

# One Challenge that Will Transform Your Team!

## Cracking the Hospitality Code

### What Everyone Should Know about Customer Service

Customer service. The resident experience. Visitor impressions. Every single day, employees are taking countless actions that are helping to support your organization. Or, insert dramatic music, working against it.

You can have the most exquisite building and topnotch culinary offerings, but NONE of it matters if your team members are unfriendly and rarely willing to be of service.

#### Meet Our Client

We recently checked in with one of our clients, Acts Retirement-Life Communities, who are focused on nurturing a culture of hospitality. Acts asked for our help to enhance the resident experience at one of their campuses in Pennsylvania. The goal? Consider the elder above the tasks that need to be accomplished and go above and beyond in all interactions.

That was not a new concept for this highly successful campus, but all team members needed to be reinvigorated so the bar could continue to be raised on the customer experience!

Aren't we just born with the desire to go above and beyond? How do you encourage the commitment of team members to achieve something that can be considered intrinsic? Believe it or not we started with emphasizing a positive attitude and you won't believe the outcome!

Our work with Actslife highlighted the importance of approaching work with a positive attitude. The opposite would be the sense of dread that all of us have about our work at one point or another. While being optimistic is not always easy...hello Monday mornings...when we work with a positive outlook we have the ability to make the patients and residents our organizations serve a bit happier.

This is especially true for patients and residents with any confusion who are reading our emotions even more so than other people. And when they are happier, magically our team's work becomes a little lighter too. Sort of like the old saying, "If mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!"

Negativity becomes a vicious cycle of team member's being miserable, which feeds resident's negativity, which ultimately leads to team members having a tougher time. Ain't nobody that benefits from that!

#### The Challenge:

Inspired by "A Complaint Free World" the team members from Acts were given a challenge: Have a daily attitude of gratitude and focus on the positive.

Sounds hokey? It sort of is. But it worked.

Here's the details so you can take replicate the program in your own organization:

Drive  
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"The workshop empowered team members to approach their work more positively and to be more open-minded with each other. Outcomes include a renewed sense of why our mission is so important, a greater sense of tolerance and appreciation for one another, and improved teamwork."

Jonathon Grant, Vice President, Mid-Atlantic Region

In this challenge, you are given a bracelet to wear on either wrist. We use the rubbery ones that come in countless colors and that you can imprint with any logo. When you catch yourself complaining, gossiping, or criticizing (yes, we ALL do it at one time or another!) move the bracelet to the other arm and begin again.

*The goal is to not move your bracelet at all!*

Some tips:

1. If you are having an internal debate trying to decide if it is a complaint, gossip or criticism, it probably is! Move your bracelet. Like cheating on a diet, you are only hurting yourself if you break the rules.
2. Thoughts are okay, it's only when you *speak* the negative ideas that you must move your bracelet. You'll find that you have a dramatic decrease in negative thoughts when your words are more positive.
3. If someone is wearing a bracelet and you hear them being negative, you may point out their need to switch the bracelet to the other arm, *but* you must move your bracelet first!
4. Stay with it! It takes months for people to go a few weeks without moving their bracelet.

You will be amazed at the difference this simple challenge can make in you, your team, and ultimately your residents!

### **The Results:**

A year later Acts shared with us the *positive impact* our work with them had— especially on decreasing the amount of negative communication – in the form of calls to their compliance hotline! Their compliance calls regarding fellow employees decreased as low as it could go: to zero!

The "Positivity Pact" was only one component of the training that we did with Acts regarding going beyond task, but it was an incredibly impactful exercise. Other clients that we've used this with have had similar results. The best part is we have found that it not only impacts people at work, but also at home.

One nursing assistant from a different client, based in Connecticut, took on the challenge and a few months later shared that her son had taken her bracelet the day she got it. Along with the bracelet he also took the idea behind it. A middle schooler, he wore his bracelet daily and practiced what his mom shared with him about being positive. She didn't realize the full impact it was having until his teacher called one day to say that he was acting like a different child!

Focusing on positive interactions between team members and with patients/residents can have a powerful impact on personal and organizational goals. Part of the positivity challenge is signing a commitment form that states the rules and your intent. If you'd like to take on this challenge in your organization, you can download the form by clicking [here](#). It's free and there's nothing to lose except complaints and gossip!

*This article was written by team members Denise Boudreau-Scott and Allison Duda.*