



Need to build loyalty to your business? A case for exceptional customer service.

It is a well known fact that typically 80% of your business comes from your existing clients (80/20 rule).

Businesses that excel create what is called a “value proposition”. A set of unique benefits that they alone can provide to customers.

A business in any sector (yes any sector) can develop a value proposition that will always leave customers with a “wow” factor. One of these customers might be what Malcolm Gladwell in his famous book *“the tipping point”* called “connectors” i.e., those people who have a wide network of casual acquaintances by whom they are trusted, often a network that crosses many social boundaries and groups.

These connectors if impressed will probably bring in many more customers than any other customers (again the 80/20 rule works here i.e the connector probably brings in 80% of customers).

Exceptional service for any sector? Really?

In the following two stories or examples, we clearly demonstrate two unlikely sectors whose owners created an excellent value proposition. The first is a dentist and the second is a taxi driver (or a special hire in Uganda).

If these two can create exceptional value, how about you? What is your value proposition?

Here are the two stories:

The dentist who kids cannot wait to see.

There is a dentist who kids look forward to seeing. Can you imagine, they cannot wait to sit in the feared dentists’ chair. I am cringing thinking of it (on account of several horrific experiences).

But I will repeat (emphasis mine). THERE IS A DENTIST WHO KIDS CANNOT WAIT TO VISIT.

Do you know why? As part of his exceptional customer service he rewards them (after a raffle) with a Bike as part of his “Outstanding check up” Program.

Is the bike a “bribe”? No. The bike is the cost of keeping customers.

Isn’t a bike like a BMX pretty expensive? Actually its really cheap. Let me explain.

A bike on its own is pretty expensive. A really cool kid’s bike (like a BMX) as per amazon.com costs about GBP 104. Which is about Shs. 400,000. A lot of money right?

But how much will this dentist generate just from that one kid?

Assuming each dentist checkup is Shs. 100,000. How many times do you think the kid will visit? two, three four times a year? I bet, who doesn’t want a chance to get the bike?

So assuming the kid visits every 3 months. That is 400,000.

Now how many kids will similarly want this? Let's assume another 10 kids, also visiting 4 times a year. That's another 400,000 each, hence Shs. 4m for the 10 kids.

Now 400,000 (the cost of the bike) is only 10% of the Shs. 4m the doctor has made.

How much more does it cost the doctor to advertise to win new clients? Think about it? Shs. 1m? Shs. 2m? May be more?

How many years will this kid be a customer for that doctor? How about other services (like fillings, tooth removal, whitening?)

So then in the big scheme, the cost of Shs. 400k becomes "peanuts."

If a dentist can find a value proposition that can bring customers beating down his door for life (he after all has these kids as customers for life), how about you?

Why are you not implementing exceptional customer service to keep customers?

Oh just to prove it to you, the link to this exceptional dentist is here:

<http://www.ahealthysmile.com/free-bike.html>

The taxi ("special hire") cab driver with a mission statement.

A man called Harvey was waiting in line for a ride at the airport

When a cab pulled up, the first thing Harvey noticed was that the taxi was polished to a bright shine. Smartly dressed in a white shirt, black tie, and freshly pressed black slacks, the cab driver jumped out and rounded the car to open the back passenger door for Harvey. He handed Harvey a laminated card and said:

"I'm Wally, your driver. While I'm loading your bags in the trunk, I'd like you to read my mission statement."

Taken back, Harvey read the card. It said:

Wally's Mission Statement:

"To get my customers to their destination in the quickest, safest, and cheapest way possible in a friendly environment"

This blew Harvey away. Especially when he noticed that the inside of the cab matched the outside. Spotlessly clean!

As he slid behind the wheel, Wally said, "Would you like a cup of coffee? I have a thermos of regular and one of decaf."

Harvey said jokingly, "No, I'd prefer a soft drink."

Wally smiled and said, “No problem. I have a cooler up front with regular and Diet Coke, water and orange juice.”

Almost stuttering, Harvey said, “I’ll take a Diet Coke”

Handing him his drink, Wally said, “If you’d like something to read, I have *The Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Sports Illustrated* and *USA Today*.”

As they were pulling away, Wally handed Harvey another laminated card. “These are the stations I get and the music they play, if you’d like to listen to the radio.”

As if that weren’t enough, Wally told Harvey that he had the air conditioning on and asked if the temperature was comfortable for him. Then he advised Harvey of the best route to his destination for that time of the day. He also let him know that he’d be happy to chat and tell him about some of the sights, or, if Harvey preferred, to leave him with his own thoughts.

“Tell me, Wally,” Harvey asked the driver, “have you always served customers like this?”

Wally smiled into the rear view mirror. “No, not always. In fact, it’s only been in the last two years.

My first five years driving, I spent most of my time complaining like all the rest of the cabbies do. Then I heard the personal growth guru, on the radio one day. He said that if you get up in the morning expecting to have a bad day, you’ll rarely disappoint yourself. He said, ‘Stop complaining! Differentiate yourself from your competition. Don’t be a duck. Be an eagle. Ducks quack and complain. Eagles soar above the crowd.’

“That hit me right between the eyes,” said Wally. “He was really talking about me. I was always quacking and complaining, so I decided to change my attitude and become an eagle. I looked around at the other cabs and their drivers. The cabs were dirty, the drivers were unfriendly, and the customers were unhappy. So I decided to make some changes. I put in a few at a time. When my customers responded well, I did more.”

“I take it this has paid off for you,” Harvey said.

“It sure had,” Wally replied. “My first year as an eagle, I doubled my income from the previous year. This year I’ll probably quadruple it. You were lucky to get me today. I don’t sit at cab stands anymore. My customers call me for appointments on my cell phone or leave a message on my answering machine. If I can’t pick them up myself, I get a reliable cabbie friend to do it and I take a piece of the action.”

Wally was phenomenal. He was running a limo service out of a Yellow Cab. Wally the Cab Driver made a different choice. He decided to stop quacking like ducks and start soaring like eagles. How about you?

Next steps

Think about the following for your business.

- What is your value proposition? What unique service can you provide to customers?
- How can you provide to customers an experience where they will always go “wow”. Find this “wow” factor and you will continue growing business, despite a challenging business environment.

If you need help in crafting your “value proposition strategy” speak to me.

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About the Writer

D E Wasake (FCCA) is a principal at lnachee.com an ethical thought leadership firm in Uganda.

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