

Delivering World-Class Customer Service

Presented at the

**Alaska Travel Industry Association's
2008 Convention**

**by
Dennis Snow**

Snow & Associates, Inc.
Phone: 407.294.1855
Email: dennis@snowassociates.com
Website: www.snowassociates.com

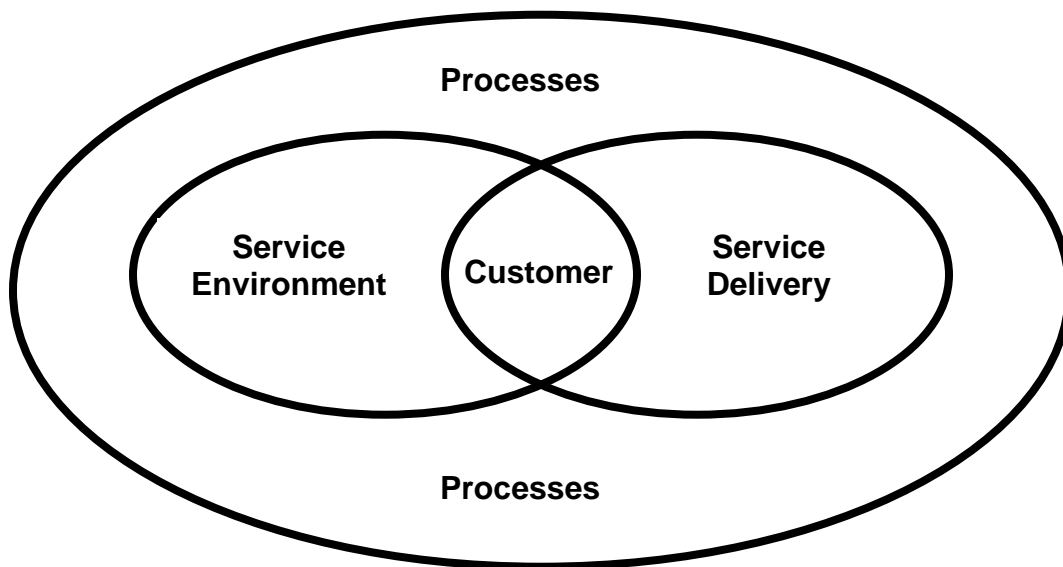
The Customer Experience

Many (most) organizations overcomplicate any initiative they undertake. Because of this over complication, these organizations tend to freeze and never finish what they start. Employees and management become frustrated by the never-ending flow of new initiatives that come and go. This is where the “flavor of the month” reputation begins to haunt any new initiative. **The key is to keep it simple!**

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication”

