

Introduction

“They act as if I’m a bother and they’re doing me a favor by dealing with me. I feel invisible and unimportant, as if all they want is to take my money and then have me disappear. Of course, they don’t say it in so many words, but the vibes I pick up speak volumes. Here I am, spending my hard-earned money with them, and all I want is a smile; to be taken care of in a friendly, professional manner; and to be thanked for my business. Why can’t I get that? I don’t think I’m asking too much, do you?”

All too often, this is the type of comment we hear from friends, family and colleagues when they complain to us about their experiences as a customer. What are the chances your customers are describing their experiences with your company in the same way?

It turns out most customers either rant or rave about their experiences. As a business owner or CEO, if you think you have no control over which way they go—ranting or raving—think again!

We don’t have to ask you which type of reaction you’d prefer. The choice is obvious. No matter what industry, size, or type of organization you lead, delivering an experience that inspires your customers to rave is what every business wants.

Fortunately, you don’t need a big budget, dedicated training staff or magic wand to get raves. All you need is desire and commitment...and our five principles in the hands of every employee who represents your company. Combining all three will help you provide experiences that will inspire your customers to rave about your company and allow you to earn their coveted trust and long-term loyalty.

Our principles are presented throughout this book, along with insightful interviews with business owners and employees who consistently demonstrate outstanding customer service. We share illustrations depicting real customer service situations, good and bad, bringing levity to a serious subject. We also demonstrate the financial benefit of implementing our principles with data on

the sad state of customer service—data that highlights the powerful impact customer service has on your organization’s bottom line. You can apply what we share with you regardless of your industry or the size of your company.

Our mission—and the reason we wrote this book—is to help you create loyal customers who are inspired to rave about your company. Based on more than 50 years of combined experience in service-based industries, the work we’ve done with our clients and extensive research, we know customer experience is a leading predictor of customer loyalty. We’ve observed many businesses work tirelessly to earn that loyalty, yet they don’t manage to create an overall experience that motivates customers to engage in long-term relationships.

It’s a well-known fact that customer loyalty drives profitability and it’s also common knowledge that it costs five times more to acquire a new customer than it does to retain an existing one. Acknowledging the direct relationship between customer experience and profitability, we’ve identified four business drivers that are linked to attracting and retaining loyal customers; we call them the Four R’s: revenue, retention, referrals and reputation.

We refer to these drivers throughout the book, noting that the experiences you and your employees provide to current and prospective customers will have a direct effect—positive or negative—on all four of them. In particular, we’ll expose the monetary consequences that can result from substandard customer service.

In Chapter 1, we introduce you to two very important fictitious employees, Rant and Rave, whose actions and behaviors represent the contrast between good and bad customer service. You have these types of employees working in your organization—and you may be surprised to learn about their behaviors and hear what they may be saying to your customers.

Think you don’t have “customers”? It’s really a matter of semantics. What do you call the people who do business with you? Throughout the book, when we refer to “customers,” we mean the people you serve. You might call them clients, guests, students, patients, members, or something else; to us, they’re your

customers—and remember, you have employees like Rant and Rave serving them!

In Chapters 2-6, we present our five principles and bring them to life through situations featuring Rant and Rave. Our intent is to encourage and motivate you to embark on a journey with Rant and Rave, reflect on your own organization, and contemplate what you and your employees can be doing to inspire your customers to rave about your company. Here are some questions you may want to start thinking about:

- When was the last time you spoke to your customers about their experiences with your company?
- Do you know how your customers feel about your company?
- What could you do differently to take better care of your customers?
- How does your customer service affect your bottom line?

To get the kind of business results you want, you must be committed to taking better care of your customers, and ready, willing, and able to continuously improve their experiences with your company. Quality customer service requires relentless attention and an effective strategy that includes our five principles.

This book provides a “how-to approach,” focusing on specific behaviors that will help you create loyal customers. Within each chapter, reflection exercises are provided to help you examine your actions and those of your employees, as well as your customer service policies and procedures. To maximize your success in turning rants into raves, we encourage you to complete the exercises as you read the chapters, and consider the practical strategies we’ve provided at the end of each one for implementing the five principles in your business.

