Hints for Enhancing Customer Interviews

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Overview

- Mission: We Serve Veterans and Their Families with Professionalism
- Generational factors-core values/ service expectations
- Traditionalists (65+)
- Baby boomers (45 to 65)
- Generation X (30-45)
- Millennials (30 and younger)

Overview (cont'd)

- Generational similarities, common ground
- Interviewing Techniques
- Ten Essential Customer Service Skills
- Ten tips for managing difficult / stressful tough customers
- Enhancing the interview process / client's overall impression

We Serve Veterans & Their Families

- On First Introduction:
  - Common Courtesy, Good _____sir or ma'am
  - Introduce yourself
  - Establish rapport, spend no more than 2-3 minuets
    Veteran is out of their comfort zone and you are in yours
- Recognize of Customer's Branch of Service
  - Notice Hats/Branch/War Era
  - Coats with Unit Patches Logos
- Note Uniqueness of Veteran's Life Experience
- Highlight Benefits today derived from past Service

Generational Factors

Traditionalists – Ages 65+

- Core Values
  Honor, Courage, Commitment
- Respect for authority
  Moral Values
- Responsibility
  - Their Duty
  - Hard Work, don't like the word or idea of a "Hand-Out"
- Discipline
- A personal touch

Traditionalists – Ages 65+

- What kind of service they expect
  - Hard work, dedication, customer support, inter-personal relations, loyalty
- Provide consistent service
- Thank them every time for their service
- Be patient with them
  - Hearing loss, disabilities
  - Education Level
- Be personable and show genuine interest

Baby Boomers – Ages 45-65

- Core Values
- Hard Work/long hours
- Equality
- Want to "make a difference"
- Anything is possible

Baby Boomers – Ages 45-65

- What kind of service they expect
- Treat them as individuals
- Be personable
- If there is a problem fix it
- Make eye contact
- Be optimistic

Generation X – Ages 30-40

- Core Values
- Independence
- Flexibility
- Results Driven
- Entrepreneurial

Generation X – Ages 30-40

- What kind of service they expect
- Show respect in an informal manner
- Treat them as equals
- Approach in a more relaxed manner
- Allow them time to ask questions to clarify
- Try to be accommodating

Millennials – Ages 30 and Younger

- Core Values
- Fun
- Diversity
- Work Life Balance
- Extremely techno savvy
- Higher Levels of Education

Millennials – Ages 30 and Younger

- What kind of service they expect
- Value charity-civic minded
- Appeal to their Technical savvy
- Be flexible
- Be genuine
- Use Humor

Generational Similarities

- Value Structure
  family, integrity, honesty, trustworthiness
- Want Respect
  Want to be heard and valued for contribution.
- Trustworthy Leaders
  Without trust communications stops, productivity lost
- Nobody Likes Change
  No one generation is more or less comfortable than the others
- Loyalty
  Not function of age but position in organization
- We all want to learn
  We all want to do a good job and willing to learn new skills to do so
- Everyone Likes feedback
  we want to know how we are doing comparatively

Interviewing Techniques

Interviewing Techniques

Success depends, in large part , on your commitment to your customers' claim success

- Opening
- Probing
- Supporting the claim
- Closing

Opening the Interview

Opening the Interview

- Establish rapport
- Active Listening for the language of "NEEDS"
- Recognize the "NEED"
  - I want
  - I'd Like
  - We're interested in
- Verify the "NEED"
- Take notes

Probing Questions

Closed Probe Question:

- Yes or No
- Used to confirm

Open Probe Question:

- Solicit a more detailed answer
- Use when required, keep to the topic
- Allows Venting
- Allows "war stories"

Supporting Information

- Review of Service Records to support the claim
- Buddy/lay statements
- The "Tri-Pod"
- Medical Opinion
- DBQ Forms

Closing

- Make customer a copy of any documentation
- Explain the process from that point on--particularly possible length of time
- Answer any additional questions the customer might have
- Be sure they have your business card and know how to contact you
- Once you are sure the interview is done say a cordial good bye, thank them for coming by, and walk them to your door.

Difficult Customers

10 Tips

1. Show respect and courtesy no matter what your customer's attitude
2. Remember: Your customer is upset with a situation not with you
3. Listen with patience. Don't interrupt, let them vent within limits
4. Apologize for the problem and empathize with *your customers* feelings.
5. Remain calm and avoid arguing
   - Speak softly, the veteran will have to listen carefully
   - Verbal Judo

10 Tips

6. Ask for details in order to steer the conversations away from emotions
7. Overcome, misunderstanding's, drawbacks and skepticism: Use positive language that promotes cooperation "Let's see what we can do"
8. Involve your customer in finding a solution Ask: "What do you think would be fair?"
9. If you get frustrated or angry, take a deep breath and stay committed to resolving the situation
10. Establish trust by keeping your word. Do what you say you are going to do.

Practical Exercise

- Scenario
- Practice makes perfect
  - Friendly First time Vietnam War Veteran
  - Hostile Navy Vietnam Veteran with all claims denied due to wrong ship
  - First time OIF/OEF Veteran
  - Surviving Spouse WWII veteran, Non-service connected.

Review

- Closing remarks
- Scenario Feed back and discussion

Review

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