

# **EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION GUIDE**

**The Keys to Your Success**

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# CONVENIENCE STORE HISTORY

The birth of the convenience store concept began in the Sunbelt portion of the United States in the late 1920's. A basic necessity of the time was ice. Customers would drive to the Ice Houses/Docks to purchase ice for their home ice boxes, the precursor to the modern day refrigerator.

Customers began requesting that the ice docks carry some simple everyday items such as milk, eggs, and bread. Having these items in one location meant that the customer wouldn't have to make additional stops carrying the ice on the running board or fender of their car where it would melt.

The number of basic items began to grow quickly into a variety of items and services. The first C-stores provided curbside service, where the store employee would come to the customer's car to fill their orders, and bring the items to them in the parking lot. The industry began to expand to other portions of the country in the late 1940's and early 1950's. This expansion was the basis of a number of convenience store concepts.

Fresh brewed coffee was a result of the c-store expansion into the eastern portion of the United States where colder weather and work commutes brought about key product of the convenience store industry.

The C-store concept today is a worldwide industry with units in every continent of the world. There are literally hundreds of convenience store companies within the United States today, making it one of the most competitive industries in retail.

This competition requires that each and every c-store unit must strive for excellence in the areas of customer service and store condition. It will be your responsibility as an employee to contribute and support our store efforts in achieving excellence with our customers.

# WHAT IS CUSTOMER SERVICE

The best way to explain customer service is to share the research that has been conducted with convenience store customers and why they choose to shop our stores.

## WHY CUSTOMERS SHOP CONVENIENCE STORES

- The speed of service/transaction time
- Convenient hours of operation
- Wide variety of product selection and services
- Generally ample parking
- One stop gasoline and product purchases
- Clean, safe and well lighted locations
- Warm, friendly, personalized service
- Competitive pricing on key items

Customers shop convenience stores not hoping for these services and standards, they shop convenience stores **expecting** to receive these standards.

## THE VALUE OF A CUSTOMER

The average customer purchase in this site is \$\_\_\_\_\_. If that customer is lost due to any of the factors above it would be quite costly to the operation.

How costly ???

If that average customer shops 4 days a week in this site that would equal \$\_\_\_\_a week.

And if that customer is a consistent customer and shops our unit each week, the annual value of that customer to our business is \$\_\_\_\_\_a year.

## A DISSATISFIED CUSTOMER

A customer may become dissatisfied for many different reasons. It generally occurs because their expectations of service were not met. It is important to understand that research tells us that the average customer that is dissatisfied with their service generally will not tell you of their dissatisfaction, but will not return to shop again.

They do however, on an average tell 4 of their friends and relatives of their poor shopping experience.

Suppose that 3 of the 4 individuals that the dissatisfied customer spoke to about their poor shopping experience were also our customers, that also don't return to shop at our unit.

How costly ???

The annual average customer transaction times 3, \_\_\_\_\_.

# PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

**You are expected to make the customer's experience outstanding by:**

- Greeting customers at the gas pumps using the in-store intercom (if applicable)
- Offering a friendly greeting to all customers as they enter the store, make eye contact, and smile
- Attempting to learn repeat customer's names, use their names when greeting them to personalize their shopping experience
- Assisting customers that are looking for product in the store, "Is there something that I can help you find?"
- Suggesting related items to the purchase, "Would you like a donut or pastry with your coffee this morning?"
- Apologizing to customers that have to wait in line for service, "Thank you for waiting, I will be right with you"
- Closing every transaction with a warm and sincere, "Thank you", "Have a good day", "Thanks, *customer's name* We'll see you again tomorrow", etc.
- Complete the transaction as quickly as possible

**You will also be expected to look your best by:**

- Wearing an approved uniform that is neat, clean, and buttoned
- Wearing an approved name tag
- Maintaining good personal hygiene and grooming habits along with proper clothing and shoes

## **STORE CONDITIONS**

**You are expected to assist in maintaining the proper shopping environment by:**

- Completing all job duties and functions assigned to you and your shift
- Mopping up spills as they occur, keeping the floor presentable to our customers
- Stocking and facing merchandise, to maintain a full and well stocked appearance
- Keeping shelves clean, free of dust, spills and price labels
- Keeping the sales area clean and free of clutter
- Practicing good personal hygiene and complying with all health standards when handling food
- Picking up trash and litter in the parking area
- Keeping all food preparation areas supplied and clean and free of trash, i.e. coffee island
- Keeping the front glass clean, uncluttered, and free of hand written signs
- Keeping the gasoline "Selling Zone" clean and free of trash and litter, supplied with water, squeegee, and papertowels
- Keeping restroom and fixtures sparkling clean at all times
- Maintaining all equipment in working order, reporting to your supervisor any equipment that is not working and marking it as "Out of Order" with a printed sign

## **TEAMWORK AND COMMUNICATION**

**As an employee of this store, you will be expected to communicate and work with all the other staff members by:**

- Using the In-Store Communication Process
- Following the direction and instruction of all senior staff members
- Reporting to work when scheduled, notifying your proper supervisor when you will be late
- Working with others in a fun but business like atmosphere
- Asking questions about something that you are not sure of. There is no such thing as a stupid question
- Discussing disputes you have with other team-members with senior staff members in order to resolve unsettled issues
- Sharing store related information with other staff members and shifts
- Working with all staff members in a positive manner and communicating all store related needs and functions



## **BUSINESS IMAGE**

**As an employee of this store you will be expected to maintain and promote a positive business image by:**

- Always demonstrating behavior that is consistent with a professional business establishment
- Serving the customer and exceeding their expectation of service
- Handling customer complaints with empathy and composure, resolving poor shopping experiences on the spot
- Promoting and enhancing the trademark(s) through excellent customer service, sparkling store conditions, and positive teamwork/communication

# **STORE POLICY**

Policy Date:

**POLICY TITLE:**

**POLICY COVERAGE:**

**POLICY GUIDELINES:**

**POLICY EXCEPTIONS:**