There have been a lot of good books written on customer service and there’s obviously more than one approach to delivering it in a memorable way. It’s our intention that this book provides a fresh and unique perspective on how to

deliver exceptional customer service that will inspire your customers to rave about your company.

Here's to turning on your customers before they turn on you!

Carol and Randi

The Rant and Rave Company

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The Journey Begins

*“The goal as a company is to have customer service that is not just the best,
but legendary.”*

Sam Walton, founder, Wal-Mart

The Journey Begins



Customer service has evolved into a business strategy that helps companies differentiate themselves from their competition, sustain profitability and thrive in any type of economy, especially during recessionary times. It's often the only competitive advantage a business has.

Improving the customer experience has become a major strategic priority for just about every company, according to a report by Forrester Research, *The State of the Customer Experience, 2012*. Of all the businesses surveyed, 93% identified the customer experience among their strategic priorities, and 28% placed it at the top of the list. Additionally, 75% plan to use it as a key differentiator. Will you?

Even though many companies seem to have good intentions and plan to implement a customer-centric business strategy, customers continue to have poor service experiences. Sadly, according to the latest American Express Global Customer Service Barometer survey, 78% of customers have bailed somewhere in the buying process because of poor customer service.

Is Your Company Customer-Centric?

Think about your last few customer service experiences and reflect on how many were exceptional. Now think about how your customers might describe their experiences with your company. Are you following through on your good intentions to implement a customer-centric business strategy? We hope so. If not, now is the time to begin thinking about it. Your process doesn't have to be complicated. Our five principles, along with the strategies we outline throughout this book, will provide you with a practical and simple approach to create a customer-centric company.

If your organization isn't customer focused or doesn't invest the time and resources to hire and train employees on the delivery of exceptional customer service, the chances of earning your customers' loyalty are greatly reduced. It's not enough to create policies and procedures for your employees to follow; you must make sure all employees and managers know why and how to go above and beyond customers' expectations and ensure they do so consistently.

Most companies recognize the importance of good customer service and understand the financial benefits of providing exceptional experiences to their customers. They're also probably aware of the "Four R's," the business drivers that are linked to attracting and retaining loyal customers:

- Revenue—customers give your company a larger percentage of their wallet share
- Retention—customers continue doing business with your company and they buy more products and services
- Referrals—customers refer their family members and friends to your company, allowing you to cost-effectively acquire new customers

- Reputation—customers speak well of your company, increasing public awareness, which attracts new customers and investors

Poor Customer Service: A Business Killer

It's not clear whether companies realize the potential cost of negative customer experiences. According to Parature's customer service blog, "*Poor customer experiences result in an estimated \$83 billion loss by U.S. enterprises each year because of defections and abandoned purchases.*" That's an alarming number and we don't want your company to contribute to it.

When customers have a bad experience with a company, they usually tell between 10 and 15 people about it, but often don't tell the company. That means the company doesn't have an opportunity to make it right and earn their loyalty. The Research Institute of America (RIA) states, "*An average business will never hear a word from 96% of their unhappy customers whose complaints range from poor service, rudeness, to discourteous treatment. These are the customers that silently move away from you and are welcomed with open-arms by the competition. These are the customers who tell their friends, co-workers, and family members about their bad experiences.*

Multiply the number of people these unhappy customers have told about their unsatisfactory experiences, and soon we realize that it's not just one customer leaving us – it's an army of lost customers and a pocketful of lost revenue." This clearly shows that the negative financial impact of poor customer service is felt in two ways: the loss of an existing customer and the lost opportunity of a new customer.

When friends and colleagues ask for recommendations on companies to patronize, customers who've had bad experiences are the first to volunteer which companies **not** to use. Whether it's word-of-mouth or having negative comments posted on social media and review sites that can turn complaints into viral phenomena, you've got to make sure the stories your customers tell are positive.

