



# THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

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## Preparation for Teen Workshop

### 1. SCHEDULING

To accommodate your school and teacher, it is important to schedule the introductory workshop at a time and place convenient to the class or group.

### 2. MEETING WITH THE TEACHER OR ADVISOR

At least a few days before the first workshop, organizers should meet with the teacher or advisor to explain the concepts embodied in the Gold Standard of Customer Relations curriculum.

- a. **Develop a partnership with the teacher/advisor.** Since the Gold Standard is based on partnerships with customers, it is important to establish a partnership with the teacher/advisor so that he or she understands the concepts behind the curriculum.
- b. **Concepts to cover with the teacher/advisor before the first workshop.** The Gold Standard asks participants to think differently about customer service than they may have in the past. Many participants think that customer service is about how the company handles a transaction with the customer, and that quality service involves providing a product to the customer in a clean, friendly environment. While those are important issues, research indicates that the concept of creating a relationship is essential in every part of the business.
- c. **All hands on deck.** Often, participants see the marketing department or the sales department as responsible for quality customer service. In the Gold Standard philosophy, everyone is responsible for creating a relationship with customers and is ultimately responsible for the success of the business. This includes delivery people, janitors, receptionists, and even employees that never directly interact with the customer, such as the bookkeeper.
- d. **Inform teachers/advisors of curriculum content and time needed.** We have found that some teachers/advisors like a copy of the PowerPoint slides while others are comfortable with an outline of what we will cover. Be sure to ask teachers/advisors if there are any specific topics that they want covered in the workshop. Try to work those issues in during the PowerPoint presentation. Requested issues in the past have ranged from a dress code for salespeople to orderliness of the workspace. We encourage you to customize slides so that they are appropriate for the group, perhaps altering some of the art to reflect the specific group.
- e. **After the workshop.** Let teachers/advisors know that this two-hour workshop will not change every participant's behavior. We talk about the power of reinforcement and the necessity of establishing customer relations norms that are rewarded and repeatable. We encourage teachers/advisors to incorporate the customer relations concepts into their teaching. We also encourage teachers/advisors to think of this workshop as something that they might want to repeat annually.



### **3. MAKE THE WORKSHOP YOUR OWN**

Change or rearrange PowerPoint slides that do not fit your delivery style. Go through the script and change wording so it fits you. Add activities to customize the workshop.

- a. **Delivery.** We recommend that two people give the workshop. This is a high-energy program and we have found that two people who work well together are better able to deliver a quality program. Keep your delivery light and fun.

Personal Stories—as you deliver the program, think of your own customer relations experiences. We have provided examples in the script for two of the six keys of customer relations. You do not have to share a personal story for every key, but try to think of at least one or two to share. Try to keep your stories positive and even humorous.

- b. **Material preparation.** All materials are located in the Supplemental Materials section of this curriculum.
  - **Activities:** optional activities are available in the Supplemental Materials section. Suggestions for when to have activities during the presentation are in the Presentation Script. These are only suggestions and the workshop leader should decide whether, and when, to put them in the presentation.
  - **Key definitions:** the cornerstones of the Gold Standard workshop are the six key attributes that are discussed in the presentation. Copy the key definitions and put one on each table. These definitions will be used during the presentation as a small group activity.
  - **Participant note cards:** place these on tables and make them available for participants to use to capture their thoughts during the presentation.
  - **Inspirational quotes:** the atmosphere that we strive for in the Gold Standard of Customer Relations workshop is upbeat and inspiring. Print out several inspirational quotes and scatter them around the room to help achieve the desired atmosphere.
  - **Completion certificates:** given to participants at the end of the program. Ask the teacher/advisor for names so that you can complete the certificates ahead of time.
  - **Evaluations:** essential in determining the effectiveness of a workshop.



#### **4. DAY OF PRESENTATION**

- a. **Room set-up.** This is an important part of the successful delivery of the customer relations curriculum. We have found the most successful room set-up is to use several tables scattered around the room. While round tables are best, we often do not get a choice, and sometimes we do not get a choice about set-up, either. Be flexible! Plan for five or six people per table if the tables will accommodate that many. It doesn't matter where people sit, and many young people are more comfortable sitting with people they know.
- b. **Setting the atmosphere.** We have provided a number of inspirational quotes, and you can find more on the Internet. Perhaps you already have some that you find especially meaningful. Copy them on bright colored paper and place them on each table. Also, copy the definition of the six keys of high-quality customer relations. Put one definition on each table as there is an activity related to the definitions.

Copy the participant note cards and place these on the tables. The note cards are for the participants to make notes and take home.

Place toys on every table. We have found that even teachers/advisors have a good time playing with the toys. The toys are an icebreaker, giving everyone something to talk about. Also, toys keep hands busy if people feel out of place. Most importantly, toys move the energy level up, and provide a change of pace from what people might expect at a workshop. Appropriate toys include small balls, light-up balls, or small fish (especially if you are planning to use the "Fish" DVD or video). Dollar stores and online party favor stores are great (and inexpensive) sources of toys. A large supply of colorful pipe cleaners scattered liberally around on the tables encourages people to be creative. We sometimes put candy on the tables, as well.

Supply pens or pencils and colorful markers for people to write their names on their name tags. We prefer that people use only their first names.

- c. **Presentation visibility.** Make sure everyone can see the screen where you will display the PowerPoint slides and the video (if available). It is your choice if you hand out copies of the PowerPoint presentation. We have found that most teachers/advisors want a copy, so it may be best to provide that with the other handouts.
- d. **Large easel and pad.** Set up an easel and large pad of paper. We use the easel for a warm-up activity, and it also provides a great place to keep track of what people say. We provide teachers/advisors with a Word document with everyone's comments within a few weeks of the workshop.