



Eliminating Conflict Through Exemplary Customer Service

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Outcomes for this Presentation

- Shared understanding of special education's customers
- Ideas about best practices in delivering exemplary customer service for special education's customers

“The business of business is not profit, it is customers. We can make a similar argument for education.”

Phil Schlechty

Education's Product

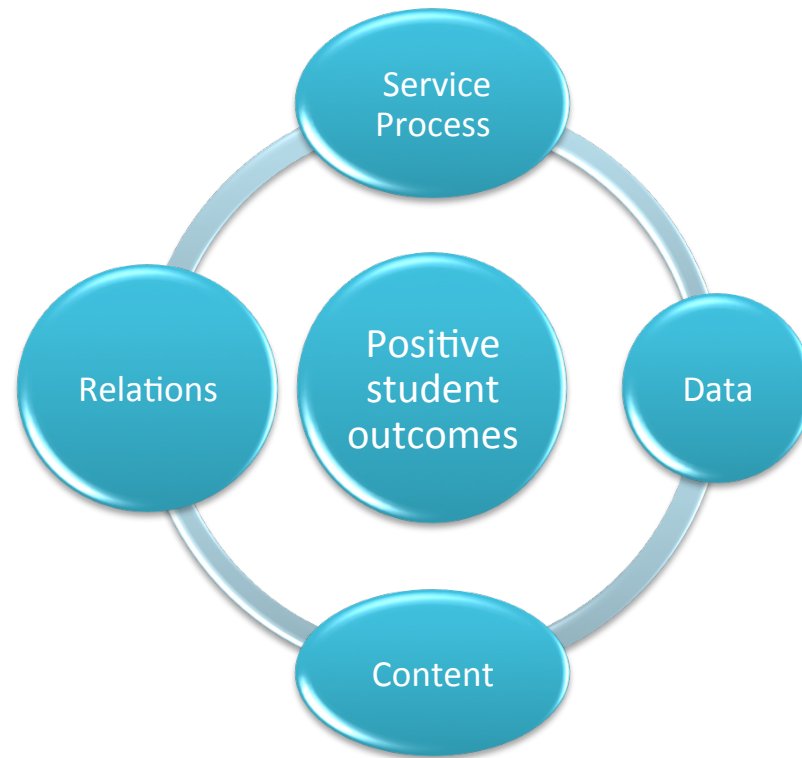
- Knowledge work
- Student learning
- Student achievement

Whatever you call it, it's about student success.

Special Education Customers Defined

- Primary customers:
 - *Students*
 - *Parents*
- Secondary customers:
 - *Community*
- Special education as a “niche market”

Serving Our Customers



When Have You Experienced Quality Customer Service?

Turn to your elbow partner and take 90 seconds and share an example of when you experienced exemplary customer service.

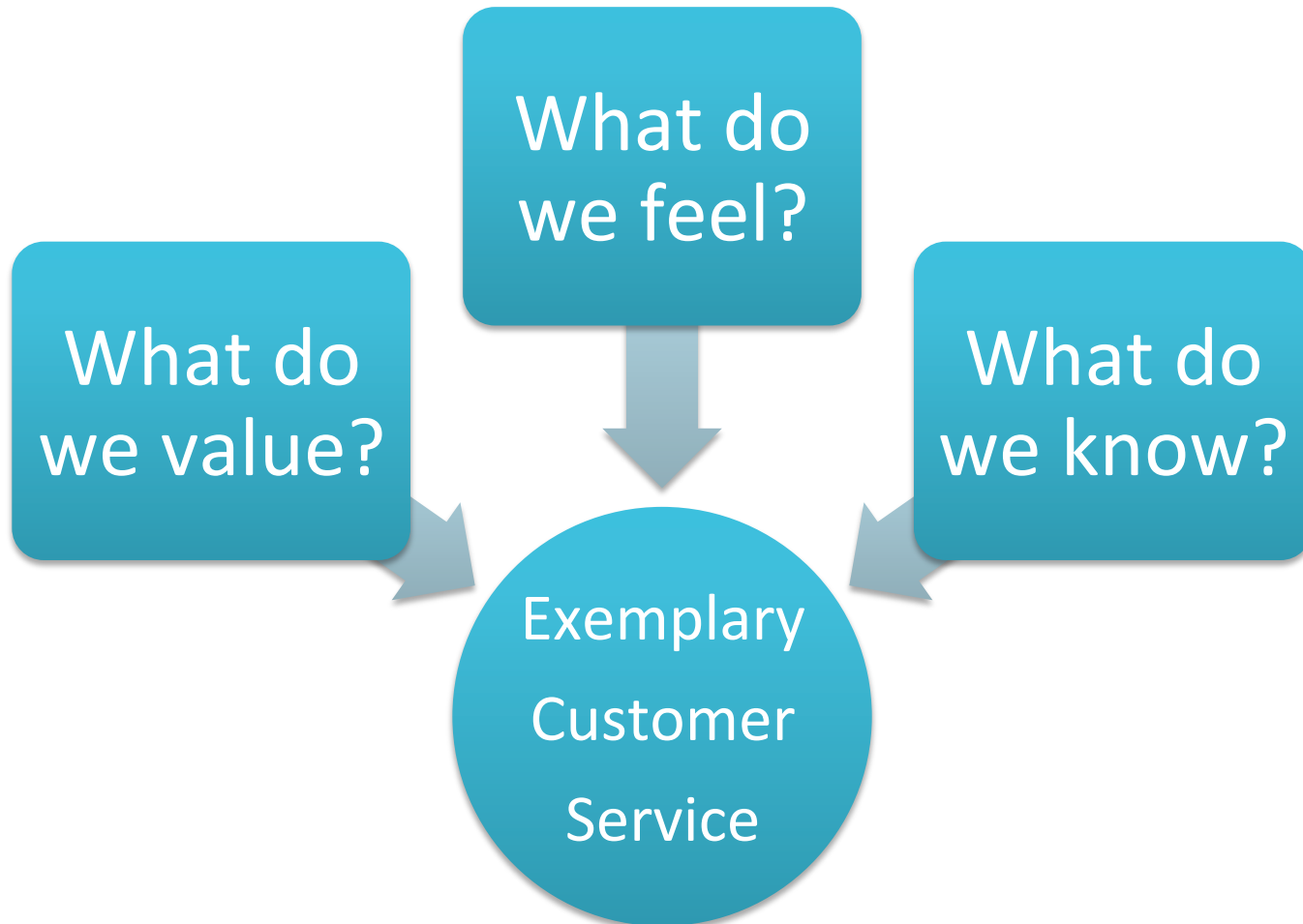
“Service which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the served. But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy.”