If you don't know how your customers are feeling and what they're saying, your less-than-stellar customer service could slowly and silently kill your

business. The Social Media for Customer Service Survey from ClickFox (2011) stated it this way: *“Word of mouth has a ripple effect on other customers. More than 60% of customers are influenced or very influenced by other customers’ comments about companies.”*

The Need for Employee Engagement

Your employees determine what kind of experiences your customers have with your company. No company can afford to have employees who are “renting” their jobs, treating customers in a manner that conveys they just don’t care. If your employees aren’t engaged, your customers won’t be either. To illustrate this, a study performed by Gallup and the federal government’s General Services Administration (GSA) found that, *“workgroups with higher levels of engagement had, on average, 23% to 26% more highly satisfied and loyal customers, which equated to more than \$1 million in revenue”* than workgroups with low or slightly engaged employees.

A well-known hospitality company provides another example that demonstrates the direct correlation between employee engagement and customer satisfaction. Through the efforts of Nigel Martin, former VP of Leadership and Learning at Harrah’s Entertainment, (now Caesar’s Entertainment Inc.), the company embarked on a two-year initiative to improve internal employee engagement. At the conclusion of their efforts, Harrah’s reported a customer satisfaction improvement of more than 10%.

What impact do disengaged employees have on your customers’ experiences...and how much is that costing your company?

It’s important to remember that customers aren’t looking for transactions. They want relationships with you and your employees. They want personalization. They want to feel valued and appreciated by the companies with which they do business. How can you exceed their expectations? It’s not rocket science. Make sure your company is staffed with engaged employees who

take ownership of their jobs and care about providing consistent, memorable customer experiences.

While CEOs and managers emphasize the expectation of delighting customers, it's their employees who are most often responsible for delivering the experience. And, how you treat your employees will often influence how they treat your customers.

Happy Employees Create Happy Customers

Fairacre Farms, an establishment that's been around since the early 1900's and has expanded to five locations in Dutchess County, New York, understands that correlation well. A key contributing factor to the company's long-term success is its devotion to quality service and genuine hospitality.

With a history of exceptional service, it's almost surprising that there's no formal training program in place. What's Fairacre Farms' secret?

"There's nothing formal, so it's kind of unique," said Gaye Mallet, director of Human Resources, *"but the owners are still involved and the managers have all been here long term. The customer service focus is passed down informally from the owners and managers, and it's effective, because people always say how they love the store. We always treat customers like family."*

Mallet continued, *"I think one of the things that contributes to good customer service is that the employees are happy here—they're treated fairly, they have great benefits, and we accommodate their schedules. The employees are happy, so that contributes to good customer service. If they aren't happy, they won't be friendly and engaging. Customers constantly tell us that people working here are so happy and that goes back to the owners. They treat the employees like extended family. Having worth and being happy helps deliver great customer service."*

Employees will model the behavior you demonstrate and pass that along to your customers—so never underestimate the influence you have on your team. Here's an employee perspective on how much this matters: *"The customer service*

you receive at Brother's Trattoria is a direct reflection of the management team and the way they handle the serving team," said server Megan Murphy. *"They're good to us, so we're good to the customers."*

Meet Rant and Rave

Speaking of employees, it's time to introduce you to Rant and Rave, our two fictitious employees. As we mentioned in the introduction, Rant and Rave represent employees who may be working in your organization, taking care of your customers.

If your employees are acting like Rant, they may:

- Only be working for a paycheck
- Not care whether customers are happy or not
- View customers as interruptions to their day
- Often be rude or impatient and have a negative tone
- Complain about the company and its leadership
- Tell customers what they can't do rather than what they can do

If your employees are acting like Rave, they will:

- Take ownership of their position and your customers
- Want to take care of customers
- Make customers feel special, giving them their undivided attention
- Smile and be pleasant and easy to deal with
- Do whatever it takes to make sure customers are happy
- Be advocates of your company

Are your employees acting more like Rant or more like Rave? Remember, how your employees act toward your customers will have a positive or negative effect on the experience they have with your company—and that will make a difference, positive or negative, on your bottom line.

