

The Importance of Serving

Service is the key to success. We can see it in business, can't we?

We enjoy spending our money with companies that give us the best service. We may choose a fast-food restaurant not because of the quality of its food, but because of the cleanliness of its restrooms. We may select a supermarket not because it always has the lowest prices, but because the personnel are always so friendly and helpful. Commercial enterprises often succeed or fail based on their service.

Humorist Bob Monkhouse tells about a thief in Italy who planned to rob a supermarket. He needed an excuse to go up into the manager's office, so he decided to complain about the choice of goods. He walked into the manager's office and there was the manager on his knees putting the day's earnings into the safe.

"I want to complain," said the thief. "Yes, sir, what's your complaint?" asked the manager.

Thinking quickly, the would-be thief said, "You've got no coffins."

"Coffins?" answered the manager. "In a supermarket? Are you mad? Go to the funeral parlor. We don't sell coffins!"

The manager turned away to close the safe and the thief seized his chance. He pulled out a club and whacked the manager over the head.

At this, the manager said, "Okay, okay! I'll get some coffins in tomorrow!"

Most people in business do not have to be hit over the head to see the importance of good service. Service is the key to success in business.

In our businesses – Life Care and Century Park – we quickly discover that service must be the foundation of all that we do. And when we do it exceedingly well, word-of-mouth becomes our best advertising.

Henry Durant (1828 – 1910), a Swiss businessman, is best remembered as the man who laid the foundation for the Red Cross. His humanitarian concerns earned him widespread acclaim. Then at the height of his fame, he went bankrupt.

Because of this, public sympathy turned against him. He lived for years in the slums of a large European city, wearing ragged clothing and broken shoes. Yet this did not stop him from giving of himself to aid those in need.

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Years later, he was discovered by an alert journalist. He was brought to the attention of the world, and shortly afterward, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. He lived out his days in a humble hospice in Switzerland.

Upon his death, a diary was found in which he gave these instructions for his burial: "I wish to be carried to my grave like a dog without a single one of your ceremonies. I am a disciple of Jesus, as in the first century, nothing more."

That kind of radical commitment might be too much for us. But we dare not forget from where we came and who we are. We are the company of the committed; we are the servant community; we are the body of Jesus Christ, who gave Himself as a ransom for others.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace (1 Peter 4:10 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter