

# Making your court the happiest place on earth!

How can the Disney Principles of Magical Customer Service  
be applied in our offices/courts

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## ***Lesson #1: Never Let 'Backstage' Onstage***

### **OR:**

No one wants to see  
Cinderella hanging out  
on the side of the castle  
drinking a Diet Coke and  
smoking a cigarette!

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## **Fun Fact!**

If it weren't for Cinderella, Disneyland and Walt Disney World might never have come into existence. At the time of the film's release, the studio was in financial straits. The production of Cinderella was a big gamble, and if it had bombed the studios would likely have closed. As with all fairy tales though, this story had a happy ending, and the enduring success of Cinderella propelled Disney to new heights and new innovations

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## **Lesson #1: *What does it look like?***

**Do these things happen in customers view at your office/court?**

- Complaints about your Judge/Supervisor/Co-workers
- Gossip about a party the night before
- Snacking or eating breakfast/lunch at your desk
- Talking about personal or home life
- Jokes about other customers

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## **Lesson #1: *What does it feel like?***

### **Have you ever...**

- Been a customer and felt like you were interrupting an employee?
- Had an employee make you feel like their ‘real’ work was their paperwork or phone call and not helping you?
- Walked up to a counter and salespeople just kept talking or just ignored the fact that you were even there?

Those people brought backstage onstage.

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## **Lesson #1: *How can you improve what it looks/feels like in your office?***

### **How can you make sure the *illusion* is that you’re always *onstage* and ready for customers?**

- Keep only present tasks out on desk (*illusion* of an efficient office) (use in-boxes or put excess work in desk drawers)
- Don’t have piles of tickets to be entered where customers can see them (*illusion* of soooo many tickets – You only want my \$\$\$)
- Co-workers gossiping/complaining should not take place in front of customers (*illusion* that their case is NOT going to be kept confidential)

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**Lesson #2: *It's never a stupid question*****OR:**

What time is the 3:00  
parade?

What time does  
midnight mass start?

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**Lesson #2: *What does it look like?***

Is this the Justice of the Peace's office? While standing next to  
the sign:

Do you work here? Said to you at your desk with a nameplate  
and you are working.

**Most silly questions are just people trying to get help.**

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## **Lesson #2: *What does it feel like?***

### **Why do people ask such odd questions?**

- They are nervous, unsure, frustrate or just plain MAD
  - De-escalate, talk calmly, allow some venting reassure them, offer help they need, sympathize with situation
- They do not have a clue how to file a case/answer/plea
  - Make them feel at ease and not “stupid” about their lack of knowledge
- They believe all judges are intimidating/mean/like Judge Judy
  - Unfortunately, this is TRUE – HA!

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## **Lesson #2: *How can you improve what it looks/feels like in your office?***

- Be patient and kind
  - Remember they do not work with this type of thing everyday like you do
- Help as best as you can
  - Offer assistance with information, forms, websites, pamphlets, payment options
- Let them be confused or wrong with dignity
  - Try to imagine yourself in their position

**You can always chuckle about it later “backstage” with your co-workers!**

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### **Lesson #3: *It's the little things that add up***

#### **OR:**

Pick up that piece of  
trash on the ground

And

The WOW factor

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### **Lesson #3: *WOW Factor***

**“A quality or feature that is extremely impressive.”**

- We don't have the resources of often the time to make **huge impressions** on everyone who walks in the door,
- But it's the **small 'wows'** that make the public feel **HEARD** and shower them with friendliness and helpfulness, so they are blow away

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### **Lesson #3: *WOW Factor***

**“A quality or feature that is extremely impressive.”**

- They will tell everyone they know about your office and your awesome customer service.
- Treat every customer the way you want to be treated yourself – **Do NOT** consider their appearance, hair, nails, cleanliness or lack of, etc.

They should **always** walk out the door saying “that wasn’t so bad!”

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### **Lesson #3: *How can you improve what it looks/feels like in your office?***

- What can you do to create these little ‘**WOWS**’?
  - **FOCUS** on the customer in front of you – they are your immediate concern
- Knowledge is **POWER!**
  - Be able to answer the questions you might get accurately. It is okay to find someone else who knows the answer (not weakness – helpful)

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**Lesson #3: *How can you improve what it looks/feels like in your office?***

- Be responsive and in a **timely manner**
  - Return emails and phone calls quickly and accurately

If you notice a customer having an issues – **HELP THEM** – without them having to ask for help!