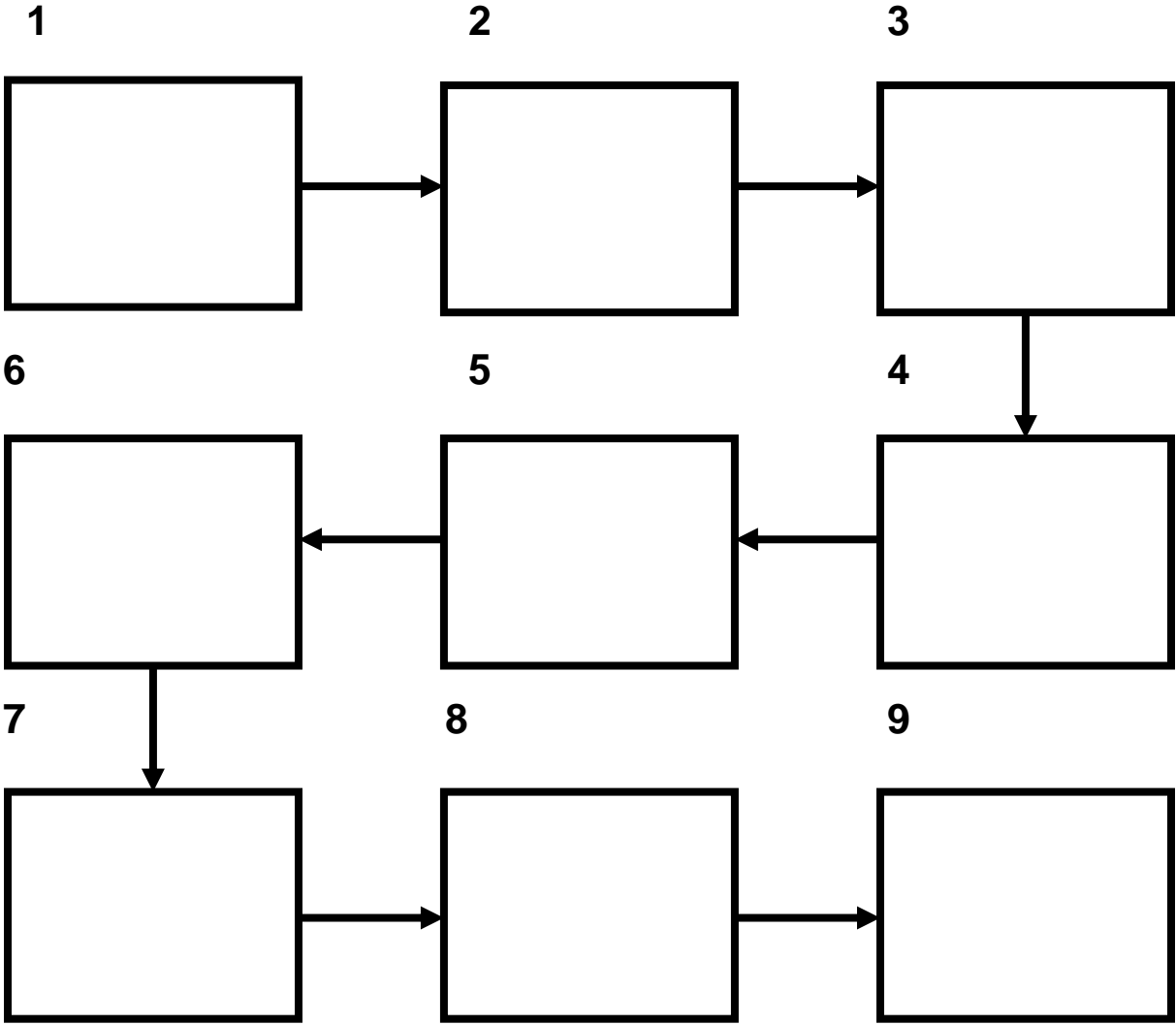
Leonardo da Vinci

The following service model is simple and straightforward. It is easily communicated to everyone in the organization and can provide a foundation or anchor for the improvement effort.



Service Map

Process Analyzed: _____



Step 1: List process steps in each block

Step 2: Which blocks present immediate areas of opportunity? (List in Step 3)

Alaska Travel Industry Association

Step 3: For each block identified in step 2, describe what would be considered mediocre service and what would be considered excellent service.

Block Number	Mediocre Service	Excellent Service

Step 4: Choose one or two processes to work towards improving customer service and determine improvement strategies.

Everything Speaks

Every detail of the service environment is saying something about your organization. Everything the customer sees, hears, smells, tastes, or touches impacts the experience. Anything that is out of alignment causes a disconnect in the mind of the customer. **Everything Speaks!** Customers may not consciously notice every detail, but subconsciously clues to your culture are being communicated. What is your service environment saying?



Come up with 4 distracters from the physical environment of your organization.

Everything Speaks Distracter	Everything Speaks Excellence
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

"Everything Speaks" Checklist

(Banking Example)

Date:

Conducted by:

Parking/Entrance

Item	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Action
Signage			
Parking Lot Condition			
Landscape Condition			
Overall Cleanliness			
Lighting Fixtures			

Additional Comments:

ATM

Item	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Action
Operational			
Supplies (envelopes, etc.)			
Screen Visibility			
Overall Condition			

Additional Comments:

Alaska Travel Industry Association

Drive-Thru

Item	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Action
Overall Maintenance			
Supplies (envelopes, etc.)			
Speaker Quality			
Cleanliness			

Additional Comments:

Lobby Area

Item	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Action
Current Displays			
Brochures, etc. Properly Stocked			
Blinds Open/Even			
Lighting Operational			
Window Cleanliness			
Entry Doors Unlocked At Opening			
Overall Cleanliness			

Additional Comments:

Alaska Travel Industry Association

Teller Line

Item	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Action
All Customer Supplies (Pens, etc.)			
Condition of Viewable Areas			
Overall Maintenance			
Overall Cleanliness			