Rant or Rave?

Think about the last time you had a bad customer service experience. Was the employee taking care of you acting more like Rant or more like Rave? How did the experience make you feel? Did you tell others about it? Would you do business with the company again?

Imagine if one of your customers had a similar bad customer service experience with your company and was ranting about it. While you might understand how this person feels, do you realize the consequences that sharing this bad experience with their friends, family or colleagues can have on your business?

Here's a comment from a customer describing what it felt like when she was taken care of by an employee like Rant: *"I just want someone to 'own' me as a customer, whether things are going well or there's an issue. I called a service business to ask them to correct a problem. I was transferred to three different people, but the problem was never resolved. So, I called back and asked to speak with a manager. I was put on hold and no one ever came back to the phone. When I called a third time and explained my situation and what I needed, the person hung up on me. That's right. The person on the other end simply didn't want to talk to me or help resolve my issue. Can you imagine? Talk about lack of ownership. I'm done with them!"*

Could this be what some of your customers are saying when they deal with your company?

Now imagine if one of your customers had a good experience with your company and was raving about it. How would you feel if that customer shared the good experience with their friends, family or colleagues and referred them to your business?

Let's hear what it sounds like when customers are taken care of by employees like Rave: *"I'm just back from a vacation and had an extraordinary experience in a restaurant. We walked in, they whisked us to our table, pushed chairs in as we sat down (every time, all night long!) and put the napkins in our laps. There were*

white napkins on the table, but if they saw someone with dark clothes, they immediately came over with a black napkin, taking away the white one. I also loved that several servers came out with the dishes, so as not to leave half the customers served and half not. Did I mention the food was excellent and I received a follow-up call to make sure we had a great experience?"

Could this be something one of your customers might say?

The Five Principles

Now that you've met Rant and Rave and we've illustrated the contrast between how they may be serving your customers, it's time to introduce our five principles:

1. Think Like An Owner
2. Build a Relationship
3. Remove the Roadblocks
4. Walk in Your Customer's Shoes
5. Capture Your Customer's Heart

We'll share the definition and behaviors associated with each principle in the upcoming chapters. We believe these five principles are the building blocks to help you create a customer-centric business strategy that will lead to long-term customer relationships.

If you and your employees already act like Rave, congratulations. Use this book to complement what you're already doing. If you're unsure whether you have employees like Rant or Rave or you know you need to improve your customers' experiences, this book will be invaluable to you.

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Principle One: Think Like an Owner

“The moral of the story: perceptions are everything. During each moment you are in contact with a customer, you are the organization.”

Jan Carlzon, former CEO, SAS Group

Principle One: Think Like an Owner



Have you ever had a personal experience where you were taken care of by a company's owner? What kind of experience was it? We'll bet it was pretty good, maybe even exceptional—because business owners know the way they treat their customers directly influences whether long-term relationships are established. They also know what effect *that* has on their bottom line. Owners will go out of their way to make sure their customers are happy...and everyone who has an owner's mentality—regardless of their position in the company—will take care of customers as if they are the owner.

If everyone taking care of your customers thought like an owner, customers wouldn't have a reason to stop doing business with your company. Do *your* employees "think like an owner"? Do they treat customers the way you want them to? Do they make decisions that are in the best interest of the customer? Are they aware of how important each customer is to the long-term success of your business? Do they realize their future employment with your company is directly affected by how happy customers are with your service?

Employees Are Customers Too

Employees often see themselves as just that, employees. They don't see themselves as "an owner" of the company. The good news is that you don't have to give your employees shares of company stock to inspire them to think like an owner. What you must do is treat them as well as you treat your customers.

Employees are your "internal" customers; how they're treated has a direct effect on how well they treat your "external" customers. When employees feel valued, trusted and respected and are empowered to make decisions, they're motivated to go out of their way to treat your customers well. When your customers are well cared for, they'll return and bring their friends and family with them.

