



FERENCE LEADERSHIP and STRATEGY

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Hospitality Gaming Foodservice Retail Leisure Entertainment

SNOW'S WHITE and the SERVICE BE NOT DWARFED Don't Get Caught In A Fairy Tale!

Once upon a time there was a lovely little facility—just like yours, as pretty as the freshly fallen snow. But in this case, the vain, wicked and arrogant owners feared that some day the beautiful facility might not be the fairest of them all, so they attempted to cut corners for greed and profit in order to make money fast! In fact, they consulted “Magic Mirror, Inc.” to have reassurances as to their stature in their industry. As long as reports came back stating that they in fact were the fairest of them all, the fairy tale existence continued.

One day, however, Magic Mirror informed the owners that another local property was now the fairest in the land—and not just because of its elegance, but because its service culture dwarfed that of the once leading facility. In a fit of rage, the vain and wicked owners ordered their legions (departmental staff throughout) to drastically improve service, but to no avail, as without proper training, communication, coordination and cooperation, the vain and wicked owners were soon driven from existence as if struck by a bolt of lightning and crushed by a boulder dislodged from a cliff. (For those of you not “in the know,” that’s very similar to what happened to a certain wicked stepmother, the Queen, in another fairy tale!)

Despite the emergence of a new leader in the industry, (things certainly do go in cycles) just what went wrong with the old leader, and how was it that the new leader came to be the best? A little analysis is in order.

Money Ain't Everything

Money is good, and you definitely have to have some—but it can only buy you material things: fancy woodwork, imported tiles, exquisite chandeliers, luxurious beds, flawless place settings and an impressive façade. But once you have all of that, why will clientele return after their initial stay if there is nothing to back that up? People, people, people! The answer is people who work as an enthusiastic team, and who give ultimate service is just what the proverbial “**Doc**” ordered that will make the difference. Our research shows that about 68% of customers view themselves as loyal, with the remainder either on the fence with moderate satisfactions or already in the process of leaving—never to return!

Service and teamwork both start with management. One key to organizational success is having trained managers so they in turn can help train their staff. Their goal is peak performance of all staff for the benefit of each and every guest. It matters not, from the newest hire to the longest tenured employee, neither can be “**Bashful**” about their knowledge and level of service excellence.

And service excellence comes down to the smallest of details. Sure it matters that the food in your restaurant comes out hot and appropriately garnished. But it’s just as important to be sure that the wine glasses have no water spots, and the silverware is clean as a whistle. (Speaking of whistles, it’s OK for your staff to “whistle while they work.”) Beds in the rooms must not only be made properly, they must be dusted and vacuumed under every day without fail. After all, you never know when someone sensitive to allergens may show up, let’s call them “**Sneezy**,” who may not return unless the room was properly cleaned.

While research again shows that most business people today are mainly interested in successful internet hookup after first entering a room, the second area of initial concern is the perceived cleanliness of the room. Yes, people continue to look under the bed. If that is clean, then so must be the rest of the room, including the bathroom! At least at first glance.

Keeping this in mind, how good is your staff performance feedback loop? Is staff ready and eager to accept constructive feedback or do they become upset and angry when correcting attitudes and

Creating Competitive Advantage

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Through
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Supporting Divisions

Peak Performance Mindset

Programs in Organizational Dynamics and Service Practices

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Customized Metrics and Assessments Positioning the Business

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behaviors? Does management even receive any feedback other than when they must listen to complaints by patrons? Certainly, there are much better ways to receive useful feedback than to query a mirror on the wall.

Communication Sure Helps

In order for “one hand to know what the other is doing,” there must either be good communication between line staff and management or a certain amount of clairvoyance! With clairvoyance being a difficult skill to master, we recommend communication as the way to go. Just “follow the Yellow Brick Road!” (Sorry—that’s another story entirely.)

Communication, however, needs to be a two-way street in order to be most effective. Management must know each guest’s NEWS: Needs, Expectations, Wants, Suggestions (but finding that out is again another story.) Learning of each guest’s NEWS (remember we are today a “Market of One,”) is accomplished not only through communication with clientele, but just as importantly, through input from staff who interact with guests on a daily basis. And staff members must also convey to management suggestions and observations on how to perform better, faster and more efficiently.

Conversely, management needs to be receptive to input from staff, and acknowledge and implement some of the suggestions they receive. Not to do so would soon put an end to effective communication and would be a “**Dopey**” thing to do. In fact, management needs to reinforce two-way communication by recognizing those staff members who contribute to reaching peak performance. Whether it’s by recognizing the “employee of the month,” by offering a special parking space or the conveyance of some “bonus money,” management can make huge strides through small incentives. Even an offer of a special “magic apple” can...Nah! Forget the apple approach!

Anyway, I’m sure you get the picture. Can you imagine all of your staff walking around feeling “**Happy**” about their work? It would be great to have three “**Happy**” front desk staff, and two “**Happy**” bellmen, eight “**Happy**” housekeepers and ten “**Happy**” waiters! “**Happy, Happy, Happy,**” everyone “**Happy.**” Disney, one of the great icons of hospitality and entertainment achieves their mission of “making guests feel happy” with a continuous, every day, 24/7 experience. You can too!

As a result, it would be difficult indeed to have guests who are “**Grumpy.**” Sure, they might show up that way, but after seeing an entire facility of smiling, energetic and enthusiastic staff, they would soon “be turned from the dark side and rejoin the force...” (Once again our apologies for allowing our storyline to digress to a time far into the future.)

A Happy Ending Or Beginning

There are numerous ways in which to write an ending, but just how do you start the beginning? We have come to find that consultants like “Magic Mirror” have their limitations, much of which is merely smoke and mirrors anyway! At Ference Leadership and Strategy, Inc., together with its two supporting divisions, Peak Performance Mindset and Center For Survey Research, we begin your journey towards a happy ending. Over the years, we have helped all of our clients, large and small, up-scale and economy, demonstrate continuous improvement through our ROI³ Performance Model: Returns-on Individuals, Integrations, and Investments.

Whether through the use of customized Employee Satisfaction Surveys, Management 360 Surveys, Management Training Workshops, or Team Building Exercises, Ference Leadership and Strategy has the experience and expertise to take your company out of “**Sleepy**” mode, restoring your business to life, where it will, through hard work, perseverance and motivation, live happily ever after. Rest assured, as sure as **Snow** is **White**.

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