

*The Guest*TM
2E



Leader's Guide

*Everything You Already Knew
About Great Customer Service*

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Introduction

Customer Service

If you ask your employees what good customer service looks like, they could probably give you an adequate response. Most people could. But, would their answers be the same? And would their answers represent their actions? Not necessarily.

Most people – your employees included – know what good customer service feels like when they're the customers. They definitely know what poor service feels like. As their manager, how do you get your employees to focus on the most important part of their job? How do you create a common language, a collective understanding of what good service looks like and apply it to their workplace? You've already taken the first step.

The Guest

With this engaging and funny DVD/video, you and your employees will discuss how to *treat a customer as you would a guest in your home*. We all know how to treat people who visit our home. So, if we treat our customers as we would guests in our home, good customer service will come easily.

The Guest will help your employees build a common language around your expectations for delivering great service and will help them identify standards for service in your business.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- List the GUEST Standards.
- Describe what each standard looks like in our business.
- Identify specifically what they are going to do differently when they return to their job.

Getting Started

About this Program

The 14-minute video, *The Guest*, is the cornerstone of this training. Both humorous and memorable, the story will engage viewers and create a springboard for discussion. This Leader's Guide will help you guide the discussion and customize the training material for your particular work setting.

Your Role

Whether you are a manager or a trainer, your role is to make this workshop lively and fun. ASK questions. Encourage dialogue, thinking, and reflection. Keep the class energized as you guide their learning about how to treat their customers as they would guests in their homes.

Training Options

Because some work teams only deal with external customers, others interact with both external and internal customers, and still others only work internally, we've designed this Leaders Guide to help you customize your workshop based on your specific needs. This Leader's Guide provides three different training options. They are:

- Training Option 1: External Guest Service
- Training Option 2: Internal Guest Service
- Training Option 3: External and Internal Guest Service

Training Option 1: External Guest Service

This training workshop is for frontline employees, those whose primary job function is to serve a paying customer. This workshop runs about 2 hours.

Training Option 2: Internal Guest Service

This training option is for work teams that do not directly interact with external customers. This training option provides you an opportunity to help employees understand the responsibilities of the frontline employees and the company's customer service standards, while outlining your internal service expectations. This workshop runs about 1 ½ hours.

Training Option 3: External and Internal Guest Service

This training option is for work groups that interact with paying customers as well as internal customers. This workshop will help you educate your employees on the importance of treating both external and internal customers like guests. This workshop runs about 2 ½ hours. The *Time Estimates Table* will help you assess your specific training needs.

PREVIEW

Time Estimates

Training Topic	Option #1 External Guest Service	Option #2 Internal Guest Service	Option #3 External and Internal Guest Service
Welcome	5	5	5
Icebreaker: Worst of Times, Best of Times	10	n/a	10
Common Language & Learning Objectives	5	5	5
Activity: Entertaining Guests	10	10	10
The Importance of Great Customer Service	5	5	10
The Guest DVD/Video	15	15	15
BREAK	5	n/a	10
The Guest Discussion	15	15	15
Activity: Guest Service Assessment	5	n/a	5
Activity: The GUEST Standards	15	n/a	15
Internal Guest Service	n/a	5	5
Activity: GUEST Standards for Internal Customers	n/a	10	15
Activity: Should Have, Could Have	15	10	15
Wrap-up	5	5	5
Team Guest Action Plan	10	5	10
TOTAL Time	2 hrs	1 ½ hrs	2 ½ hrs

Tips for Conducting a Successful Meeting

Before we get into the specifics of the program, let's go through a few basic training tips:

- **Start on time and end on time.**

If you want to gain the respect of your participants you need to first show that you respect them and their time. Start on time to reward those who arrive promptly.

- **Take breaks at odd intervals.**

Tell your class to return in seven minutes, or, start your break at 11:33 a.m. and tell participants to return in exactly 10 minutes. Participants are more apt to return promptly because of the specifics of your request. It's more fun too!

- **Assign group leaders the responsibility for rounding people up at the end of a break.**

- **Raise the energy level and increase participation in the class by having fun.**

Everybody knows that learning is more effective when it is fun. As the leader, it's your responsibility to keep things going. ASK a lot of questions and facilitate small-group discussions. Reward participation by throwing out gum or awarding candy for realistic ideas.

