

Excellence Wins in Customer Service

Part 1 *Excellence Wins*, by Horst Schulze

INTRODUCTION

Horst Schulze, past chairman and CEO of Capella Hotel Group, is a legend and leader in the service world. His vision has helped reshape concepts of customer service throughout the hospitality and service industries.

Horst served as vice chairman of The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company from 2001 to 2002, after serving as president and COO of The Ritz-Carlton Group. Horst was responsible for the \$2 billion Ritz-Carlton operations worldwide. Under his leadership, the Group was awarded the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in both 1992 and 1999 – the first and only hotel company to win even one such award.

The focus of this series is to take all of the key principles of Horst Schulze's *Excellence Wins* and layer along key biblical principles and then challenge ourselves to apply them to our own business and/or organization.

SUMMARY

Horst's philosophy about the hotel industry and business is "*Ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen.*" His view is that business is all about PEOPLE. Doing something for people, by people. "For people" is your market, and "by people" is your employees.

This helps us concentrate on doing the right things for the customer every time. Start by asking, "What is my vision for my product?" Then you should analyze what the customer wants. Finally, you create processes to deliver your products in a way that is superior to your competition.

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NOTES FROM THE VIDEO

Three Universal Expectations of Customer Service

First: Customers want a product or service or other output with *no defects*.

Second: Customers want to be served with *timeliness*.

Finally: Customers want the person with whom they're dealing with to *be nice to them*.

In today's world there are two more expectations which have become critically important:

Individualizing – meeting individual needs and desires.

Personalization – addressing people with respect and gratitude

These five components comprise great customer service. It helps move a customer from dissatisfied, to satisfied, to loyal. The difference between a satisfied customer and a loyal customer is TRUST. All customer service is focused on developing this trust relationship.

SCRIPTURES TO CONSIDER

Biblical foundation for “great customer service” = “love you neighbor as yourself”

– **Matthew 22:39.**

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

– **Philippians 4:8**

Whatever you do, do your work heartily (with excellence), as for the Lord rather than for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

– **Colossians 3:23**

QUESTIONS FOR TABLE DISCUSSION:

1. From what Horst said, how would you define great customer service?
2. Discuss your understanding and application of the three universal expectations of customer service.
3. Why are the two additional elements of customer service important in today’s marketplace?
Individualization
Personalization
4. How is your business doing at incorporating and living by these five expectations of great customer service?

A FEW NOTES ABOUT BRUCE WITT

Bruce Witt is the Iron Forums facilitator for Cobb County. He is also the President of Leadership Revolution, where for nearly a dozen years he has offered personalized coaching and leadership roundtables to key executives to help them with professional and personal growth. Bruce was key in connecting Iron Forums with Horst Schulze, and also in developing this content module. If you would like to speak with Bruce, you can contact him at bwitt@ironforums.org.

A FEW NOTES ABOUT “EXCELLENCE WINS” BY HORST SCHULZE

The content for this exclusive interview Horst Schulze did for Iron Forums is based on his



book, *Excellence Wins*. Horst shares more details of his visionary and disruptive principles that have produced global successes over the course of his career with Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co. This review from Zondervan Publishing says it well: “If you're searching for the blueprint to beating the competition and out-performing everyone around you, look no further than *Excellence Wins*. Schulze pulls no punches as a masterful guide to becoming the very best in a world of routine compromise.”