



# The Customer Service Imperative

Irving Stackpole, RRT, MEd



## **The Customer Service Imperative**

Good service, satisfactory service and poor service: some definitions

The value of good and satisfactory service, and the cost of poor service



- Customers vs. Consumers vs. Patients
  - Customers “choose”
  - Consumers “use”
  - Patients... “comply”



- Calculating the “value” of customer service
  - Monetary
    - Lifetime service consumption
    - Referral value
  - Inter-Personal
  - Intra-Personal



- “Practicing clinicians have always understood that medical decision making is as much art it is science. They rely increasingly on “hard” scientific data. But scientific evidence is often limited and ambiguous.”

(Gerteis, et al: Through the Patient’s Eyes. 1993)



- “Clinicians’ ability to manage patient care and to anticipate the outcome of treatment in practice depends as much or more on “soft” information about patients’ attitudes preferences and personal idiosyncrasies.”



- **Five dimensions of quality– the RATER scale<sup>[1]</sup>**

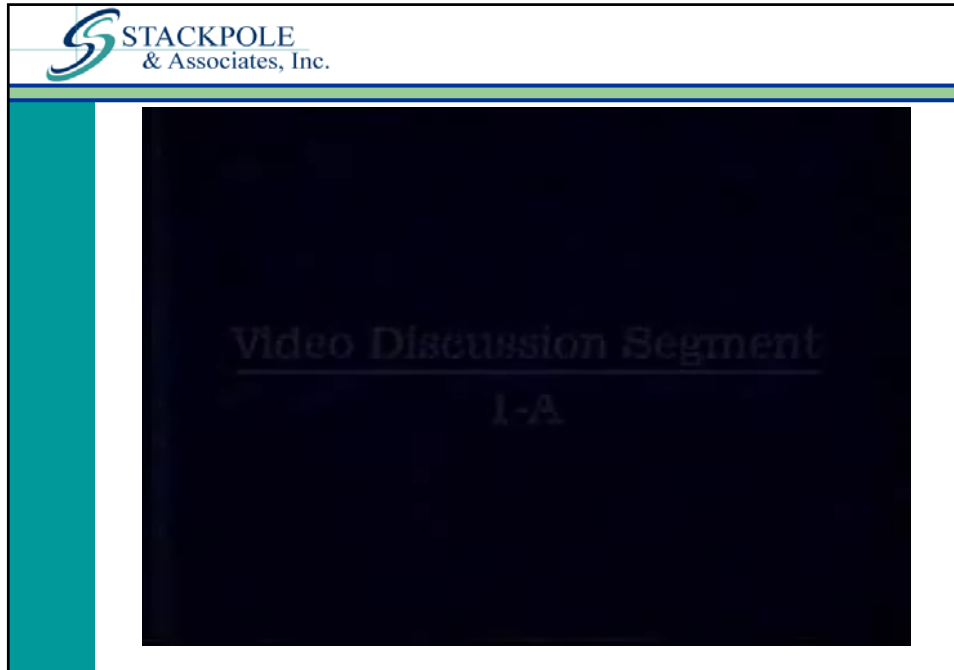
- Responsiveness
- Assurance
- Tangibles
- Empathy
- Reliability

<sup>[1]</sup> Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry. A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. Journal of Marketing. 1985 Fall:41-50



- **Understanding satisfaction thresholds**

- Lowering the satisfaction threshold
- Raising the dissatisfaction threshold



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- The image shows a slide header with the Stackpole & Associates, Inc. logo. Below the header is a bulleted list. A teal vertical bar is on the left side of the slide.
- What they ***aren't*** telling you
    - Who complains
    - Who they tell
    - Who don't complain
    - Who they tell
    - The bottom line to your operation



- Customer behavior in the face of poor service
  - Less than 30% complain
  - They tell on average 11 people
  - How many have heard by the time you hear about a service problem?





