

## **Integrity: The Key to Service**

Integrity is a key element in peak performance. In the travel world, it is integrity with the customer that really counts.

When I was a boy I loved going to work with my Dad. My Dad was a plumber. Not a job you would immediately associate with customer service. However, I have to tell you I learnt more about service from him than I did from any text book. My Dad, you see, took pride in what he did. I'm sure the concept of 'customer service for plumbers' hadn't even been thought of (maybe it still hasn't!). Had it been, I'm confident many aspects of it could have been modelled on my father and the things he did.

My Dad understood that integrity was the essence of service. As a boy I was working alongside him one time in a dark cellar deep within the bowels of an old but 'well-to-do' house. I pointed the torch beam at the small maze of pipes and asked my Dad a simple question. A question that seemed innocent enough at the time. His answer, though, has stayed with me forever.

"Dad, why are you always so concerned about getting the joints so neat and the pipes so perfectly vertical or horizontal?"

Putting the oxyacetylene flame to one side, he stopped what he was doing and turned to look quizzically at me.

"Well?" I continued probing "No-one is ever going to see it. Nobody is ever going to crawl under here and take a look. No one would even know if it was done messy or done right".

He looked into my naive, boyish eyes. "Son..." he said laconically, as the light from the torch illuminated a stern look in his eye, "I'd know".

He looked away and picked up the spirit level. I knew I'd learnt a lesson of significance. One that would resonate with me over the years. My Dad understood not only about doing things right but doing the right thing.

The lesson is this: The alignment of what you do, what you say and what you think about others, particularly, when they're not there, is in direct proportion to your level of integrity.

Are the people that come to you for advice told the same thing as you'd tell a trusted friend?

### **Action Steps**

Consider the actions you currently do behind closed doors. Make a list of the things you do for others that they do not know about. Then, make another list of the things you could be doing. Finally, put into action the strategies necessary to make the two lists the same.

Ask yourself and your team ‘When the customer or colleague is not around am I not only doing this right but Am I doing the right thing?’ The answers to this question will largely determine your level of integrity.

#### Motivational Quotes

*“The Measure of a real person’s character is what they would do if they knew they would never be found out”*

- Thomas Macauley.

*“The first key to greatness, is to be what we appear to be”*

- Socrates

*“It is priceless to find a person who will take responsibility, who will finish and follow through to the final detail – to know that when someone has accepted an assignment that it will be effectively, conscientiously completed”*

- Richard L. Evans