

MATCHING AND LEADING THE WAY

This is an interactive exercise exploring how to make a good impression with our customers and a technique on memorising names. As discussed in module two, customers will judge each experience with us based on what they **see, hear, think, and feel**.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- 1 Flip chart paper or a wipe board to write down the methods of communication.
- 2 A few old magazines or newspapers which have pictures of people and their names.
- 3 Have what this module looks at and video on the screen ready to play.
- 4 Room for the team to be together in pairs or small groups.



THE EXERCISE:

- Start the exercise by playing the video and explaining the purpose of the session.
- Write down each of the three methods of communication on flip charts but do not write the percentages down.
- For part 1 of the exercise get the team to sit as a group and tell them that initiating a conversation and leading with positive body language is a great way to build rapport with our customers but do they know how that conversation is received?
- For each method of communication (1. Words, 2. Tone of voice and 3. Body language) ask the team **what percentage impacts the receiving person's feelings and attitude?** Remind the team that the total for all three must add up to 100 of course!
- Ask the team for their answers and note some of their responses on the flip charts. Is anyone close or far off? Once you have canvassed enough responses from the team reveal the answers. **1. Words only account for 7%, 2. Tone of Voice is 38% and 3. Body language is 55%.**
- Tell the team that this is important for making a good impression, but it is especially important when dealing with a difficult situation. Ask them **why that might be?** Explain when a customer is angry or negative, we must not match their communication style but remain positive through our choice of words, tone, and body language. If you do this well, the customer will start to match your style and become more relaxed! *Tell the team they will cover more about this type of scenario in Module 8 – Handling tricky situations and Module 10 – Managing expectations.*

THE EXERCISE CONTINUED:

- For part 2 of the exercise, split the team into pairs and give each group a magazine and/or newspaper to use. The aim of the exercise is to memorise names of people they are not already aware of. To help the team there are four simple steps to aid memory recall (you might want to write these down for the team to see). These are:
 - 1 **Commit** – Pay attention and actively listen. When we meet someone, sometimes we are not fully engaged in the conversation!
 - 2 **Repeat, repeat, repeat** – While looking at their face mentally repeat their name three times as soon you hear it or include it in a reply e.g. “Hi I’m Claire Smith, here for an interview.” Reply with “Hi Claire, nice to meet you. Take a seat and I’ll get someone to meet you.”
 - 3 **Word association** – Associate their name with something they tell you or you know about them e.g. Fred from the Fourth Floor.
 - 4 **Picture this** – When you are looking at them, do they remind you of something or someone else e.g. celebrity or relative? It might seem a little ridiculous but that’s the point. The more outrageous the imagery, the more likely you are to recall it in the future.
- Let the team practice and after a few minutes ask them how they are getting on? Any star performers?
- Explore with the team what stops them using a customer (or colleagues) name? How do they feel when a customer uses their name? It can be powerful, right? Someone has noticed me and paid attention... Knowing someone’s name is also an easy way to strike up a conversation next time you see them and a chance to make a good impression – **Does the team agree?**

TIPS:

- Share the customer quote:

“The security team are absolutely fantastic, they acknowledge you by name as you come in, always say good morning, they make my day.”
- Share the story:

When a customer returned to a busy restaurant years after their previous visit with no reservation, imagine their surprise and delight when the waiter not only found a table for them but also welcomed them back using her name and commented on liking the change she had made to her hair. The waiter had a good memory, and read the customers personality style correctly, engaging in a brief conversation making the customer feel appreciated.
- Ask the team:

What can you do today to engage with our customers?

TO CONCLUDE:

- Always ask the team at the end of the session, is there anything that they will **Stop** doing, **Start** doing or more importantly **Keep** doing to improve the customer experience? Note down any ‘promises’ individuals make as you can use these in future conversations with team members to keep the momentum going between modules.



In short, being aware of our method of communication and using a customer’s name is a good way to ensure a positive first (and lasting) impression and to show our customers we appreciate them. We know from ‘The Six Pillars’ that personalisation and recognition are key for customer experience excellence.