



***World-Class Customer Service:
EVERYONE is a Customer***

January 27, 2010



**RABINER
RESOURCES**

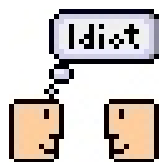
MANAGE THE LENS THROUGH WHICH YOU VIEW THE WORLD

We all have a certain lens through which we view the world. Some call it attitude and others refer to it as perspective. Whatever you call it, it is a key to success in providing world-class customer service.

Why? Because by principle, *you attract people and situations into your life that harmonize with your dominant thoughts*. In other words, what you see in life tends to be consistent with what you think about. It's what you expect to see, so your attention is drawn to it.

This principle, commonly referred to as the law of attraction, was popularized recently in the book and DVD titled *The Secret*. Here's another example of how it works. Have you ever noticed that when you buy a new car you suddenly find yourself noticing other cars of the same make and model? Your focus has shifted to that specific car and now you see them everywhere.

Here's how it works with regard to people and customer service. If we have a negative attitude about someone, we tend to avoid interacting with that person. We rationalize our feelings, saying to ourselves that the person has negative personality traits or motives. No matter how hard we try to cover them up, our attitude leaks out through negative verbal and nonverbal cues. What happens? The other person reads these cues and withdraws. Communication breaks down and we begin to lose our connection and our influence with that person.



On the other hand...if we have a positive attitude about someone, we tend to seek that person out and initiate contact. We rationalize our positive feelings and look for evidence to support them. We send out positive verbal and nonverbal cues. What happens? The other person reads these cues and likes them. Communication opens up and we begin to gain a connection and influence with that person.

Here are some examples of situations we all find ourselves in that can impact attitude:

- We are multi-tasking and the person who needs our service feels like an interruption.
- We are thinking about something else like:
 - How many people want something from us*
 - How irritating the last person we dealt with was*
 - What you think of this person's clothes or hair*
 - What's for dinner*
 - Whether or not you will be able to solve this person's problem*
- We are involved in something different and more interesting than serving this person
- We feel numb from too many difficult customers
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When you manage your attitude, you deliberately stop your current thinking process and adopt a positive, friendly attitude of service. It is a simple, yet powerful tool. It allows you to be totally present for that person, completely focused as you serve him or her, and in the frame of mind most likely to result in an open, positive customer interaction.

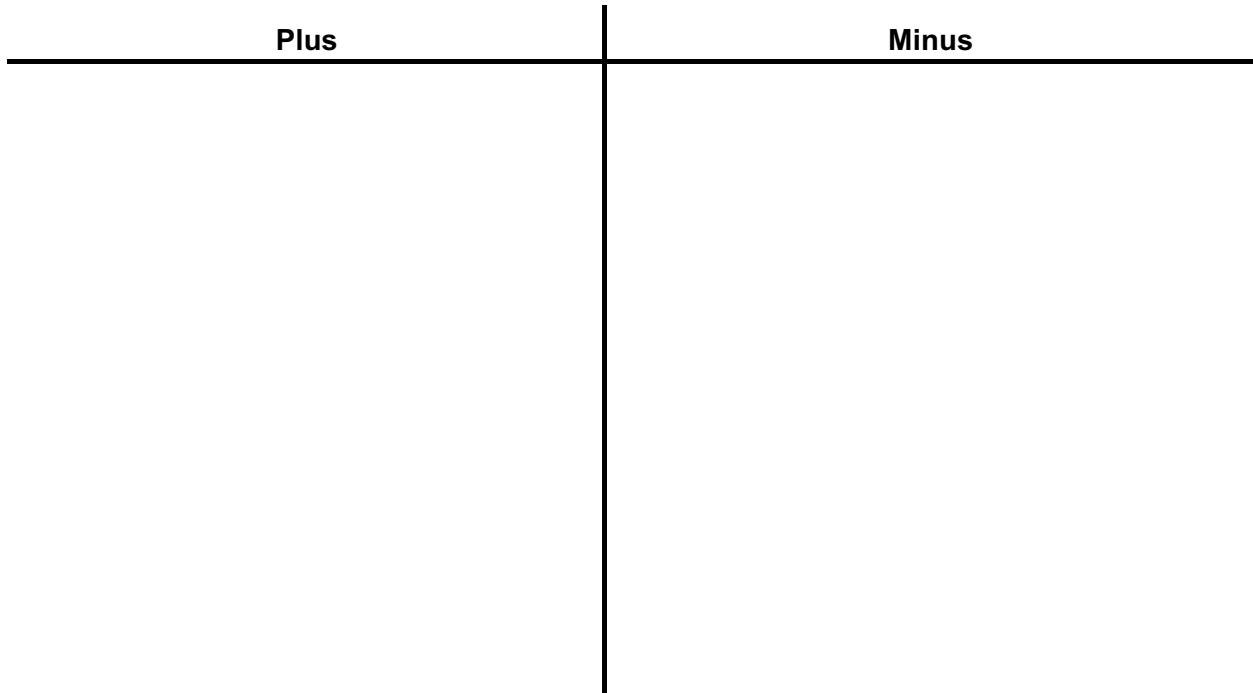
***“...everything can be taken away from a person but one thing:
the last of the human freedoms
— to choose one's attitude in any given set of
circumstances, to choose one's own way.”***

— Dr. Viktor Frankl

PRACTICE VALIDATION

Remember Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs?