Ghandi

Models of Best Practices in Exemplary Customer Service

- Ritz Carlton (and Marriotts)
- Nordstrom
- Publix supermarkets

Guiding Questions



Culture and Atmosphere

An eye-opening study from the American Society for Quality shows that only 9 percent of customers will leave because they are lured away by the competition; 14 percent will leave because of dissatisfaction with the product; and a whopping 67 percent will leave because of the attitude of *one person* in your organization.

Eliminating Poor Customer Service

- Examples of dissatisfaction from parents and students
- What quality customer service might have turned these situations around?

Setting Expectations

- Customer service from the heart, not the head
- Building a culture of quality customer service

What do our administrators, staff, and teachers need to value, know, and feel?

First Impressions

- District websites
- Phone systems
 - *Answering the phones*
- Administrative assistants: greeter or gatekeeper
- Visitors policies in schools and for programs

When a Student First Enters Special Education

Setting up for future contact

- The IEP Meeting: a conversation versus cold bureaucracy
- IEP Facilitation

Communication

Not just listening for understanding, but to make certain that the customer is valued and heard

- Listening with empathy
 - *Curiosity*
 - *Interest*
 - *Respect*

Communication

- Returning phone calls
- Prioritizing contacts
- Taking the time to address an issue

Building Relationships

Think of a family with whom you have a good relationship. What characterizes that relationship?

How can you transfer that to other families?

Service to our Diverse Customer Population

- Developing individual and system-wide understanding of cultures
- Communicating successfully across language and cultural differences

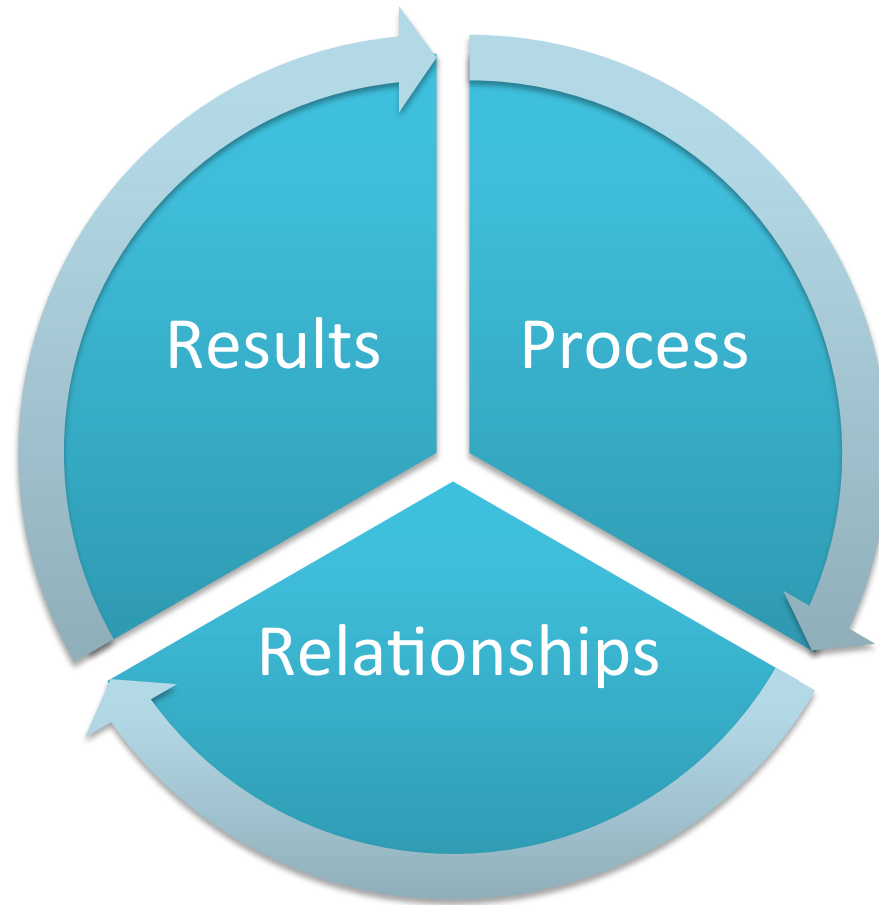
Serving our Interior Customers

- However staff and teachers are treated, they will mirror with parents and students
- Positive environment and communication
- Clear expectations for all
- Acknowledgements
- Modeling the model of exemplary customer service

Dealing with Difficult Customers

- Empathy
- Expertise
- Preventions
- Interventions
- Acceptance
- Understanding

Dimensions of Success



What can you do?

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world. ”

Ghandi

Debrief

+S



Thank You



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