When the energy level starts to dip, get your participants out of their seats. ASK questions and reward answers. Or, give participants a break and have them return to a fast-paced Q & A contest. Give prizes for Q&A summary games or reward small groups for returning from break on time. Be creative!

- **Tell the class that you will follow up to help ensure that learning took place; then do so!**

Preparing for Your Meeting

Making time to adequately prepare is the single most important thing you can do before you teach this workshop. Get familiar with the DVD/video. Get comfortable with this Leader's Guide. Think about customer service problems that come up at work. Consider the specific service challenges that face your team.

Spend time brainstorming ways to overcome those challenges and improve the service you and your team provide.

Note: *Although the success of this workshop depends on your team's willingness to come up with their own answers and solutions for improving customer service, it is important to anticipate what may come up during the workshop. It's not your job to provide answers; rather, you should guide your team to embrace solutions that will work and that they are willing to try.*

Pre-Meeting Checklist

- Watch the video.
- Read this Leader's Guide.
- Reserve meeting space, video player or DVD player.
- Secure a whiteboard or flip chart, and markers.
- Blank paper for each participant to draw on for the 'Common Language' activity.
- Print Handouts in advance to ensure you have enough for each participant:
 - Meeting Announcement.
 - Team Member's Service Assessment.
 - GUEST Standards in Our Business.
 - One or two blank pieces of paper for each participant.
 - Gather candy, gum, and trinkets to reward participation and add a dimension of fun to the meeting.
 - Send Meeting Announcements.

Preparing Your Follow-up

Once your team members walk out of your training room, it may seem as if your job is done. But how do you know whether they will remember what they learned? While you may feel confident they know what it means to treat a customer like they would a guest in their home, how do you know that they will transfer that knowledge to the workplace? How do you know they will apply the GUEST Standards when they go back to their jobs?

That's why follow up is so critical. It reinforces everything that they learned and also gives participants the opportunity to ask any additional questions that have surfaced in their individual jobs concerning treating their customers like guests.

How you follow up will depend on your time, resources, demands and company culture. The ideas here range from simple check-ins to a more formal process:

- Schedule a follow-up coffee break or lunch 30 or 60 days after the training. Use a brown-bag coffee break or lunch hour to informally discuss what's worked, what's been challenging and any issues or achievements related to Guest service.
- Have a Wall of Fame board with successes and milestones.
- ASK participants to submit stories about how they have successfully implemented their Action Plan, or particularly good customer service stories that illustrate how well they implemented the GUEST Standards.
- E-mail success stories to all participants. Again, focus on improvements, milestones and achievements as well as successes.
- Call participants at random within 30 days of the training. ASK them specific questions to ensure their understanding of the content or to ensure they have transferred the skills they learned. This can be time consuming but is a great way to build relationships with your team members and coach one-on-one.
- Observe. Catch your team members in the act of treating their customers like guests. Encourage them verbally or write them a note that lets them know that you see and appreciate the great job they are doing.

Be creative and have fun. The follow-up is not an effort to make more work for you but, rather, to reinforce the learning.

Flip Charts

Prepare the following flip charts for use in your training workshop. You may also use the PowerPoint Presentation included as a file on both the DVD and the CD-ROM.

- 1 Common Language
- 2 Treat your customers like GUESTS
- 3 My Vi
- 4 Welcome them
Use Their Name
Anticipate Their Needs
Thank Them
Invite Them Back
- 5 Never = 1
Rarely = 2
Occasionally = 3
Often = 4
Always = 5
- 6 Welcome Guests: Improvement Ideas?
- 7 Use Their Name: Improvement Ideas?
- 8 Anticipate Needs: Improvement Ideas
- 9 Thank Them: Improvement Ideas
- 10 Invite Back: Improvement Ideas
- 11 Our Internal Customers
- 12 Expectations

Conducting Your Meeting

Welcome

Welcome employees.

Note: After participants have settled into their seats, immediately begin ice-breaking, morale building, get-to-know-you type activity.

Icebreaker: The Worst of Times and the Best of Times

BREAK participants into small groups. **TELL** participants that they will be talking about their worst customer service experiences and their best.

