

"Brian is the Norman Vincent Peale of Customer Service"

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Brian Lee CSP

Satisfaction Guaranteed

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Peter Howard, President – O.H.I. (G.M., Chateau Laurier)

“By suggesting that innkeepers perceive their businesses from a customers’ point of view, you offered them new ideas and have given us much food for thought.”

*Sandra LaRuffa, Executive Director –
Bed & Breakfast Innkeepers of Northern California*

Satisfaction Guaranteed™

Satisfy Every Customer Every Time

Master the Six Secrets of How to Create
World-Class Customer Satisfaction

Brian C. Lee CSP
Canada's "Mr. Enthusiasm"

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Profile of an author and world-class professional speaker

Brian Lee CSP



Brian Lee CSP

*“Mr. Customer Satisfaction”
Canada’s “Mr. Enthusiasm”*

Active as a public speaker from the age of 15 when he completed a Junior Achievement course, Brian Lee CSP has applied his exceptional communications skills in a host of ways.

Becoming successful in business as the Vice-President of a major retail firm by the age of 25, he then entered politics two years later and was elected Calgary’s youngest-ever Alderman. Nine productive years in public life on City Council and as a Provincial MLA provided Brian with public speaking opportunities on a daily basis.

Brian Lee’s Career Highlights

- Brian Lee is a past president of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers (Alberta Chapter) and past Assistant Area Governor, Toastmasters International as well as past president of the University of Calgary Oxford Debating Society.
- Brian Lee CSP is one of North America’s leading experts in the field of World-Class Customer Satisfaction and Change Leadership and has authored five books.
- For two consecutive years, Brian has been evaluated by the International Customer Service Association Conference as the number one rated Customer Service Speaker in the world.
- “Mr. Customer Satisfaction” travels over 150,000 miles a year, delivering over 180 keynotes and seminars, and has spoken in every state and province, and 12 countries worldwide.
- As both a speaker and implementation consultant to over 100 Fortune 500 corporations and health care organizations, Brian is sought-after as an advisor/coach to senior management, specializing in long-term strategic solutions.
- He has been awarded the National Speakers Association Professional Designation, CSP (Certified Speaking Professional), becoming one of less than 20 in Canada, and 500 in the world.
- Custom Learning Systems Group Ltd. (CLS) was founded by Brian Lee CSP in 1984. Headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, CLS has offices in Winnipeg and Toronto, and serves its client roster of 6,000 organizations in North America with a team of 24 world-class trainers and communication professionals.

Put Brian Lee to work for your next conference or meeting.
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(for information, see Customer Responsiveness/Professional Development page 109)

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Satisfaction Guaranteed™

Satisfy Every Customer Every Time

This book is based upon Brian Lee's acclaimed "Six Star™" Customer Satisfaction seminar series, with over 500,000 graduates in the past 14 years. Mastery Publishing Co. is publishing the complete series in book form.

Other titles in the series are:

- **Winning With Difficult Customers**
How You Can Say to the Most Difficult Customer in the World ... "Come and Get Me!"
- **Stress-Free Service Excellence**
How to Create a Stress-free Environment for Your Customers and You
- **One Minute S.E.R.V.I.C.E. Selling**
How to Gain a Competitive Advantage by Helping Others Get What They Want
- **Managing Moments of Truth**
How to Continuously Improve Customer Satisfaction
- **Self-Esteem and Service Superstars**
How to Enhance Self-Esteem for Improved Service Excellence

Satisfaction Guaranteed™

The Six Values of Lifetime Customer Loyalty

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Foreword

“The whole secret to success in business is to do or know something that nobody else does.”

– Aristotle Onassis

Excellence. It’s a noble pursuit, but finding it in customer service can be tough.

I’d been travelling into Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario for several months, planning to do a series of seminars. The Sault was a typical Canadian border city in the 1990s and all I heard was doom and gloom.

Practically every business person I talked to said “government” should take action, “government” should rescind the Canada/ U.S. Free Trade Agreement, and “government” should make it illegal for anyone to cross the border and purchase products on the other side in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

Crossborder shopping in Canada, like outshopping in the United States, is a major issue. It will probably always be one.

