms Christie Vanover** of PAO to help us out with this and she quickly responded to our request getting Ms Angie Malone to narrate our ceremony. I must say that she was the best we have ever had! Ms Malone was on time, very professional and we had many, many positive comments on her performance from those attending the ceremony! She is a great talent and made the ceremony a big hit and special for all in attendance. It would be our great pleasure to work with her again!"



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"I came in today after the education counselor **Mr. Jessie Saucedo** came to our unit B co and gave a thorough briefing I wanted to get help registering for classes and needed more info for education benefits to me, he did not stop till all my questions were satisfactorily answered what a BIG HELP he was he went above and beyond his job duties and showed genuine care and concern for my issues. Also Mr. Francisco Cruz always very helpful every time I come in always asking if I need assistance and always hooking me up with the right person to address my needs. The front desk staff is always helpful and friendly as well and I have always seen them going out of their way to help people in general this is by far one of the best most helpful facilities on this post KUDOS to the entire SFAC staff your excellence of service shows and is appreciated."

"Greatly appreciated the service provided to me today at the Fort Hood CYS Parent Central Services office by **Ms. Jodie Cain-Smith**. I had a couple issues that were quickly resolved by Jodie prior to me leaving her office. She goes above and beyond to assist soldiers and their families to get a resolution to problems or concerns. She provided excellent customer service and I felt she should be recognized for this as she is a great asset to this program. Thank you so much once again."

"**Rudy Diaz** is an outstanding electrician with DPW. He provided excellent service by assessing our needs and keeping us informed on the status of parts and the completion of service work. What surprised me most is that he actually stopped by a few days after the service/work was done to see how things were going for us! Rudy is not only an outstanding service technician, he is an outstanding human being that actually takes his job serious and cares about customers...
SOMETHING I RARELY SEE IN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES!"

"After 30 plus years in the Army, I am retiring. Unfortunately I was dedicated to work and not to taking care of my own records. But fortunately for me, **Ida Medel** at the Military Personnel Center was here to help me. She has cheerfully spent hours of her time helping me get my records in proper order before retirement. I could never have done so without her and I am very grateful to her. I will remember her for her kindness, understanding, and patience while doing something she really should not have had to do long after I leave the Army. Please commend **Ida Medel** for her outstanding customer service to me as well as to the many other Soldiers she supports on Ft. Hood. Thanks so very much! SGM Barbara Maxwell."

"I have been dealing with **Ms. Denise Leae** who works in the Transportation office for Non-Temporary Storage and she has been extremely helpful. Actually, she has gone far beyond my expectations and in 21 years in the Army, has to be the most qualified and helpful transportation person I have dealt with. This is extremely important as I am currently deployed to Iraq and she continuously provides responses, feedback and helpful information. I still have business to conduct with Ms. Leae, but have such high confidence in her support, I am submitting this now."

"Would like to thank **Judy Bellamy** at the Clear Creek ITR office for her help last week. My family and I had been waiting to get the military rate tickets for Moody Gardens in Galveston for a while. Every time I checked they were sold out. The day before our departure to Galveston, there were still no tickets available and "Judy" arranged to have tickets waiting for us at the Visitor Center at Moody Gardens. She went above and beyond what she was required to do and did so with a smile. She saved us about \$50 in entrance fees, which made a big difference in our vacation budget. Thanks Judy!!"

Satisfied Customers Tell Three Friends,
Angry Customers Tell 3,000



"Congratulations to Larry here, who actually picked up his phone and spoke with a customer. This might be a breakthrough for our company!"

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"I am an employee at this particular day care center and have been for ten years. I am commenting on the character education class I took on Aug 16 2011 given by Mrs. R. Woodard. Briefly this class teaches the about the pillars of character. I think Mrs. Woodard has an excellent way of emphasizing the importance of the basic "golden rule" and being a good human being. If we would just all follow this way of living our lives at home and in our professional life what a great place this world would be to live in. I wish everyone had the opportunity to be instructed by Mrs. Woodard and I am thankful to have her as one of our trainers at FHCDC. I always walk away with a new outlook when attending training by **Mrs. Rhonda Woodard and Mrs. Jennifer GodBold.**"

"Thanks go out to **Ms. Lacey J. Eide** for information on the exciting fire and office safety class this morning. She is very knowledgeable and professional. At the conclusion of the class she asked for any questions, comments and concerns and passed out pamphlet, she is very well accepted by the audience. 100% presented and understood by all. Thank you. Lacey Eide Fire Inspector Public Information/Public Education Officer Fire and Emergency Services (FES) Fort Hood TX 76544."