EXPLAIN:

- They will have five minutes to share customer service stories.
- They can be stories they experienced as customers, personal experiences while serving a customer or second-hand tales that someone else told them.
- When time is up, each group will nominate its favorite best and favorite worst service story for voting.

ASK:

What made the best service stories so good?

What made the worst service stories so bad?

RECORD best and worst nominations. Vote. Provide funny prizes to winning groups.

Note: If you have time constraints, consider including this activity as a prerequisite to attending the workshop and announce the winners for best and worse service stories, instead of conducting the activity during the workshop.

Common Language

EXPLAIN that this next activity is quick and is designed to spark their creative juices. Give everyone a sheet of paper and issue the following instructions.

SAY:

Take sixty seconds to delineate a lodging that includes a boschage, binal efflorescence, and a canine in the anterior curtilage.

Wait for blank looks. Repeat your instructions and remind everyone that you are using English, but don't give away what any of these words mean. Tell the group to go ahead and give it a try. When one minute is up, have them show you their drawings and tell them it wasn't exactly what you were looking for. Tell them you're going to give them another shot.

SAY:

This time, take sixty seconds to draw a picture of a house that includes a few trees, two flowers, and a dog in the front yard.

ASK:

Why were my instructions so easier to follow the second time?

Answers will vary:

Because we knew what you were talking about.

Because we knew what you meant.

Because you were using language/words we understood.

POST flip chart #1: *Common language*

EXPLAIN:

- We had a common language.
- You knew what I meant when I used the words "Draw" and "house" and "tree" and "two flowers" and "dog" and "front yard."

SAY:

Common language is critical to good communication, and it's especially important that we're all on the same page about what good service looks like so we can communicate well with our customers and with each other.

ASK:

So, what is GOOD customer service?

Taking care of their needs; Saying hello; offering eye contact; answering questions; fast check-out, etc.

RECORD answers on a flip chart and encourage as many answers as possible.

SAY:

A few minutes ago, you all knew exactly what I meant when I asked you in simple terms to draw a picture of a house with a tree, two flowers, and a dog in the front yard. It was because we have a common language that everyone understood. Today, we are going to agree on a common customer service language. During this workshop, we'll clearly define our customer service expectations by agreeing on a customer service language, called GUEST standards. Let's take a moment to go through the learning objectives.

Learning Objectives

TELL your audience that by the end of the workshop they will be able to:

- List the GUEST Standards.
- Describe what each Standard looks like in our business.
- Identify specifically what they will do differently when they return to their job.

Activity: Entertaining Guests

POST blank flip chart paper.

TELL employees to think about a time when they had visitors to their home, a time when they:

- Invited friends or family.
- Hosted an informal get together.
- Threw a party.

TELL employees to close their eyes and keep them closed until the activity is over. **TELL** them to think about:

- When their guests arrived.
- What they did when their guests came inside.
- What they did to help make their guests feel comfortable.
- What they did when it was time for their guests to leave.

TELL employees they may open their eyes. **ASK** the following questions and **RECORD** answers on the flip chart.

ASK:

What did you do when you answered the door?

Said hello. Took their coat. Invited them in.

How did you address them?

Used their first name.

After they came inside, what did you do?

Told them to have a seat. Offered them something to drink or eat. Talked to them. Tried to make them feel comfortable.

What did you SAY to them when they were ready to leave?

Thanks for coming.

Did you talk about getting together again? What did you SAY?

Let's plan on doing this again.

The Importance of Great Customer Service

ASK:

Why do you think we went through this activity?

Answers will vary...To see how we treat people when they visit us. To see what kind of host/hostess we are.

POST flip chart #2: *Treat your customers like GUESTS.*

ASK:

Why are we spending time talking about customer service? Why is great customer service so important to our company?

Answers will vary. Without customers, we wouldn't have a company, or a job. Offering great customer service sets us apart from other similar customers. Offering great customer service is treating our customers, as we want to be treated when we are customers.

SAY something like:

Our company's success depends on the level of customer service we offer our employees. We all have an idea of how to treat guests in our own home. So, why not treat our customers the same way? In the DVD we are going to watch, Ken asks the very same question. This humorous video shows us just what it means to treat customers like guests.

Note: *This discussion is designed to help employees understand why they are going through this training and why providing great customer service matters. If applicable, focus your comments on internal customer service.*

The Guest

Show the DVD/video.

