

Letter from the Chamber Chairman

Where is the summer going? It's hard to believe that August is here and the Fair is just around the corner.

With families taking their vacations and with the many events that are taking place through out Henry County, we have many customers stopping or traveling through the county. Are we doing all we can to show the customer that we do care? I was reading an article on "The Basics of Customer Service" and the one thing that upsets a customer most is an "I don't care attitude". It also said that businesses will lose thousands - even billions of dollars for the large businesses - because customers feel that the organizations don't care about their business enough to make an effort to keep them. It also takes five times more to win over a new customer than keeping an existing customer. Why does this happen? Could it be there was no training or the lack of training? I know most of the Henry County businesses do a very good job with customer service, but we all can make sure we take that extra step. Do we:

* Listen

Do we take the time to really listen to our customer what they are trying to share with you? Use active listen skills such as

- ~Nodding you head
- ~Saying "I hear what you are saying", or "I see what you mean"
- ~Look at the customer
- ~Being patient and don't interrupt the customer before adding your thoughts
- ~Devoting your full attention to listen to the customer

* Respond

How do we respond to the customer? We should respond by

- ~ Using inflection in your voice, not sounding monotone
- ~ Not using "whatever, yeah, right," or "if you say so"

* Check your body language

Is our body language saying "I want to help you"? Are we

- ~ Smiling
- ~ Standing erect, not slouching
- ~ Avoiding leaning on the counter
- ~ Look like you are alive

* Show Empathy

Show the customer that you understand their pain. Make comments like

- ~ "I can understand why you would feel that way"
- ~ "I would be disappointed too if that happened to me"

* Commit to Action

Let the customer know that action will be taken; and then act. One without the other is just a broken promise.

Most customers just want to be listened to. Show them that you understand and that you really care that they are number one. Increased revenues come from happy customers.

"Remember to shop Henry County"

**Chamber Chairman,
Steve Thomas**