- Customer surveillance: catching them when they're unhappy
  - Gold-plated complaints
  - Effect of Service Recovery on loyalty



- Service recovery strategy
  - Prompt  
Speed of the response is related to satisfaction with outcome
  - Authoritative  
Don't equivocate – tell the consumer what will be done
  - Follow up  
Do what you say will be done
  - Measurement  
Measure effectiveness



- The Telephone
  - High level of contact
  - Least level of training
  - Highest level of skill assumption

***Result***

- Potential to raise or lower customer satisfaction thresholds




- Telephone Basics
  - Answer it!
    - Within three rings
      - Is the phone an enemy?
  - Greeting, Location, Name
    - Good morning, Megaboheemoth Health. This is Sara.
  - Help!




- Telephone Basics
  - Can you help? How *CAN* you help?
    - Yes or No – Take Responsibility




- Placing callers on hold
  - Ask permission
  - 30” rule
- Transferring callers
  - Tell them what you’re about to do
  - Give them the extensions / DIDs
- Terminating calls
  - “Is there anything else I can help you with?”

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- How are customer services measured?
  - Satisfaction measures
  - Loyalty
  - Recommendations / referrals

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## The Pain/Pleasure Trend

- *Customers prefer a sequence that improves over time*
  - ✓ *Recommendation: Get the bad stuff over quickly*

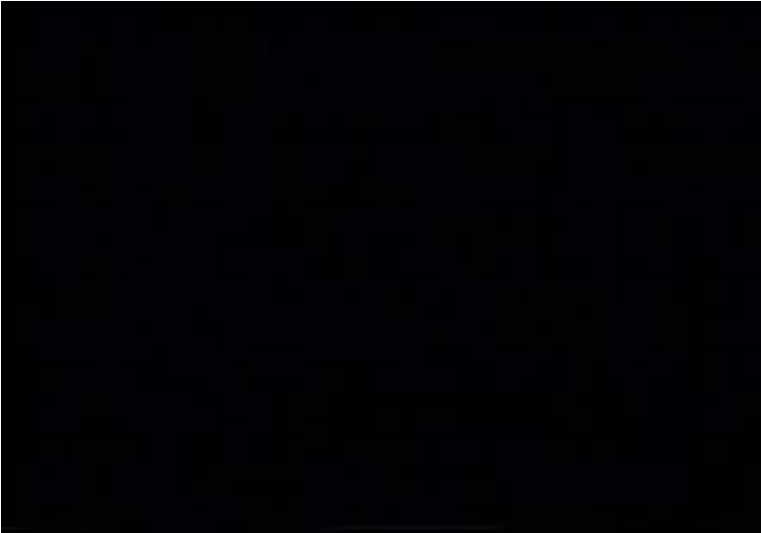


- Customers are sensitive to the duration of pain and of pleasure
  - ✓ Recommendation: Segment / stretch the pleasure, combine the pain
  - ✓ Recommendation: If pain is anticipated, choice helps

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- Negative experiences may be overwhelmed by positive endings
  - ✓ Recommendation: End Strong, e.g., wave goodbye

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## Service Errors and Recovery

- Effective Recovery → Loyalty
  - ✓ Recovery Must Be:
    1. Prompt
    2. Authoritative
    3. Follow-Through



## Service Errors and Recovery

- The Correct Recovery
- Task Specific Errors (Outcome) – Lost articles
  - ✓ Recovery - compensation
- Process Specific Errors – Rude behavior, schedule delays
  - ✓ Recovery – apology / explanation / demonstration



## ➤ Service Errors and Recovery

- Why Don't We All Get this Right?
  - Personal Defensiveness
  - Professional Pride
  - Culture of CYA
  - Loss of Wisdom → Turnover
  - "Task" focus vs. "person" focus



## ➤ Managing Customer Services & Loyalty

- Don't major in the minor things
- Know what's important, and how satisfied consumers & customers are
- Testimonials
- Take time to ask – customers and each other