

# Life is Chaos

I am sure that most of you know by now how chaotic today's lifestyle is. It is nothing like it was 30 years ago. It requires two people to be working in most households just to be able to pay the basic bills, and sometimes even our kids are working just to help us keep up. The stress, the anxiety, and all the hassle that we deal with today are overwhelming sometimes, and it is a rare occurrence when someone shows us appreciation for that.

If you have a lifestyle like myself, or many other people, you might get up at five o'clock in the morning, get an hour workout in (if you have time), shower, get a little breakfast for yourself and get dressed. Then you get the kids up and showered, get them dressed, make them breakfast, make their school lunches, then get them off to school. You head off to work, where you sit in rush hour traffic for an hour, put in 8 hours at work and sit in rush hour traffic on the way home. You swing by the store for a few groceries, get dinner started, take one kid off to ballet, the other kid off to soccer practice, and you rush back home again to finish making dinner and get a load of laundry in the wash.

You pick up one kid at soccer practice, the other kid at ballet, get home, eat dinner, pay some bills, do some chores, watch the 10 o'clock news, see the significant other for 10 or 20 minutes, then fall asleep. You get back up the next day, and what do we do the next day? That's right . . . the same thing. That's our life! And, you know what? We all think that we're the only ones. It's like a pity party out there because we all think we are the only ones with this crazy life, and we feel sorry for ourselves. But understand, most people are living that same kind of lifestyle. Anytime you interact with an external or internal customer, please show tremendous consideration for their time, because they too have very little of it.

Acknowledging the customer quickly is the most important thing for your customer. It does not mean you have to "assist" them right away, but it is crucial to let them know that they are important, and you will be with them soon. Acknowledging customers can be verbal, or it can be nonverbal. Verbally is obviously the best answer. If you see a customer that you could acknowledge verbally, just give them good eye contact and a smile, then say; "It's good to see you today!" or "I'll be right with you!" You may use any words that verbally communicate the message; "Welcome -I see you are here."



□ If you're not able to verbally communicate with the customer, maybe because of the distance they are from you, then communicate using non-verbal techniques. This must include a smile, and be accompanied by either an acknowledging nod of the head, or a hand gesture (like raising an index finger) that communicates the message; "I see you, and will be with you shortly."

Have you ever been in a retail business, where you stood in the middle of the store, and watched the employees walk right past you trying not to look at you in the eyes? Did you feel like you were stealth? Remember the anxiety that you experienced, and how horrible that felt to you? Would you want to do that to anybody else? Of course not!

Acknowledging customers quickly is very important, and it should be a team effort. Even if you've got a designated person at a customer service desk in your business or environment, it is still every employee's duty to make sure each customer gets acknowledged promptly. At Disneyland, if there is a piece of paper on the ground, they do not care who picks it up, as long as somebody picks it up. Just because it is one of their duties, it does not have to only be the maintenance people who do it. Everyone in your company may have specific duties, but customer service is everyone's responsibility. It is all about creating a great experience for the customer, and that requires all employees to contribute.