- We all have a strong need to like and respect ourselves.
- Self-validation helps minimize our fusion to others.
- Validating others works because of their fusion to us.



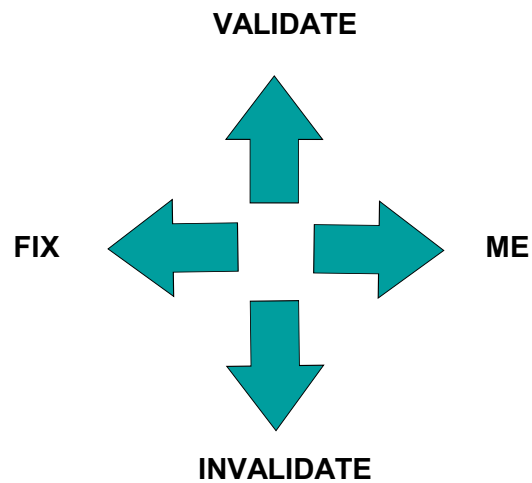
Whenever we do something for validation and we do NOT get validated, we see it as invalidation.

Whenever we feel we have been invalidated, the easiest way we cope with it is simply to invalidate the invalidator.

We justify our own "right-side" behaviors by making them someone else's fault. Deep inside our stock in ourselves drops.

Whenever we invalidate ourselves by demonstrating "right-side" behaviors, we will turn to someone else to get validated.

The Validation Fork



Understanding the “validation fork” is an important relationship tool. Fork opportunities happen many times each day. How do you typically respond?

Here are a few important tools to avoid invalidating others.

- Use questions
- Take ownership
- Acknowledge them
- Stay off the shuttle

***"Life is ten percent what happens to me
and ninety percent how I react to it."***

— Lou Holtz, former NCAA football coach

RECOVER WITH GRACE

Everyone makes mistakes, but few of us recover from our mistakes well. We either deny they happened at all, defend our actions, justify the outcomes, or shift the blame to avoid facing the fact that we made a mistake.

However, we define ourselves as people and professionals by the way we recover from mistakes. Our professionalism is as much about how we recover from mistakes as it is about getting it right the first time.

To successfully recover from a mistake, follow these three steps:

- Own it!
- Make amends.
- Learn.

Keep in mind that the people you work with and serve are watching you closely and will see your mistakes and how you recover from them. Set an example and recover with grace. When you model the way, you foster accountability and growth within your team and make it easy for customers to forgive you.

***“My heroes are the ones who survived doing it wrong,
who made mistakes, but recovered from them.”***

**— Bono (Paul Hewson), Rock Star, Social Activist,
Philanthropist, and Nobel Peace Prize Nominee**

MAKE THE MOST OF ONE-ON-ONE COMMUNICATIONS

The Receiving Steps



② **Be Present**

Avoid:

- *Waiting for the chance to jump in and take over*
- *Putting what's being said in context for yourself*
- *Rehearsing your response*
- *Judging what's being said*

Instead:

- *Free yourself of distractions including your own thoughts and feelings*
- *Put yourself in the talker's shoes*
- *Notice the feelings behind the words*
- *Notice what is not said*

③ **Acknowledge**

Simply tell them you hear them. Use expressions that show it impacted you.

Play back what they just told you.

Ask questions to clarify what happened.

Ask questions or make statements to clarify what they are feeling.

④ **Validate**

Make them feel normal.

Make them feel exceptional.

Show appreciation and gratitude. Say thank you.

Show interest. Ask follow-up questions.

⑤ **Solve (Optional)**

Fixing is not always necessary.

Avoid invalidating or making it about you.

Ask questions.

The following resources are some of those we used to assemble the material contained in today's program. These are wonderful resources that we recommend you consider as you continue your self-development.

Covey, Stephen R., *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Simon & Schuster, 1989.

Goleman et al, *Working With Emotional Intelligence*, Harvard Business School Press, 1998.

Best wishes for your continued success,



David Rabiner, CSP, speaker, trainer, and facilitator, graduated from the Edward R. Murrow School of Communications at Washington State University. Before becoming a trainer in 1993, David enjoyed a successful career in radio, executive-level public service, and as an entrepreneur. David has presented to more than 1,700 audiences in 12 countries and 44 states. In 2003, David passed rigorous standards to earn the coveted Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation, the worldwide benchmark for speaking excellence. Email David at david@rabiner.com.

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