



President and Provost Roundtable Discussion

Topic – Aspects of “Customer Service” in Higher Education: Today and Tomorrow

NOTE: Articles cited are for reference purposes – not necessarily endorsed by President or Provost.

Purpose – To discuss the importance of “customer service” in higher education—how will growth affect student service—how do we “make” lifetime customers—how do we promote internal customer service?

Customer Service Principles¹:

1. Students should be given courteous and concerned attention to their needs and valued as people.
2. Students should come before personal or college-focused goals. Students really are more important than you are.
3. The processes, rules and regulations of higher education should be created or changed to assure that students are kept at the center of the institution.
4. Be honest in all communications and do not patronize students.
5. Students can never be an inconvenience.
6. There must be a proper match between the product and the customer (i.e., courses, the college and the student).
7. Just because it was someone else who did a dis-service to a student does not relieve you of doing what is right.
8. Students deserve an environment that is neat, bright, welcoming and safe.
9. Students are not really customers. They are professional clients.
10. The customer is not always right. But then again, neither are you or I.
11. Satisfaction is not enough and never the goal.
12. Do not cheapen the product in the name of customer service. No pandering. No easy grades.
13. To every problem there is more than one solution, and they are often external rather than within academia.
14. Not everyone is capable of providing positive customer service. Move them away from students or out of the college.

How to Turn That One-Time Buyer into a Lifetime Customer²

Internal Customer Service³

- 24 hour customers/service
- Four Quadrants
 - High attention, high-time “motivation” quadrant (what people really care about)
 - Low-attention, high-time “habit” quadrant (routines)
 - Low-attention, low-time “value” quadrant (cheapest products with least amount of time)
 - High-attention, low-time “convenience” quadrant (productivity enhancers)
- Applications that are habitual, valuable, easy – convenient for people to use time wisely and spend more time in the “motivation” quadrant benefiting themselves and the organization
- Leadership 5 Attributes:
 1. Results with others and for others – 360-degree communicator
 2. Alignment – purpose and vision
 3. Interdependence – recognize and foster across division/departmental borders

4. Sway – influence and be influencable
5. Enthusiasm – convey it and promote it even in tough situations

★ Leadership is not positional – everyone should feel enabled to exercise leadership skills

References

1. Raisman, N. (2003). *What Does Customer Service Have to Do With Enrollment?* LRP Publications. A1 – A3.
2. Sewell, C., Brown, P. (2002). *Customers for Life: How to Turn That One-Time Buyer Into a Lifetime Customer*. Crown Business.
3. McMillan, M. A. (2012, January/February). Clients Get It, So Must We. *Educause Review*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Review/EDUCAUSEReviewMagazineVolume47/ClientsGetItSoMustWe/244407>