If your customers don't have good experiences with your company, they won't come back. Additionally, there's a correlation between customer satisfaction and employee retention. If you start losing customers, you won't need or be able to retain all your employees.

If your employees don't think like an owner, they may be turning off your customers. What do we mean by think like an owner? Our definition is *to make decisions, solve problems and do what's right for customers as if you're the owner of the company.*

Obviously, the illustration at the beginning of this chapter doesn't depict Rant thinking like an owner. An owner would never tell a customer, "I don't know. I don't work in this department." An owner would help the customer, or at the very least, find someone who could.

Share Your Expectations

As business owners and CEOs, it's your responsibility to educate your employees and provide them with examples of how you want your customers to be treated. Using specific examples is a good way to help employees understand

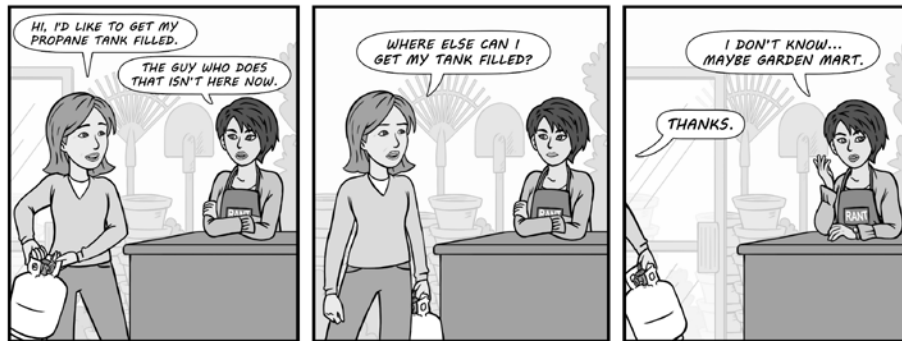
what you mean and what you expect them to do. For example, you might review the following process you want them to use to address customer complaints:

- Thank the customer for bringing the issue to their attention
- Apologize for the inconvenience the issue has caused
- Work to resolve the issue to the customer's satisfaction

By sharing examples of typical customer service scenarios and how you expect them to be handled, you'll exemplify what it means to think like an owner and what behaviors you expect your employees to demonstrate.

If you empower your employees to make decisions, solve problems and do what's right for the customer (whatever it takes), they'll begin to think and act like an owner of your company. As the owner or CEO, you aren't able to serve all your customers yourself, so having employees who think like you will ensure your customers are taken care of in the manner you'd treat them yourself.

What Would Rant Do?



What came to mind when you read this comic strip? Are you concerned that this might be how employees behave in your business?

There are specific behaviors associated with the *Think Like an Owner* principle. It's important to identify the ones you don't want your employees displaying with your customers.

The list of negative behaviors (actions Rant might take) will help raise your awareness and define your expectations with your employees. Actions that

might be displayed by an employee like Rant when taking care of customers include:

- *Unnecessarily passing customers to another employee*
Example: Transferring customers to colleagues without providing an explanation of the situation
- *Not taking an interest in customers or their needs*
Example: Ignoring customers when they need help
- *Trivializing customers' problems*
Example: Telling customers, "I can't believe you're making a big deal about this"
- *Making customers feel like they're an interruption*
Example: Rolling eyes and asking "Yes?" when customers approach them while they're speaking with another employee

Later in this chapter, we'll contrast these behaviors with those an employee like Rave might display with customers.

The Cost of Bad Customer Service

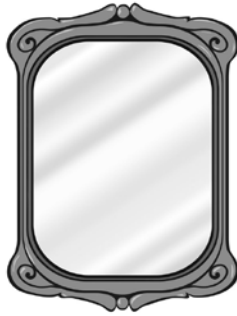
As you can imagine, not having employees who think like owners can quickly turn off customers, but it does much more than that; it negatively affects your revenue and customer retention. There are extensive research findings that support the direct correlation between employees doing the bare minimum and what that may cost a company.