Do I look Happy to you!

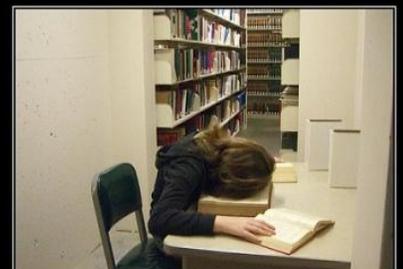
"Electrical, DPW Shop 93: Brad Waldrep. Brad is a truly outstanding electrician who corrected approximately fifty electrical deficiencies at BLDG 37011 during July alone. I am certain the electrical issues of BLDG 37011 would not have been resolved so swiftly if anyone else had been the point man. I have worked with Brad many times in the past, and he has always responded to even a Routine Service Order within 24 hours (DPW is authorized up to 28 days before responding to Routine Service Orders). He is accommodating, quick, experienced, and knowledgeable (not a combination very commonly encountered when working with contractors). Additionally, his work ethic is such that he always goes the extra mile. The diffusers (fluorescent light covers) for BLDG 37011 are one example of this. Due to the age of the fluorescent light fixtures in BLDG 37011, replacement diffusers are no longer available. However, Brad purchased sheets of diffuser material from Home Depot and molded them until they fit on the light fixtures so well that they looked to have been diffusers specifically designed for those fixtures. Brad is truly a credit to the entire DPW organization, and is an indispensable asset."

"I would like to say thank you to **La Shanda Scott** of the Transportation office for her outstanding help during my PCS move. She was absolutely professional during the entire ordeal, and was instrumental in assisting me while I was on PCS leave. Despite being given the run around from the gentlemen at the front desk, La Shanda quickly realized that she had personally handled my paperwork and quickly gave me resolution on how to expedite the handling of my situation. Absolutely great work by an outstanding employee."

"I had a maintenance request after my back gate was broke into. With my spouse currently gone I was feeling a little unsafe since I woke up and the gate had been opened with lock on it and I could not shut it. The two gentlemen that came out today fixed that. **Jerry Brown and Ken Hyman** showed up on time with smiles on their faces and listened as I explained everything. Then one of them asked me do you use this gate and I said no we have never used it he said ok we will fix you right up. They DID!!!! I now have a totally secure gate back there and they fixed the latches and better yet it took less than 15 minutes they looked and me and said is there anything else I was so shocked it was done so fast! I love that we have nice people that help wives when they have these issues. I am very grateful!! Thank you!!!"



We're no dog and pony show.



CUSTOMER SERVICE
It's the only thing that keeps you from being just another student in the library

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Good News Stories.....

It's not very often that the public as a whole is privy to some of the actions taken as a result of ICE Comments. Below are some examples of how the ICE Program can benefit the community as a whole.

Example #1: "As a volunteer during last week's Earth Day Festival, I was surprised to see that more efforts weren't made to promote recycling. While there were numerous recycle bins on site, they were for plastic bottles and aluminum cans only. The majority of the food being sold was being distributed on cardboard and paper plates. Additionally, the toys being handed out to the children also came in cardboard boxes. Unfortunately, those types of waste just got tossed in the trash with no chance to recycle. I just found it ironic that everyone was eager to wear a t-shirt with a recycle logo on it and talk about Earth Day, but our organization didn't do more to practice what we were preaching."

Action taken: We now have a crew going around collecting cardboard and other recycle material at events, we now provide T-shirts to personnel at events that say recycle patrol....has worked great.

Example #2: Reduction of Customer Waiting Time

While I know that we all should constantly be evaluating our processes for potential improvements, sometimes the details are missed and they can make all the difference. For example, In the DOL Transportation Personal Property office we used to have long lines of customers waiting to ask questions, see about setting up shipments, or checking on their shipments status. Mixed in with those, some customers were turning in personally procured move (PPM,

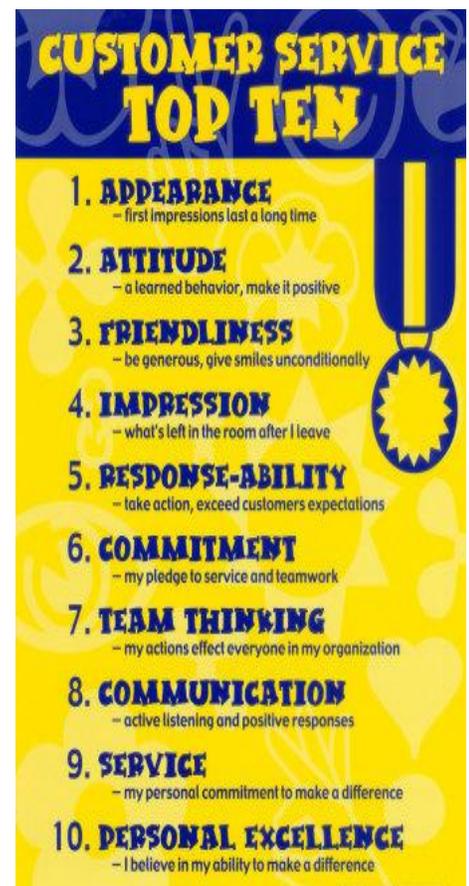
formerly DITY) packets of forms, and some were simply in-processing or clearing. Our average wait time in line was clocked at 10-15 minutes. In the summer peak season, customers sometimes waited in line as long as 30 minutes or more, just to get face to face with a staff member. Waiting time was our most prevalent complaint. Not surprisingly our ICE scores were pretty bad. By asking and recording the reasons that customers gave as to why they were coming to see us, and analyzing the data, we were able to clearly see categories and that we needed to address the various reasons for their visits in additional ways.

We brainstormed solutions, with special attention as to whether there wasn't some other way to address the reasons for visits to our office, and began developing alternatives. For example, in our hallway outside the office, we placed poster sized lists of frequently asked questions and their answers. It is not unusual to see a Soldier take notes in the hall or snap a picture with their cell phone.

We eliminated the requirement for each and every soldier to in-process or clear through our office. After all, we really only need to see those Soldiers, Family Members, and Civilian Employees who actually are moving or storing household goods through us.

We also addressed the most common subjects with fact sheets and handouts. Lastly, we set up some self-serve areas. Turning in of PPM packets is a good example, as well as our new automated Kiosk area to access our system on line. All equipment, materials and instructions are provided for the customer to use. Of course questions do come up, and just like at the self-check-out at a discount store, staff are available as a back-up to self-service.

All of these efforts collectively reduced waiting time. None of this happened overnight, but our customer waiting time during this peak season is averaging 5 minutes, down from 30, and has not averaged more than 6 minutes in over a year. Incidentally, our ICE scores are consistently more than 10 points higher too!



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We all have little things that drive us nuts. Here's one of mine - the phrase "You'll have to."

Yesterday I walked into a store, politely asked for help, and was told, "You'll have to wait for one of our technicians to be free." I didn't mind the wait, but it got me thinking how often we hear that statement in public - and how abrasive it is to hear as a customer. (Excuse me, but I don't "have to" do anything, especially for a stranger!)

Most of us probably don't say "you'll have to" out of rudeness. We say it because we are trying to protect ourselves, or set expectations with a customer. But when you examine the meaning of this statement literally, you can see where it breeds a lot of customer resentment right off the bat:

-It tells another person what to do.

-It implies that you have the power in this transaction, not them.

-It doesn't give the customer options.

The irony is that, just by changing a few words, you can turn a curt brush-off into a great customer experience. Let's try a few examples:

Before: You'll have to fill out this form.

After: I'd like to get a little information from you so we can help you better.

Before: You'll have to wait for a technician.

After: I'll have someone out to help you in just a few minutes.

Before: You'll have to wait in line.

After: We should be able to get to you soon - it shouldn't be more than a short wait.

Perhaps the best example of an alternative to "you'll have to" came when I tried to go to a sold-out Philadelphia Phillies baseball game last year, while I was passing through town. Instead of saying the obvious "We're sold out - you'll have to come back another time," the ticket clerk said, "We'd love to have you see the game. Even though we're sold out, here's what I'd suggest - if you'd like, feel free to check at each of our gates to see if there are any extra tickets. Good luck!"

As it turned out, there were no tickets at any of the gates and I eventually left empty-handed - but every person I dealt with at the ballpark was so polite, upbeat and helpful that it was still a great customer experience. I later discovered that these people are specifically trained for what to say to fans in situations like these, and it works!

So look critically at times where you are tempted to say "you'll have to" to customers, and start rehearsing new responses that speak to your customers' interests. The difference will be amazing!

Rich Gallagher is a communications skills expert and seminar leader. He is the author of several books including Great Customer Connections (AMACOM, 2006) and What to Say to a Porcupine (AMACOM, 2008). Visit <http://www.PointOfContactGroup.com> for information.



"Someone calling themselves a customer says they want something called service."



"I'm looking for a job in customer service. So, I'm distributing my resume."



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