

**Retailer Newsletter**

**November 1, 2023**

**Tom’s Business “TIPS”**

***“To Improve Profits”***

**RE: Do You Use A Daily/Shift Checklist?**

**Hi,**

**Sometimes I have difficulty deciding what topics/issues to discuss with you each month. There are times when a ‘Topic’ just presents itself. My wife, Lexie, and I go out to lunch frequently on Fridays. Typically, we visit fast-food restaurants; however, a particular one has caught my attention on more than one occasion. A recent lunch stop, which we tried to do before the noon rush, was a little frustrating. You would think that a business (like a fast-food restaurant) would have everything filled, cleaned, and ready for business before they opened their doors each day. We walked in shortly after they opened, and I checked out the rest room and noticed the paper towel dispenser was empty, and the trash was full! As I went into the restaurant, my wife gave me a cup to fill with our favorite beverage. I noticed the napkin dispenser and straws were both almost empty. You may be thinking to yourself, “well, maybe this was a one-time occurrence.” Let me assure you it was not the first time. Obviously, this store does not maintain a shift/daily checklist. I assume they expect their employees to remember what needs to be done. Well, I have a news bulletin for them, it’s not working. Every business, retail or other, needs a daily checklist to be sure things are done every day. I am a big believer in faithfully completing Daily Shift Checklists. At my stores, each shift had duties to perform. The last shift of the day (which for us ended at 7:00 a.m.) would put the checklist in their shift paperwork. I made a real effort to look for this document each morning, since there were usually notes on it directed to me. For example, notes may indicate a particular canopy/pole light that was out, a nozzle was leaking, or something similar. Usually, the notes were not an urgent or emergency situation but given enough time (delay) in handling the problem, it could become one. We have a checklist posted on our website, under Business Reports & Forms – *C-Store Daily Checklist*. This may not work for everyone, but it gives you a starting place. Download this document and make it specific to your store. I’ve seen some stores use a checklist under a plastic cover and they use a grease pencil to check off the duties performed. I prefer the individual sheet of paper, since it also serves as a reminder for me to look for important notes. I believe if you start using a tool like the *C-Store Daily Checklist*, situations will not occur at your store(s) like the fast-food business mentioned in my opening paragraph.**

**I know I have been writing a lot about ‘Employee Theft’. I hear that from my wife as she critiques my newsletter each month. So, I think to myself, maybe I’ll take some time off and not mention it for a month or two, but then something pops up and I find another reason to add ‘Employee Theft’ to my next newsletter. Something occurred after my last Tom’s Tips that I want to share. A retailer here in KC posts shoplifters at his store, attempted hold ups, and even employees stealing on *YouTube*. He wrote me after last month’s *Tom’s Tips* to tell me he recently caught (and fired) three employees stealing. I call it his ‘Wall of Shame’. It’s simply amazing how all his employees and most of his customers know he has an elaborate camera system in his stores, and they still try to get away with stealing. Maybe you should try implementing your own ’Wall of Shame’ when you catch employees and customers stealing from you.**

**Recently I witnessed another unpleasant situation occur, and I thought I should pass it along. I entered a hardware store and could not help but hear a manager (I assumed) yelling at a store employee. Now I say ‘yelling’ because he could have been heard at the back of the store. Whatever happened to cause this manager to berate a fellow employee within earshot of many store customers must have been horrific. I will admit I was guilty of doing the same thing when I was a young entrepreneur, but not for long. I heard something many years ago that stuck with me to this day:**

***“Criticize in private, compliment in public”***

**Nothing anybody does deserves to be disciplined in public. I felt sorry for the employee; but I also felt sorry for the manager, because it was obvious to me that the environment at that store was not a place to work at OR shop at.**

**Here’s a personal pet peeve of mine, slow pumps. Recently while fueling up at a local store (in the rain) and the fuel was pumping so slowly that I finally had to stop before my tank was full. Here is my suggestion to you, especially with winter coming, be sure your dispensers are fueling properly. If you have not changed the filters in a while, consider doing it. With winter almost upon us, customers do not want to wait needlessly in the bitter cold while your dispensers work slowly. For many of you, filter replacement is easy, it’s a simple spin-on filter. If you are not sure, ask your pump service company how to do it. Most stores should replace the filters twice a year, high-volume locations probably more often. Do it today, it is a customer service item!**

**Keeping with my commitment to share some items we feature on our website each month:**

**Business Forms & Reports For Your Business:**

* 1. **Mass Attack in Crowded & Public Places – the report was made available by the US Dept. of Homeland Security. This is worth reading for you, your staff, and your family.**
	2. **Mission Statement – this brief statement tells your staff (and customers) what you are all about.**
	3. **Quick Employment Application – this is a must-have document to have on-hand when a new applicant comes into your store, any day, any time.**

**If you would like to improve your store sales and profits, give me a call or email. If you are a supplier or organization with retailers, and they are struggling to maintain profitable stores, please reach out to me. We can help these stores operate more efficiently and improve profitability!**

***“Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is love what you do.”***

***Steve Jobs***

**Don't be a victim of the 5 Dangerous Words –**

***‘Maybe I’ll Do It Tomorrow’***

**Do it today because tomorrow (~~could be~~) will be too late!**

Tom
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***“Our business is making your business better!”***