According to The Wharton School's David Sirota and Louis Mischkind, who based their findings on 30 years of research involving 2.5 million employees in 237 companies, organizations with high morale outperform their competitors by roughly 20%. In contrast, companies whose employees are discouraged and do just enough to get by suffer when it comes to results. What's the cost of bad service to your company?

When it comes to retention and reputation, according to the White House Office of Consumer Affairs, happy customers who get their issue resolved tell about four to six people about their experience. If your employees understand that—and realize the potential result of their behaviors—they're more likely to perform the actions and display the behaviors you expect...and your customers deserve.

Time for Reflection

Take a few minutes to think about your actions, and those of your employees, and answer the question below.



What behaviors are your employees demonstrating related to the *Think Like an Owner* principle that could be negatively affecting your Four R's?

It's Not About the Shoes

You might be surprised at how many opportunities there are to differentiate your company through customer service. Do you know who Tony Hsieh is? He's the CEO of Zappos, a company that primarily sells shoes...but may be just as well known for being all about the customer experience. Here's a true story, in Tony's words, to illustrate just what we mean:

"I'm reminded of a time when I was in Santa Monica, California a few years ago at a Skechers sales conference. After a long night of barhopping, a small group of us headed up to someone's hotel room to order some food. My friend from Skechers tried to order a pepperoni pizza from the room service menu, but was disappointed to learn that the hotel we were staying at did not deliver hot food after 11 p.m. We had missed the deadline by several hours.

"A few of us cajoled her into calling Zappos to try to order a pizza. She took us up on our dare, turned on the speakerphone, and explained to the (very) patient Zappos rep that she was staying in a Santa Monica hotel and really craving a pepperoni pizza, that room service was no longer delivering hot food, and that she wanted to know if there was anything Zappos could do to help.

"The Zappos rep was initially a bit confused by the request, but she quickly recovered and put us on hold. She returned two minutes later, listing the five closest places in the Santa Monica area that were still open and delivering pizzas."

This story is a good example of a customer-centric business strategy. Imagine if all your employees were responding to customers in this manner; it would be like having a whole company of employees like Rave serving your customers.

What Would Rave Do?



Clearly, Rave's behaviors—which reflect thinking like an owner—contrast drastically with Rant's. The benefits of your employees thinking like an owner positively influence your company's reputation and future referrals, both of which have a direct effect on your revenue. Remember, happy customers who get their issue resolved tell about four to six people about their experience. You read that earlier, but it bears repeating.

Here are the behaviors and actions associated with this principle that might be displayed when an employee like Rave is taking care of customers:

- *Taking responsibility for customers even if it's not your job*
Example: Processing a credit rather than transferring customers to the accounting department to have them do it
- *Doing whatever it takes to make sure customers are satisfied*
Example: Answering customers' questions and confirming their needs were met
- *Making customers your top priority*
Example: Giving customers your undivided attention
- *Resolving customers' problems even if you didn't cause them*
Example: Telling customers, "I'll be able to take care of that for you"

An Employee's Perspective

What does an actual employee who displays these behaviors think about customer service and specifically this principle? The following insight from waitress Julia Machover is something to share with your employees, as they may be able to relate to her.

Julia may only be a waitress for the time being, as she's pursuing a business degree, but she takes her role seriously; it's much more to her than just earning some extra cash. Julia values her job at Seasons 52 restaurant in Garden City, New York and firmly believes in going the extra mile.

"I've been working as a server since I was 16, so it's really the only job I've ever known," Julia said, *"but through my experience, my number one priority is ensuring guests have the best experience possible. It's taken me a while to get to that point because at first it was just a job; I was doing it because I needed the money, because I was forced to, or whatever the case may be. Now, working in hospitality for so long, I've realized that when I go out to a restaurant and eat as a guest, I notice so many things that can make or break my experience. I try to treat guests how I'd want to be treated if I was sitting in the booth."*

Julia finds that a lot of customers who frequent the restaurant ask for her as their server. Having had the pleasure of being served by her, we're not surprised. Julia is told customers' names before she's even made her way to their table. This way, customers can be addressed by their names to create a more personalized experience.