Discussion and Debrief

ASK:

What was your favorite part of the show?

Answers will vary.

ASK:

Why does Ken say he wishes he could buy everything he needs at that store?

Because he is treated like a welcomed guest.

What does Ken mean when he says he is treated like a welcomed guest?

He is greeted by name. Vi takes cares of his needs. He is thanked and invited back.

Activity: My Vi

ASK for a show of hands.

Who has a friend or a relative like Vi?

Answers will vary.

Note: The idea here is to generate discussion about a Vi your employees may know well: an aunt, a grandmother or grandfather, a neighbor, etc. Chances are it will be someone older, someone who is retired perhaps. Someone who has time to anticipate the needs of your visit and who makes you feel like your visit was important to them. Someone who greets you warmly, maybe with a big hug and ushers you in with a genuine smile, lots of enthusiasm and offers of food and something to drink. Someone who is always ready for your visit and who makes it obvious how welcome you are and how much they enjoyed your visit.

POST flip chart #3 and **RECORD** answers. **ASK** for names for their “Vi” and write down the specific things “Vi” does.

ASK:

What kinds of things does she or he do when you visit?

Answers will vary.

ASK for a show of hands:

Have you ever had someone like Vi helping you or serving you when you were a customer?

Have you ever been to a business like that?

Answers will vary.

Note: If possible, tie in the best customer service story from the “Activity: The Best of Times, the Worst of Times,” to the way Vi treats her customers like guests at the Country store. Talk about similarities and differences.

SAY:

Vi in our story, and every “Vi” we’ve talked about is an example of what it means to treat a customer like a guest. Vi lives the GUEST Standards.

ASK:

Who remembers the five GUEST Standards Ken talks about?

POST flip chart #4: *Welcome...*

Reinforce flip chart.

SAY:

- Welcome your customers.**
- Use their name when possible.**
- Take care of their needs.**
- Thank them.**
- Invite them back.**

GUEST Service: How Do We Rate?

DISTRIBUTE Team Member's Service Assessment. **TELL** employees to complete the assessment honestly and that no one will see it.

Scoring

POST flip chart #5: *Never = 1...*

REFER to flip chart and **EXPLAIN** that for every answer, they should assign a point value.

ASK for a show of hands:

Who scored a perfect score of 50 points?

Who scored between 40 and 50? Between 30 and 40? Less than 30?

Who believes we all have areas in which we can improve?

SAY:

We are going to talk about each of the GUEST Standards and what they mean in our business. After we relate each standard to our line of business, you will have an opportunity to identify ways in which to improve the guest service you offer.

Activity: The GUEST Standards

Note: You need five groups for this activity. Regroup if necessary.

DISTRIBUTE “The GUEST Standards in Our Business” handouts. Place flip charts 6 through 10 at various places in the room.

EXPLAIN:

- That it's time for everyone to get up out of their seats. **ASK** them to stand.
- Each group will work on one of the GUEST Standards and how it relates to our business.
- They will have about 5 minutes to talk about the discussion points and brainstorm improvement ideas.
- They will post their improvement ideas on a flip chart and then, share them with the rest of the class.

TELL participants to stand up, take their handouts with them, and go find their flip chart.

Note: Walk around the room and help discussion by encouraging conversation about your line of business or The Guest DVD, when necessary.

Debrief

When time is up, ask everyone to **POST** flip charts next to one another. **TELL** participants to take a seat except for the group that will present their ideas for Welcoming. Have that group present its ideas to the class. Keep groups on track with the following discussion points:

Welcoming our Guests

- What do we currently do to welcome our customers? How can we do it better?
- Ideas for Improvement?

Using Their Name

- Do we use their name?
- What can we do to learn their name?
- What can we do to remember the name?
- Ideas for improvement?

Anticipating Their Needs

- What do we currently do to anticipate our customers' needs? How can we do it better?
- Ideas for improvement?

Thanking Them

- What do we currently do to show our customers we appreciate them?
- What else can we do? How can we do it better?
- Ideas for improvement?

Inviting Them Back

- What do we currently do to invite our customers back? How can we do it better?
- "See you next time" works, but is there anything more specific for our business?
- Ideas for Improvement?

