

# THE MAN IN THE HAT

A man attending a crowded church service refused to take off his hat when asked to do so by the ushers. Others also requested him to remove the hat, but he remained obstinate.

The preacher was perturbed, too, and waited for the man after the service. He told the man that the church was quite happy to have him as a guest, and invited him to join the church. Then he explained the traditional decorum regarding men's hats, and said, "I hope you will conform to that practice in the future."

"Thank you," said the man. "And thank you for taking time to talk to me. It is good of you to invite me to join the congregation. In fact, I joined three years ago and have been coming regularly ever since, but today is the first time that anyone paid attention to me."

Then he added: "After being an unknown for three years, today, by simply keeping on my hat, I have had the pleasure of talking with the ushers. And now I have a conversation with you, who have always appeared too busy to talk to me before."



The story is instructive for us. What do we do to make visitors – particularly, strangers – welcome in our centers? Are we too busy, as this man said to the preacher, to take time to talk to them?

Hospitality is an important part of all that we do; a foundational stone of good customer service.

The routines of our jobs are necessary, but it is the people who are important.

– Beecher Hunter