When I was speaking in Provost, Alberta, I found out they were worried about their people shopping in Wainwright. When I was in Wainwright, I heard people there who were worried about losing customers to Edmonton. In Edmonton, they worry about people going across the line into the United States. Canada worries about the U.S. and the U.S. worries about Canada.

It’s an epidemic.

The statistics in Sault Ste. Marie were pretty typical, with the average resident spending about \$700 a year shopping in Michigan.

Merchants on the Canadian side were livid.

In the midst of all this gloom and doom, in the middle of tough times, as bad as things apparently were, every time I drove past a grocery store called Loeb's IGA the parking lot was full.

As a matter of fact, when I asked who was good in customer service in Sault Ste. Marie, as I do everywhere I go, the people said, "Loeb's IGA."

I asked my hosts to introduce me to the owners, Judy and Larry Cairns.

"How's business?" I asked, and they said, "Great! As a matter of fact, it's up 30 percent."

Hmm. Up 30 percent? When the whole town is headed south? What gives?

I said, "How are you doing on prices?"

They said, "We're competitive."

I said, "Are you the lowest on everything?"

They said, "No, we're competitive."

I said, "Could you give me a tour?"

They said, "We'd be delighted."

Now I didn't need a tour to see the former Greyhound bus in the parking lot, painted over with "Loeb's IGA" on the side. It is used to pick up senior citizens twice a week and bring them to the store; the bag boys even ride back with them to carry the groceries to their front door.

Nice touch.

I didn't need a tour to see how clean the store was and how user-friendly everything seemed to be. There were plants everywhere. When I came in the front door, I noticed something that took me all the way back to my high school days when I worked at Safeway in Calgary.

Back then, if a customer dared ask to use the phone, we'd make him or her go in the back, over the boxes, past the smelly bathrooms, over the bottle depot, to the telephone – it was a major imposition on our lives.

At Loeb's, there is a telephone in the front entrance facing you as you come in. It's as if they wanted you to use it.

In Sault Ste. Marie, almost everyone was buying dairy products on the American side because it was supposed to be so much cheaper, but at Brian Lee's – Satisfaction Guaranteed™

Loeb's IGA they had a sign up above their cheese that said, "We will slice it, dice it, grate it, you name it, we'll do it."

User-friendly.

However, the acid test for a food store — if you are the one who buys the groceries in your house, you'll know — comes every Saturday afternoon.

When the store is jam-packed with shoppers, how long do you wait to get through the checkout line and on your way?

At Loeb's, the answer is no more than two carts per line any day of the week. Period.

Now those of you who do the scheduling at your place of business know that this is a pretty demanding expectation. They meet it at Loeb's every Saturday.

How was it, I had to ask, that they had created this oasis of customer service excellence in the midst of a wasteland?

The answer was music to my ears.

"Brian," they said, "we went to a seminar three years ago and the speaker said, 'Consider the customer in everything you do.' "

Exactly!

Now Loeb's IGA did three critical things uniquely different.

First, they got educated. They learned something about customer service. Second, they trained all their people in what they had learned. Third, they acted on that knowledge — immediately.

That's what Six Star Customer Satisfaction is all about!

The key to success, whether you are an owner, a manager, a front-line associate, an entrepreneur, or whether you work in government, or private business, or in the non-profit sector,

is about how you can create a career advantage for yourself, personally, and do well regardless of how the economy is doing. As a matter of fact, you will grow in spite of hard times.

If you will take my challenge to get educated and put this knowledge to work in your industry, in your career, in your working life; if you will utilize the most powerful advancement tool — Total Customer Satisfaction – you too, can gain the competitive advantage that Loeb’s IGA has.

By the way, there were five stores operating in a six-block radius of Loeb’s IGA in Sault Ste. Marie and another one had just closed because they couldn’t take the heat.

Wouldn’t you like to be the Loeb’s IGA of your market/profession?

