



LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS: LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Have you ever filled in one of those feedback forms online about a hotel, wireless carrier, or rug cleaner and had the sense that your time and effort in giving feedback has gone into a great black hole? A model response is the one I recently received after a visit to Curry Village in Yosemite National Park. I had indicated in my comments that I had to wait an unreasonable length of time in an extremely long line to just pick up the keys to my cabin.

The response I got was immediate, personal, and courteous. They apologized, investigated, and described the actions they have taken in response to my feedback. They referenced their values/philosophy. They built customer loyalty. Perfect!

Immediate: Their response came within three days of my submission via their feedback form online.

Personal: “Please accept my apologies for the time you had to wait to pick up your keys,” as opposed to a form letter, “We apologize for any inconvenience.”

Courteous: “I would like to thank you for bringing this specific issue to my attention so that I am able to monitor and correct the situation.”

Apology: “I understand that your experience was frustrating and time-consuming and apologize that you had to wait so long to get settled into your cabin.”

Investigated: “I have looked into the issue you mentioned that the line was extremely long and then closed when you returned.”

Actions to Remedy: “I believe many people were using the key pick up window as a normal check-in line, and subsequently have taken steps to prevent this from occurring in the future. We have created and installed two large signs indicating that it is a “Key pick-up” window, and have instructed staff and management to periodically remind guests that the window is only for guests who have already checked in and simply need their keys.”

Values/Philosophy:

- “This is certainly not the ‘welcome’ we want to give our guests.”
- “Please know that we take our roles as stewards of Yosemite very seriously and will use your input in adjusting our operations.”
- “The management and staff of DNC Parks & Resorts at Curry Village are dedicated to providing the highest level of guest service possible. When those guest expectations are not met, we appreciate the opportunity to receive feedback so we may refine our operating procedures and services.”

Building Customer Loyalty: “I am confident your next trip to our property will provide the positive experience you are seeking and look forward to seeing you back in Yosemite soon.”

So, this is a model for the next time you receive customer feedback (or any feedback). The response you get from the customer or whomever will be quite positive IF you:

- Are immediate, personal, and courteous in expressing thanks for the input.
- Apologize.
- Show evidence you took it seriously and investigated.
- Take action and report back on what that action is.
- Tie the events and your response to you core values.
- Make it clear you want to continue to do business with the person giving feedback.

How have you responded to customer input in the past? How have you felt when you have given input? What will you do to ensure a positive response on the part of a customer giving you or your organization feedback?