Tips for Managers | Ideas from Human Resources

Telephone Etiquette and Customer Service at BYU-Idaho: Your Duties as a Manager

**Quote from President Clark:** “We must raise substantially the quality of every aspect of the experience our students have.” (Inaugural Response, BYU-Idaho, 11 October 2005)

In an effort to help accomplish this objective, President Clark has asked that we look to improve the quality of our “telephone etiquette” and “customer service” skills on campus.

As a supervisor, consider accomplishing this objective by doing the following:

1. **Set an appropriate example for your department by treating the employees that you supervise with kindness, courtesy, and respect.**
   - *Key Quote:* “Employees tend to treat customers the way they are treated by their leaders.” (Stephen Covey)

2. **Set an appropriate example for your department by treating all employees (whether inside or outside of your department) with kindness, courtesy, and respect.**
   - Acknowledge, greet, and graciously serve all BYU-Idaho employees with whom you come into contact.
   - Consider ways that you can better serve the needs of those around you—especially those who rely on you and your department for service.
   - Lead-out in showing a high level of service and respect to students and guests of the university.

3. **Measure, monitor, encourage, and insist on good telephone etiquette and customer service within your own department.**
   - *Key Quote:* “If it’s not important to you, it probably won’t be important to your employees.” (Unknown Author)
   - *Key Quote:* “What gets measured gets done.” (Tom Peters)

**Some Basic Principles to Remember**

1. Interactions with students, parents, visitors, vendors, and co-workers (whether by phone, email, or in-person) should be warm, friendly, courteous, and helpful.
2. Each employee should give “extra-mile” service (i.e. service that is designed to exceed a customer’s expectations).
3. Each incoming phone call (with few exceptions) should be answered by a “live” person (not voice mail or a “calling tree”) who is willing, able, and happy to assist the caller.
   a. Avoid using voice mail and “calling trees,” especially on primary office lines.
   b. All voice mail systems and “calling trees” (where deemed appropriate by line management) should be used efficiently and effectively; and all systems must include an option to talk to a “live” person.
4. Incoming calls to primary office lines need to be answered promptly.
5. When an office assistant is absent, arrangements should be made to answer his/her phone.