Forward – Just “DO IT” Checklist

Recommendations:

- ❑ 1. Conduct a “best practises” tour and visit the three organizations in your market area that are famous for “world-class” customer satisfaction. Ask a lot of questions.
- ❑ 2. Invest in yourself. Take a minimum of 18 hours a year in Customer Service-related training.
- ❑ 3. Whatever inspires you in this book, act on it ***Urgently***. Ideas have a way of “cooling down” over time.

What Is Customer Service?

Bold Goals: “Whatever you can do or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.”

Russ is irritated. He’s a friend of mine who lives in Boulder, Colorado, and like many of you, he’s tired of bad service.

Have you ever noticed that people will take your money and never even look at you? Russ has. He claims it is now his prime goal in life to get a retail clerk to thank him (or say “please”) when he makes a purchase.

If somebody won’t even look at him when he pays for goods or services he just holds onto his money with a firm grip until the clerk looks him squarely in the eye — usually like he’s unbalanced or something — and then, in the most obvious of voices, he says, “Thaaaaannnk you.”

What is service? A good definition is:
“Adding you to your product or services.”

It’s almost as if you have to beg to be thanked.

My friend Barry, in Houston, told me he was in a store buying something and he said to the clerk, “You didn’t smile and you didn’t say thank you.”

The clerk’s reply? “It’s on your receipt.”

Have we sunk so low?

Stanley Marcus, the founder of the Neiman-Marcus department store chain said, “Customers are people. Consumers are statistics.”

So true.

I believe the Consumers Association should drop that name and call itself the Customers Association because we are all customers. I think ultimately what we all aspire to as customers is to be treated as individuals.

What is service? Well a good definition is, “Adding you to your product or services.”

Almost all of us own a car. No matter what car company you’ve purchased from in the last few years, there are literally thousands and thousands of people whose efforts have gone into building that automobile.

There are designers and engineers and assembly people. There are accountants and managers and quality control people. Yet, who had the most impact on how you view that manufacturer? Probably the salesperson.

The irony of it all is that the car salesperson is the least-trained of the entire chain. The average car salesperson lasts about eight months and only about one-third make a decent living. You’re no doubt aware of his suspect reputation among the buying public, of his image best represented by Kurt Russell in the film, “Used Cars.” You know, bad plaid.

How many companies blow it all by having minimum wage employees, with little or no training, dealing directly with the customer?

The reason I got elected to city council as the youngest alderman in Calgary’s history was not because I was wealthy and it certainly wasn’t because I was smart. No, it was because I was prepared to knock on 11,000 doors in just four weeks.

And people say to me, “Brian, how did you do that?”

One door at a time.

It was kind of a waste of time knocking on doors and having nobody answer, so I would have campaign workers going up and down the street getting people to come out to meet me.

I would say to them, “Look, when you knock on that door, you are me. As far as those people are concerned, their perception of you is their perception of me.”

It’s the same with your business, government department or non-profit organization. The public’s perception of your organization is their perception of you, one at a time. It is very much a personal thing.

If that car salesperson knew nothing about the car he was trying to sell you, or if he was rude or indifferent or smelled bad, how would you feel about the company he represented?

The Japanese phrase for customer service means,
“Honoured visitor in one’s house.”

My friend Ed in Atlanta was interested in a particular automobile that retailed for around \$30,000. He’d done his homework, knew plenty about the vehicle and was prepared when he walked into the showroom.

It took him 15 minutes to find a salesperson who’d even talk to him. And when they eventually found a vehicle to take for a test drive, the salesperson knew absolutely nothing about it. Nothing.

Disgusted, my friend left the dealership vowing never to return. He ended up buying a car he hadn’t even considered because the salesperson he dealt with at the other dealership was outstanding. Of the six dealerships he’d visited, only one salesperson had even bothered to call him back with the answers to his questions. Guess who got the deal?

The Japanese have a very interesting phrase for customer service: “O Kyaku San.” It means, “Honoured visitor in one’s house.”

I like that.

Have you ever noticed when you call someone at the office during the day, he usually answers the phone with an unseemly bark such as: “Lee here!”

It's almost as if they're saying, "What the heck do you want? I'm a busy and important person and you're not."

Call them at home at night and it's an oh-so-smooth, "Hello. Mr. Personality here. Oh, wrong number? Would you like to talk anyway?"

Ultimately, customer service is nothing more than treating customers as friends and I suppose treating friends as customers. Jack Harrison says the natural evolution goes something like this: Suspect, Prospect, Customer, Friend.

More than anything, customer service is an attitude of gratitude, it is an expression of appreciation. It is the highest honour to which you can aspire.

Chapter 1 – Just "DO IT" Checklist

Recommendations:

- 1. Smile and make eye contact. Say "please and thank you." Be a model for everyone.
- 2. Treat every customer as a friend. Better still as an "honoured visitor."
- 3. Don't underestimate the importance of your "telephone voice." Speak softly, as if you were at home.

Who Is Your Customer, Really?

“First we will be best and then we will be first.”

— *Grant Tinker*

It is nine o'clock on Monday morning. Do you know who your customer is?

Well if you said, “Everybody,” you are probably on the right track. That may not be a bad approach, because anyone may be your customer today, or tomorrow, or sometime in the future.

If you don't deal directly with the people who utilize your organization's services or buy your company's products, perhaps you'd say your boss is your customer. One lady in a seminar got up and said, “My boss is really my only customer. Everything I do in the company, I do for him.”

That may be true for you, too. It works the other way as well. Your staff might be your customers.

We just don't look at our co-workers as customers.

How about your suppliers? Does the way you treat them have anything to do with how well they treat you? As a matter of fact, there is a trend in the 90s to have our vendors or suppliers as partners, because of what a difference the results can make for an organization.

There are really two types of customers: external and internal.

The external is the most obvious. With a professional or business association, it's the member. For the government employee, it's the taxpayer. And in retail, it's the person buying your product. Simple.

But few of us consider the internal customer.

I always ask my audience if they consider themselves internal customers. Invariably, only a few brave souls will put up their hands. We just don't look at our co-workers as customers.

Think about it for a minute.

Does somebody write you a cheque every couple of weeks? Does somebody keep the place clean? Are there other people in the company who provide services to you? If you work in manufacturing, don't you depend on the next person in the production line?

You bet you do!

Yet perhaps you've never considered yourself a customer within your own organization before. You should. Because we are all internal customers. I believe in the 90s, the internal customer is just as important to us as the external one.

I was delivering a seminar at a hospital in Long Beach, California, and there was a lady there from admitting who had a real attitude problem.

Now I don't know about you, but from my experience I've come to wonder if it's a requirement to have an attitude problem if you work in admitting at a hospital.

In any case I pulled her aside and I said to her, "Listen, what's the problem here?"

She said, "Mr. Lee, if our customers are treated like a 10 out of 10, then we are treated like a two out of 10."

Guess how she was treating her patients?

Right. A two out of 10. Or worse.

What's that old saying about "What goes around comes around"?

It must be a pretty exceptional human being who will care for their customers when they, themselves, are being treated poorly, ordered around, or being treated without respect by the boss. Most employees treat customers better than they're treated by their bosses. Sad but true.

If the 1990s was the decade when we woke up to the importance of customer service, then the 21st Century should be the era when we recognize that treating our internal customers takes precedence over how we deal with our external customers.

It really is the beginning of everything we do.

Looking inside your organization is important but it's also crucial to look outside at the bigger picture.

Who is your customer? I was speaking at a city government seminar, and a storm and sewer manager said, "My customer is anyone who flushes a toilet." Big market!

Either a person is a customer now or he is
going to be sometime in the future.

Who is your customer? A realtor in Fort McMurray, Alberta, said, "Any live, warm body." Now there's a positive thinker and a positive attitude! I like that.

Either a person is a customer now or he is going to be sometime in the future. And that is a healthy way to look at it if you want your company, your government department, your non-profit organization, or your own career to grow and prosper in the decade ahead.

Chapter 2 – Just “DO IT” Checklist

Recommendations:

- ❑ 1. Treat anyone you provide a service to as your customer, including your boss and co-workers.
- ❑ 2. Make a list of your various types of customers and ask them “What can I do to serve you better?”
- ❑ 3. Serve others the way you’d like to be served.