Internal Guest Service

Note: *If your participants are frontline employees who never interact with internal customers, skip this section and go to the Wrap-up section.*

POST flip chart #11: *Our Internal Customers*

ASK:

Who are our internal customers?

RECORD answers.

POST flip chart 12: *Expectations...*

ASK:

What do our internal customers expect from us?

RECORD answers.

Activity: GUEST Standards for Internal Customers

Note: You need as many groups as internal customer types in your organization. Regroup if necessary.

DISTRIBUTE “The GUEST Standards for Our Internal Customers” handout. Give each group a blank piece of flip chart paper.

EXPLAIN:

- Each group will work on one of the internal customers.
- They will have about 5 minutes to talk about which GUEST Standards apply to their internal customer and brainstorm ideas for improving and strengthening the relationship.
- They will post their improvement ideas on a flip chart and then, share them with the rest of the class.

ASSIGN an internal customer to each group and tell them to write it at the top of their flip chart. **TELL** participants to take their handouts and find a place to work.

Note: Walk around the room and help discussion by encouraging conversation about your line of business and your internal customers, when necessary.

Debrief

When time is up, ask everyone to **POST** flip charts next to one another. **TELL** participants to take a seat except for the group that will present their ideas for Welcoming. Have that group present its ideas to the class.

Keep groups on track with the following discussion points:

- What are the GUEST Standards?**
Welcome, use their name, anticipate their needs, thank them, invite them back...
- Of the GUEST Standards, which are applicable to our relationship with our internal customers?**
Record answers on flip chart.

Activity: Expectations

POST flip chart 12: Expectations...

Place blank flip charts around the room. **TELL** groups to get up and go to one.

EXPLAIN:

- Groups should get up and go to a blank flip chart.
- You will assign one internal customer to each group.
- Groups should discuss what the internal customer expects from us and how we can apply the GUEST Service Standards (refer to flip chart #12).

Debrief

ASK groups to share their answers.

- What do we currently do to show our internal customers great service?**
- How can we apply the GUEST Standards to our internal customers?**
- What specific things can we do to strengthen our relationship with our internal customers?**

Note: If you are conducting Training Option #3: External and Internal Service, you may want to facilitate this activity as a large group or combine it with the previous activity and assign internal guests to one small group to discuss.

Activity: Could Have, Should Have

SAY something like:

We talked earlier about our worst experiences as customers. We've probably all made mistakes dealing with our guests too – hopefully not as severe as some of the dealings Ken had. But, there's no question we can probably all think of situations, with external and internal customers, that we could have handled better. Even though we might want to forget they ever happened, these experiences can be a great learning tool if we're willing to take the time to process them.

DISTRIBUTE “Could Have, Should Have” Handout.

EXPLAIN:

- They will have a few minutes to reflect on a customer situation (external or internal) that didn't go very well and write down what they could have done differently.
- This is for their use only.
- Although we will be talking about how we can better handle difficult customer situations, they only need to share if they are comfortable doing so.

Debrief

ASK:

Does anyone want to share their customer service situation?

Note: *Be prepared with your own story if nobody volunteers. It can be either an internal customer story or an external customer story, depending on your training needs.*

ASK the volunteer:

What ideas did you come up with to handle things differently?

Does anyone have additional ideas for handling this kind of customer situation?

Conclusion

Wrap-up

Activity: Guest Service Action Plan

DISTRIBUTE Action Plans. **EXPLAIN** that there are two parts to the action plan. **REFER** participants to flip charts 6 through 10.

Note: Direct employees who only interact with internal guests, to the GUEST Standards for Internal Customers and the flip charts they completed.

Part 1

EXPLAIN:

- The group will vote on improvement ideas.
- To vote, everyone will get up and make one mark next to the improvement idea they like best on each flip chart.
- When everyone returns to their seats, you will tally the votes and announce the idea that garnered the most votes for each GUEST Standard.
- That their votes represent a commitment.
- They will write the winning ideas on their action plan.

Note: As you announce winners, verbally guide them to complete their action plan.