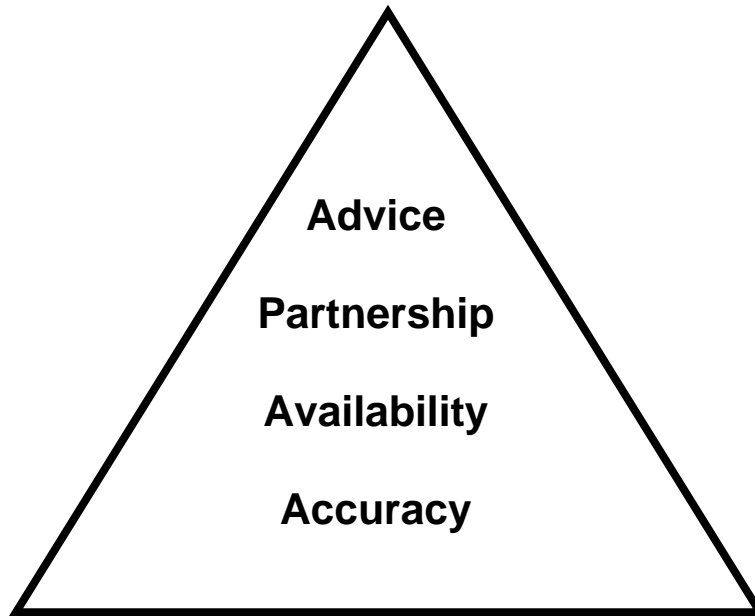
Additional Comments:

Restrooms

Item	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Action
Supplies			
Overall Cleanliness			
Lighting			
Overall Maintenance			

Additional Comments

Hierarchy of Customer Expectations



Adapted from Gallup Research

	Service Behaviors
Accuracy	
Availability	
Partnership	
Advice	

Service Standards

(Example)

- **Accuracy** – We “do the job right.” We perform with precision and ensure error-free interactions with each customer.
 - Maintain the absolute privacy/confidentiality of the customer transaction.
 - Pay attention to every detail of the transaction.
 - Know all products or where to obtain correct information.
 - Listen carefully to ensure true understanding of the customer’s need.
 - Ensure the customer’s understanding of the transaction.

- **Availability** – We are accessible to our customers and always ensure that their experience with us is efficient and timely.
 - Acknowledge the customer promptly.
 - Conduct each transaction efficiently.
 - Keep all commitments/return calls promptly.

- **Partnership** – We care about the long-term success of each customer and strive to build trust-based relationships.
 - Treat customers as welcome guests.
 - Learn and use customers’ names.
 - Look at each transaction as an opportunity to build trust with the customer.
 - Focus on building customer partnerships that are life-long and strong enough to pass to the next generation.

- **Advice** – Our customers learn from us and are better because of the relationship.
 - Inform customers of new, beneficial products that provide solutions to their needs.
 - Constantly learn about customers and help them to identify their needs.
 - Always be on the lookout for ways to further assist each customer.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT MEETING

1. Put employees at ease by holding the meeting in a distraction-free environment. Silence pagers, phones, etc.
2. State the purpose of the discussion: To identify obstacles that are in the way of delivering exceptional customer service.
3. Re-emphasize that continuous improvement is not directed at blaming people, but at improving processes.
4. Establish a cooperative environment at the meeting, following the rules for successful brainstorming:
 - Title flipchart: "What keeps me from delivering exceptional service?"
 - Set allotted time for brainstorming.
 - Record all obstacles on flipchart.
 - Encourage all participation, not permitting critical comments.
5. After discussion, select one or two obstacles that are a major source of customer complaints and frustration.
6. Generate as many potential solutions to the obstacle as possible. Often, the solution will be generated on the spot. The key is to keep an open mind and build on ideas. While not every solution presented will be feasible, it's important to respect the contribution.
7. For those solutions that will require time and study to implement, discuss and agree on who will be responsible to work on a solution and others who need to be involved. The more involvement from the team, the greater the resulting buy-in.
8. Set a date to report back on status of obstacle and solution.
9. Thank employees for being honest in the session and express confidence in their ability to come up with solutions and your willingness to help them.

Note: The meeting should be kept short, positive, and to the point. Any promises made by management at the meeting should be kept.

