

**Retailer Newsletter**

**July 1, 2022**

**Tom’s Business “TIPS”**

***“To Improve Profits”***

**RE: Putting Employees First**

**Greetings,**

**For many years I have been mentioning the advantages of putting your employees first, not just in words, but more importantly in your actions. Many retailers *say* they treat employees well, while others actually *do*. The following is a perfect example. Recently as I walked into a c-store in a rural area, and as I walked in, I noticed signs saying, “Restrooms are not available, due to construction.” I did see evidence of work being done, but I assumed it was just a typical ploy to avoid having restrooms available for customers. I jokingly asked the CSR if there is a restroom for them. She told me, “Nope, we have to get in our cars and drive two miles to a neighboring store.” I looked around the store and asked, “Are you working by yourself today?” She told me the other CSR was due in 30 minutes, and the first thing she was going to do was get in her car and drive to that restroom. I’ll be the first to admit that I do not know the cost of renting a port-a-potty; but as a store owner, I would certainly spend the $$ necessary to provide my staff with what is important to avoid any unnecessary hardships at the workplace. This would also help assur~~e~~ them of their value in operating my business successfully. I am willing to pay extra to keep them happy. It’s no secret that I am a seasoned citizen, and I make numerous trips to the restroom throughout the day, so it is unfathomable for me to consider asking my staff to work without the bare necessities of life. Think about it, do you just say, “My employees come first!” or do you actually show “My employees come first!” I’ll leave the rest up to you.**

**I received an interesting phone call last month. The caller identified herself as a store owner from the Chicago area who had attended one of my very first training sessions after Bill Sawyer and I started T&S Management almost 17 years ago. She wanted to tell me she has been reading ‘Tom’s Tips’ ever since that time. She was curious as to why I continue to send a newsletter to people I have not seen or talked to in almost 17 years? I told her that when Bill and I started T&S in 2005, we were determined to provide something other training organizations did not do, and that is ‘service after the sale’. This means, that our commitment to helping retailers, managers, and CSRs does not end when the class or consulting session ends, it is ongoing. I remember back when I operated my stores and often found myself struggling to keep my head above water; not just financially, but with an overload of problems every day. I think about those days each time I write *‘Tom’s Tips’*. I’m simply attempting to pass along a thought or two each month to help retailers in their day-to-day operations. You may not realize that I send out 3,000+ newsletters each month. If any of my articles strike a nerve with only 10% of the readers, that’s 300 retailers, managers, or CSRs who are impacted. That is a lot of people who may find an easier/better way to operate their business, make more $$, or become a better person interacting with customers. I usually average four to five phone calls or emails each month from readers of my newsletter with questions about our business. Many times, it is an issue I have previously discussed. I know they found my contact info readily available in my communication. My newsletter has also allowed retailers and marketers to contact me for training needs. Please keep the questions coming.**

**I wish I had a crystal ball to tell us when the roller coaster ride with fuel prices will end; but sadly, I don’t have one. I realize you may be seeing dramatic spikes in the cost of your next load of fuel. Remember, your customers are paying attention to your price sign. It is imperative that you stay as competitive (with your nearby stores) as possible. By that I mean, if you raise your price higher than your competition, you are asking your customers to seek a better deal elsewhere. The latest statistics claim, “Customers will drive two miles to save 5¢ per gallon”. Try to stay as competitive as possible. When this fiasco finally ends, and it will end, customers will remember who was fair to them during tough times and who wasn’t. Good luck!**

**I write a Safety & Security Tip each month on our website. A recent incident in my own neighborhood occurred that I think is worth mentioning. A lady went to the gym early one morning. As usual, she left her purse in the car and only took her keys inside the gym. Unscrupulous people are out there watching for just this type of behavior. When she went inside, crooks broke out the car window and stole her purse and the garage door opener. Finding her driver’s license, they went to her house, parked their getaway car in her garage, and cleaned out her home of valuables. They stole her computer *AND her notebook with all her passwords*. OUCH! By the time she finished her workout at the gym, went out to her car, and discovered what had happened, the thieves were long gone. DO NOT LEAVE VALUABLES IN YOUR PARKED CAR, EVEN ON YOUR HOME DRIVEWAY. Remove them or put them in the trunk before you get to your destination. Pass this advice along to your staff and children. This also applies to your daughter going to soccer practice or dance lessons.**

**I read a recent article in ‘Convenience Store News’ from *Workjam*, “Advice from the C-store Frontline: How to Overcome the Labor Squeeze.” This is a well written piece on the struggles to keep CSRs. There are some good ideas to help KEEP the staff you have, since it is cheaper than HIRING & TRAINING new employees. Well worth your time to read. I have included the link below.**

[**https://www.csnews.com/advice-c-store-frontline-how-overcome-labor-squeeze?**](https://www.csnews.com/advice-c-store-frontline-how-overcome-labor-squeeze?utm_source=omeda&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=BONUS_CSN&utm_keyword=&oly_enc_id=1138E0799701E6U)

**If your store is not as profitable as you would like or need it to be, 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 improve operations and profitability!**

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***“No matter how educated, talented, rich, or cool you believe you are, how you treat people ultimately tells all.”***

***“Integrity is everything.”***

***\* \* \****

**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
Thomas W. Terrono

**T&S Management Services, LLC
Instructor / Consultant for the Convenience Store Industry
Lee's Summit MO 64082-4864**

**816.550.8048**



**tom.tsms@gmail.com**

**[www.tsmanagementservices.com](http://www.tsmanagementservices.com)**

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