Developing Customer Service Skills
Importance of Customer Service Training

• Increase customer satisfaction
• Improve communication & problem solving skills
• Improve student assistant morale & motivation
• Enhance teamwork & collaboration
Purpose & Value of Training

• Start off with a solid foundation
• Provide accurate, consistent and helpful information
• Student Assistants become valuable key team players within the Department
• Student Assistants perform better when they are trained adequately
• Higher efficiency & productivity
Training Manual

• Create a manual if there is not one

• Provide scenarios and examples—as you experience new situations and include them in the training manual
Communication, Communication, Communication, Communication!
Methods of Communication

- Speaking
- Listening
- Writing
- Reading
- Non-verbal expression
When in Person

Acknowledge

– A prompt, friendly greeting is the first impression
– If on the phone, be sure to place the call on hold to greet the person and let them know you will be right with them!
Listening

• A good listener.....
  – conveys sincerity
  – focuses on the speaker & what they are saying
  – does not interrupt
  – listens with their eyes & their mind
Listening

• Things to avoid.....
  – formulating what you want to say while the customer is still talking
  – thinking about other things while the customer is talking
  – jumping to conclusions
## The Power of Words

### Words to use:
- May I
- How can I help
- Would you like
- Consider this
- Opportunity
- I’ll be happy to

### Words to avoid:
- You have to
- Not our policy
- Not my job
- We’ll try
- I don’t know
- I have no idea
Email Etiquette

• DO NOT put email in “To” until email is written, edited and ready to send
• Subject Line should clearly indicate topic of email
• Be sure to CC supervisor so they know
• Use highest level of courtesy when addressing someone (Dr, Mr, Mrs, Ms) unless you know them
• Type full words & sentences using correct grammar & spelling
• Remember emails are property of the University
Telephone Etiquette

• Make sure you are familiar with the features on your phone
• Answer promptly & identify yourself & office
• Be sure to avoid side conversations & try to reduce background noise
• Never eat or drink while on the phone
• Ask permission before placing someone on hold
• Thank customer for holding once s/he is off hold
Start off the phone conversation by stating who you are
– Important to let the caller know who they are speaking with

The Office of........ Student Assistant speaking, how can I help you?
Why are Customers Challenging?

- They may not have an understanding or expertise of the situation
- They may not speak “our” language
- They may have difficulty in making decisions
- They may be impatient, hostile, non-communicative, immature, etc.
Q-TIP METHOD
Q-TIP Method

Q = Quit
T = Taking
I = It
P = Personally
Sometimes the customer doesn’t know what to ask

Or

The customer isn’t clear what the issue/problem/concern is and/or where to turn for the answers
Practical Tips

- Stay Calm
- Listen & do not interrupt
- Speak Softer & More slowly
- Try to Solve the Problem
- If situation is escalating, get your Supervisor
- Stay Positive
Lesson Learned!
What to Do When You’ve made a mistake

Admit the mistake-WE ALL MAKE THEM
Apologize for the error
Find a solution
Document the error if needed
Incorporate ways to lessen the likelihood of further errors
Benefits of Customer Service Training

- **Satisfied** students/staff/faculty, which leads to increased retention, improved graduation rates
- **Positive reputation** and **respect** of students, their families, institutional peers
- Problems are **creatively solved**
- Work is more **personally fulfilling** for student staff
“The quality of your customer service support will never exceed the quality of the people providing it.”
Questions?

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