Alaska Travel Industry Association

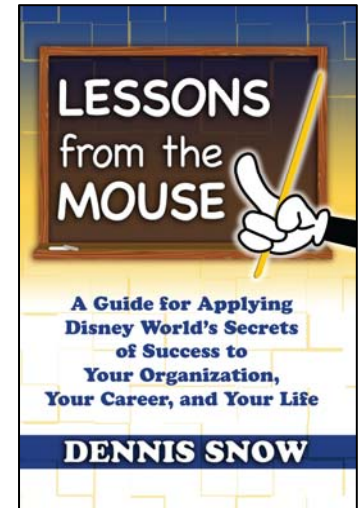
Dennis Snow's newest book is now available!

Lessons From the Mouse *A Guide for Applying Disney World's Secrets of Success to Your Organization, Your Career, and Your Life*

What can a mouse teach you? When that mouse has been delighting and entertaining hundreds of millions of people for decades, it turns out there is plenty to learn! Dennis Snow's newest book, ***Lessons From the Mouse*** provides ten no-nonsense, practical principles that anyone, anywhere can apply. He entertains while he educates with chapters like "What Time is the 3:00 Parade?' Is Not a Stupid Question."

The mouse is very candid here – no Disney pixie dust blinds the reader. Backstage snafus, onstage errors, and occasional chaos emerge in all their drama, humor, or irony. At its heart, though, ***Lessons From the Mouse*** presents ten lessons that guide readers in applying excellence in their own organizations, careers, and lives. The ten lessons include:

- Never Let Backstage Come Onstage
- What Time is the 3:00 Parade? Is Not a Stupid Question
- Little Wows Add Up
- Have Fun With the Job – No Matter How Miserable You Feel
- Don't Be a Customer Service Robot
- Pay Attention to the Details – Everything Speaks
- Never, Ever Say, "That's Not My Job" – Don't Even Think It!
- Everyone Has a Customer
- Figure Out What Ticks Off Your Customers – And Do Something About It
- Take Responsibility for Your Own Career



Find out more information at www.lessonsfromthemouse.com or order from:

Amazon.com
BarnesandNoble.com

For quantity discounts please go to www.800CEOread.com and type *Lessons From the Mouse* in the Search field.

Alaska Travel Industry Association

Available at www.snowassociates.com

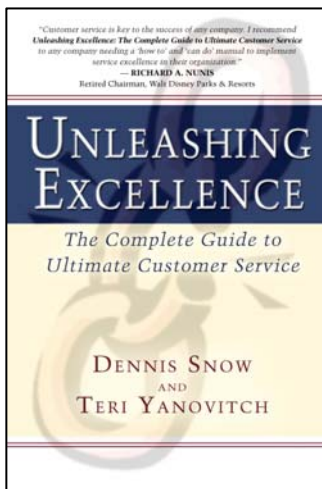
Creating a Culture of Service Excellence (DVD)

Dennis's customer service presentation is now available on DVD. This informative 45-minute DVD covers topics like:

- Looking at your organization through the "lens of the customer."
- Paying attention to the details because "everything speaks."
- Delighting your customers by creating "little wows."

Featuring a keynote speech presented before a live audience, the DVD includes the service principles and stories that bring the principles to life. The content is designed to be entertaining, informative and practical. Use this DVD to:

- Provide content for in-house training programs.
- Introduce new employees to the service standards they are expected to demonstrate.
- Revitalize a company's focus on customer service.
- Re-familiarize employees with the key drivers of a service-driven organization



Unleashing Excellence – The Complete Guide to Ultimate Customer Service (Book)

Many books have been written on the importance of excellent customer service. What has been missing is a "how to" book that takes the reader step-by-step through the key *processes* of planning and building a culture of service excellence. Dennis Snow and Teri Yanovitch have written a book that fills that gap.

Unleashing Excellence: *The Complete Guide to Ultimate Customer Service* encourages readers to take a strong look at their customer service efforts. With practical tools (all of which can be tailored to a company's own needs) readers find a step-by-step guide to building a service-driven culture. Here are tools and approaches that can be implemented by the most experienced company or department, as well as an organization just beginning to focus on customer service.

Nothing is left out of **Unleashing Excellence: *The Complete Guide to Ultimate Customer Service***. If you've been searching for a blueprint for building a customer service program, you'll find it here. The book's chapters include:

- The "DNA" of Service Excellence
- Creating a Service Improvement Team
- Developing Your Service "Non-negotiables"
- Communicating the Service Strategy to Your Team
- Service Training and Education
- Interviewing For Service Excellence
- Developing Effective Service Measurements
- Recognition and Reward Systems
- Implementing a Service Obstacle System
- Building a Culture of Accountability