

Snazzy Service

Learn how to wow your customers with snazzy service, no matter your business.

by Kindra Gordon, field editor

Have you ever experienced the kind of service that made your jaw drop? I once heard the story of a couple celebrating their anniversary at a fancy restaurant. Upon arrival, the hostess took their photo. The couple enjoyed their meal, and when they left the restaurant they were presented with a framed photo of the two of them — the image taken when they arrived earlier. That's a wow!

No matter what business you work in — be it a desk job, on the ranch or one on the computer, there are ample opportunities to add a “wow” factor to the work you do. So says business consultant Bryan Williams, who began his career in the luxury hotel industry.

Williams came to learn that most of the hotel's clients already had as many nice things as they wanted. So what they sought while at the hotel wasn't necessarily more things, but superior service.

This put Williams on a quest to study exceptional service and teach others how to deliver

are supposed to be only offering the bare minimum,” he adds. They are offering the service of a robot really.

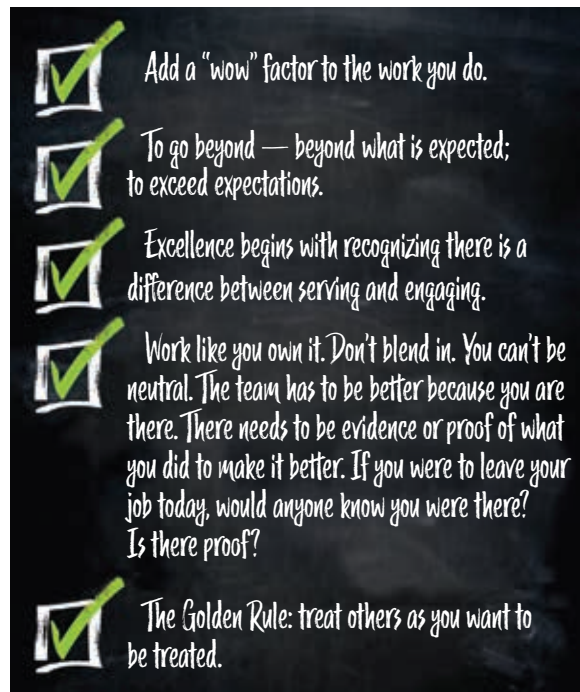
Ultimately, Williams says excellence begins with recognizing there is a difference between serving and engaging. “Your customers do not want to be served, they want to be engaged. Engagement means commitment, a partnership, a future,” he notes.

“Service has little to do with the server; it's about the recipient, and maybe they don't want to be treated the way you would,” he explains.

Thus, he points to the platinum rule, which suggests, “treat others the way they want to be treated.”

To this, Williams says, “It works. But sometimes you give customers what they ask for and they still get upset.”

Case in point, he shares the story of having one of the tires stolen off his car while parked in a large city. He put the donut wheel on and drove to a tire store to get a new one. He told the employee behind the counter his saga and the employee got him a new tire, which is what Williams asked for. But on his way out of the store, a manager stopped and visited with him. As Williams shared his story, the manager asked if he ordered a wheel lock, which prevents wheel theft. Williams said he'd never heard of such a thing. This experience led him to teach employees the “Double



“Excellence” in businesses

Williams starts by recognizing the root word of excellence, which is “excel.” He says, this means “to go beyond — beyond what is expected; to exceed expectations.”

In delivering service, Williams uses the analogy that “a kiosk, computer or robot can meet expectations.” Thus, as he trains employees today, he implores them to consider, “What's an add-on you can offer that is more than what's expected?”

“Employees who only do what they

To be engaging with clients, he advises employees to, “Work like you own it. Don't blend in. You can't be neutral. The team has to be better because you are there. There needs to be evidence or proof of what you did to make it better. If you were to leave your job today, would anyone know you were there? Is there proof?”

As a final tip for striving to deliver excellence, Williams points to a common rule — The Golden Rule of treating others as you would want to be treated.

Platinum Rule,” which suggests anticipating your customer's needs.

“Give the customer more; give them what they don't even know they want or need. Make them feel listened to and cared for,” Williams says. “Excellent service means being an advocate for the person.”

He urges to “Ask yourself, how can I do more than the bare minimum?” He concludes that when you exceed expectations, it should result in that wow factor! **AJ**