**Retailer Newsletter**

**November 1, 2020**

**Tom’s Business “TIPS”**

***“To Improve Profits”***

**RE: Training Does Cost, But It Does Pay $$**

**Hello,**

**My last few ‘*TIPS’* have discussed the importance of recruiting, hiring new CSR’s, keeping CSR’s, and *Great* Customer Service. I received several comments from retailers who believed it was time to reevaluate their own business after some deep soul searching. I would like to pass along one final Customer Service thought. As many of you know who have attended a training session with me, during introductions I often ask, “What is one of the biggest challenges you face in your business?” Many times, I hear new competition is the biggest obstacle retailers face. I usually follow that up with a thought-provoking question. “Is it really new competition or is a competitor outshining your store?” For example, is another location offering outstanding ‘Great Customer Service’ and you’re providing mediocre service to your customers? Could be! Does another location look spic ‘n span (AKA clean, clean, clean) and your store not-so-much? Maybe! As a former retailer myself, I understand the constant pressure you are under 24/7. Looking yourself in the mirror and asking, “Are you doing the absolute best or are you settling for whatever customer service your staff wants to provide?” This is one of the struggles you as the owner signed up for, right? Well maybe that wasn’t high on your list of priorities but settling for second best could be a business killer.**

**Now, I would like to focus on training new staff members. Numerous statistics state*: ‘Most employees quit their job because they don’t feel comfortable doing their job.’* In other words, they were never properly trained to do the job they were hired to do. Now, let that sink in for just a moment. . . . You have spent a considerable amount of time (and $$) to find the right CSR to join your staff and work at your store taking care of YOUR customers. Finally, you found the right person, but either you thought they were experienced enough, or you just didn’t have the time to properly train that new employee. You put them on the front line to serve your customers and told them to let you know if they had any questions. Right? How did that work out for you? Did you really expect them to come to you with little questions from time to time? Don’t kid yourself! Speaking from experience, (yes, you bet I’ve done that a time or two) I think if you’re honest, the results were probably disappointing, or maybe, you blamed the new hire because they were not as good as they led you to believe. That’s right, blame the new hire, don’t face up to your mistake.**

**When I am presenting our class: ‘Recruiting, Hiring, and Training’ I always share our ‘5 Day Training Schedule’. I’ll admit this is a very detailed, in-depth training outline. If you are not currently doing any formal CSR training for new (or current CSR’s) it may be a bit overwhelming. I suggest you focus on one or two pages to get started. You can find a copy of the training schedule on our website, (in EXCEL) and you can modify it to your situation. After you have trained a couple of CSRs (or maybe you have delegated this to a manager or trusted CSR), you might be able to expand the training to add a couple more pages. What do you have to lose? Give it a try!**

**Let’s review my opening line, “Training Does Cost, But It Does Pay $$.” Think about that for a moment. Do you realize “Training Does Cost, But It Does Pay $$.”**

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| **I recently read at NACS Magazine: *$1,716 was the cost to hire, train, and equip a full-time sales associate in 2019!* Wow! Think about that! How many times have you done that in 2020? 1X $1716, 2X $1716, and so on. *“It does pay to train and reduce employee turnover.”*** |

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**Just as a reminder, April 2021 is the deadline to upgrade your dispensers to avoid the liability for lost, stolen or counterfeit credit cards. After that date, *the liability shifts to the retailer* (that’s you) in the payment chain with the least secure payment technology. COVID-19 was the latest reason for the pushback on compliance. I wouldn’t wait too long since contractors will be busy, and new equipment could very well be in short supply.**

**On a personal note, it looks like things are opening up just a bit. I had my first virtual (Zoom) training session. I also have a couple of training seminars on my travel calendar, and an inquiry from a retailer requesting I meet her for a consulting visit at her stores. I’m anxious to get back on the road and meet with retailers.**

**I hope you; your stores staff, and family are staying safe during these trying times. If your health warning signage is looking tattered, maybe it’s time to replace/refresh. I hope you and your staff are always wearing face masks, even if local regulations do not require it. I believe your customers will appreciate your efforts. OBTW, I notice many stores have a sign on the front door, “All Customers Are Required to Wear a Mask”. Guess what I see when I walk in – no mask on the CSR. Do you see the problem with this scenario? I’ll leave the rest up to you.**

**We have added a page on our website, *“How to Clean & Sanitize Your Facility”*. We recommend you download a copy, share with your staff, and post/laminate in each location.**

**Here’s an item I’m seeing in many restroom doors. Maybe it will work for you. I think your customers appreciate your efforts to keep them safe. Hands-Free (no touch) Door Openers examples:**

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**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!**

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