SAY: As a group, we have committed to do the following:

- To welcome our guests, we will:**
- To learn our guests' names, we will:**
- To remember our guests' names, we will:**
- To anticipate our guests' needs, we will:**
- To show our guests our appreciation we will thank them by:**
- We will invite our guests back by:**

Note: If the complexities of your business make it unrealistic to implement an improvement plan that addresses all five steps of treating customers like guests, choose one area to work on that will impact your business the most.

Part 2

Refer participants back to their assessment. TELL them to consider one or two things, based on areas they need to improve on, to add to their action plan. Direct them to the bottom of the Action Plan.

SAY:

In addition, based on my Guest Service Assessment, I will also work to improve the guest service I offer by:

Following Up

TELL employees your plans for following up with them. **EXPLAIN** what you plan to do to help keep the GUEST Standards top of mind.

THANK participants for attending the training meeting.

Class Aids

Reproducible Handouts

- Meeting Announcement: Personal Invitation
- Meeting Announcement: Staff Meeting Posting
- GUEST Service Assessment: How Do We Rate?
- GUEST Standards in Our Business: Welcome
- GUEST Standards in Our Business: Use Their Name
- GUEST Standards in Our Business: Anticipate Needs
- GUEST Standards in Our Business: Thank Them
- GUEST Standards in Our Business: Invite Them Back
- GUEST Standards for Our Internal Customers
- Should Have, Could Have Handout
- Team Guest Action Plan

Dear

To focus our attention on the importance of our customers, we are offering a humorous training workshop called **The Guest**, for all employees.

During the workshop, you will watch and discuss an engaging and funny DVD that illustrates how easy it is to offer great customer service when you choose to treat a customer as you would a guest in your home.

The Guest workshop will help us build a common language around what it means to deliver great service in our business.

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- List the GUEST Standards.
- Describe what each standard looks like in our business.
- Identify specifically what you are going to do differently when you return to your job.

Workshop Details are:

Date:

Time:

Place:

See you then!

GUEST Service: How Do We Rate?

Team Member's Service Assessment

1 Never

2 Rarely

3 Occasionally

4 Often

5 Always

_____ I treat each customer as if he or she was the only one that day.

_____ When I'm in a bad mood, I make sure it doesn't show at work.

_____ Every time a customer calls or walks in, I smile and greet them warmly.

_____ Even when it's really busy and I'm feeling a little overwhelmed, I always smile and nod to acknowledge a customer who walks in.

_____ If I know a customer's name, I use it.

_____ I try to anticipate my customer's needs.

_____ I thank our customers for coming.

_____ I invite our customers back.

_____ I treat every customer like a guest in my home.

_____ I treat co-workers as if they were guests in my home.

Score _____

Our GUEST Standards: Using Their Name

How do you think our customers feel when we try to use their name?

Do we use their name?

What opportunities do we have in our business to make note of our customers' names? What can we do to learn their name?

Creative ways for remembering a person's name:

Do we think most people are comfortable using our customers' names? If uncomfortable, why? What can we do to make everyone feel comfortable?

Ideas for improving in this area:

Our GUEST Standards: Thanking Them

What do we currently do to show our customers we appreciate them? How can we do it better?

What else can we do?

Creative Ways to SAY “thank you” in our business:

Ideas for improving in this area:

GUEST Standards for Our Internal Customers

Who are our internal customers?

What do our internal customers expect from us?

Of the GUEST Standards, which apply to our internal customers?

What do we currently do to show our internal customers we value and respect them?

What else can we do?

Creative ways to make sure we treat our internal customers as guests:

Ideas for strengthening our relationship with our internal customers:

Should Have, Could Have

Think back to a guest encounter that left much to be desired. What was the situation?

In responding to your guest, what did you do? What did you say?

Looking back now, what could you have said or done that might have created a more positive outcome?

GUEST Action Plan

As a group, we have committed to do the following:

To welcome our guests, we will:

To learn our guests' names, we will:

To remember our guests' names, we will:

To anticipate our guests' needs, we will:

To show our guests our appreciation we will thank them by:

We will invite our guests back by:

In addition, based on my GUEST Service Assessment, I will also work to improve the guest service I offer by:

Signature: _____ date: _____

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OWEN-STEWART PERFORMANCE RESOURCES INC.

4485 Shoreline Drive, Gloucester, ON K1V 1S7

Toll Free: 1-800-263-3399

Email: sales@owenstewart.com

Website: www.owenstewart.com