Julia explained that she strives to stay one step ahead of her guests in order to offer them a memorable experience. Whether it's filling a glass with more water or offering extra napkins, she's constantly thinking of things she can do for her guests before they ask. Julia advised us that she's *"not trying to do the bare minimum, but trying to improve the overall."*

Given her wisdom about the value of customers, we weren't surprised that Julia had a wonderful response when asked about our principles. *"Think Like an Owner really stood out to me. Customers come in and they want to sit down and relax. I'm the one who's responsible for them and in the end, I want them to come back."*

Julia's comments provide an honest perspective and powerful example of how an employee who thinks like an owner can positively affect a company's Four R's.

Time for Reflection

Take time to think about your actions, and those of your employees, and answer the questions below.



What behaviors are your employees demonstrating related to *Think Like an Owner* that could positively affect your Four R's?

When you think about the behaviors you and your employees are currently displaying toward your customers with regard to thinking like an owner, are they more like Rant's or more like Rave's?

View From the Top

You've heard from an employee about the importance of thinking like an owner. Now let's hear from an owner.

Scrub-A-Doo is a fairly new company that's rapidly expanding. The success that's led to this growth is graciously attributed to the high regard with which customers are held.

"Do what's right," said Brett Bohl, Scrub-A-Doo's owner. *"When I bring on new people who are going to talk to our customers, I tell them, 'You guys have the power to do what's right.' If you think the right thing to do is refund the customer and let him have the product anyway, do what's right. The customer always comes first."*

Brett makes sure he and his staff are on top of their customers, and most importantly, living up to their customers' expectations. Scrub-A-Doo makes it a point to ensure that not a single customer is neglected or ignored. *"As far as our policy,"* Brett explained, *"it's be upfront. Get back to people in a timely manner, set expectations and follow through with them."*

Each and every customer at Scrub-A-Doo is treated with undivided attention, and an extreme amount of hospitality. As soon as orders are placed, customers are advised when they'll ship. Once orders have shipped, customers are contacted again, informed when they'll be delivered, and given the name and contact information of an employee who'll serve as their direct contact in the event anything goes wrong. When Scrub-A-Doo orders are fulfilled, customers receive handwritten letters of appreciation for their business. Oftentimes, a 10% off or "free shipping on your next order" coupon is enclosed.

In addition to clearly going the extra mile, Brett is a firm believer in offering his employees ownership over their positions. Aside from his coaching, role-playing occurs and new employees receive handbooks containing the basic customer service principles Scrub-A-Doo follows.

"I think you should try to get your employees to buy into 'thinking like an owner.' That's a great principle," Brett said. *"One way to do that is empowerment. My*

employees know they have the ability to do things like refunding the customer or sending someone a \$25 gift certificate; they don't have to ask me for permission. They have the answer right away and it makes them feel better about their jobs. They don't have to tell the customer, 'Let me check with...'. They have ownership over their positions."

Right from their job interview, potential employees are aware of what the team is passionate about: customer service and satisfaction. Team members are offered freedom and encouragement. *"Customer relationships are important,"* Brett noted. *"We put a lot of time, effort and money into them. There's no incentive program for providing good customer service; that's the core of our business. If you don't do it, you're not going to work here."*

When you look at Brett's comments in combination with Julia's, it's easy to see how the *Think Like an Owner* principle can be applied and the obvious impact it has on actual customer experiences. As you think about how you can apply this principle in your company, to ensure you have a team of employees who act like Rave, we've provided some strategies to assist you.

Think Like an Owner Action Strategies

- Define what it means to you to serve customers and communicate that to your employees.
- Help your employees develop strong decision-making skills.
- Communicate what you expect your employees to do to serve customers in your absence.
- Establish what it means to go above and beyond customers' expectations.
- Coach your employees for success. Give immediate feedback when they demonstrate actions and behaviors that contribute to thinking like an owner.

Call to Action

What action steps can I take to bring this principle to life in my company?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