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**Lesson #4: *Have fun even if you're miserable***

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## **Well, maybe not always 'fun' but don't take it out on the customer**

- Most people that come to our office need something that only our office can provide and is often part of something “negative” that happened to them
  - Traffic ticket, being sued, dangerous dog, etc.
- You may have to give them disappointing news
  - The fine is \$500, you have been evicted, autopsy results

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## **How can you improve the negatives and turn them into positives**

- **Smile, Smile, Smile at the customers**
  - We know we are all overworked and underpaid, but it is not the customers fault
    - As a matter of fact – what they pay helps the county pay for YOUR salary and may actually secure the fact that you still have a job – so technically they are our BOSS!!

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## **How can you improve the negatives and turn them into positives**

- **How do you feel about yourself at the end of the day**
  - It feels much better to go home and share a story of something good you did during the day than to go home and complain about the lousy customer/lazy co-worker
- **Treat your customers/co-workers with R-E-S-P-E-C-T**
  - Remember you are on the SAME TEAM!

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## **Lesson #5: Don't be a robot – be animated!**

### **What do you say over and over?**

- Next.....
- Have a nice day.....
- Can you HOLD.....
  - And not wait for them to answer...elevator music/silence on the phone...seems like forever...and ever...and ever

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## **Lesson #5: Don't be a robot – be animated!**

- Ever had the minister start looking past you to the next person in the processional?
- Ever had a sales clerk walk right past you because of your appearance or because your child is crying and go to a customer that appears to have more money/status/alone?

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## **Some simple improvements**

- Eye contact
- Acknowledge each person...Yes ma'am/sir or by name if known
- Next...thank you for waiting – how may I assist/help you?
- Have a nice day...Nice talking with you –or– Have a GREAT day/Hope day gets better
- Hold on/Please hold...May I place you on a brief hold (so I may finish with the customer before you) (and **wait for response!**)

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**Do you have a particular way you handle something that everyone may benefit from?**

1. Answering the phone/taking message
2. Organizing cases for court that week
3. Handling an irate customer in-person/phone
4. Responding to email
5. Speaking to your judge about an issue w/ them or co-workers
6. Finding an answer to a question you do not know the answer to
7. Assisting/having a customer fill out paperwork
8. Some other task that you are awesome at and want to share

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**Details...Details...Details**

- Being organized and ready for the types of questions you're asked at the window.
  - It's never a good idea to throw a new/any clerk into direct customer service until trained and comfortable with duties – shadow
  - If co-worker is having a really bad day – switch duties/take over counter for a bit
  - Give yourself a break too – our jobs are NOT easy-peezy

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## **Details...Details...Details**

- Having the court prepared for the day/week docket – what cases are coming up, what information does the judge need
  - Appearing in court is sometimes scary and important to the parties seeking justice – imagine how they feel if the judge is confused about what case they are hearing, or fumbling through papers looking for the petition, service or motions because the file is not in order ?

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## **“Some” duties of a Court Clerk - Part 1**

- Entry of cases and the collection of court fees and fines
- Reply to inquiries from the general public, judges, court officials, and lawyers
- Prepare dockets of cases to be called by the court
- Maintain records of court appearances and proceedings
- Ensure smooth and organized proceedings in the courtroom by making sure that all materials required are put in place before each hearing

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## **“Some” duties of a Court Clerk - Part 2**

- Be knowledgeable of all types of cases that can be filed in your court/others
- Ensure that the courtroom and surrounding environment are kept clean and tidy all the time
- Train and coordinate the activities of support staff and deputy clerks
- Maintain good relationship with judges, court officials and other law enforcement agents

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## **Lesson #5: *Choose your “WORDS” wisely***

### **OR:**

The public doesn't know the laws, legal words, types of cases and forms we use everyday

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And He said – Come from a land of “**Pro-se**”  
And She said – Do ya “speaka my **language**”

- What are some words, phrases, or legal lingo we should “avoid” when speaking with the public?
- And what words should we replace them with?

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### **Lesson #7: “That’s not my job”**

- I need to know how to pay my ticket – “I’m a civil clerk, I don’t do that.”
  - You need to react to it like that IS apart of your job. - “Let me get you to Suzi who handles most of our traffic cases”
- The ability to answer people’s questions is a “big part” of the customer feeling satisfied

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## **Lesson #7: “That’s not my job”**

- Turn “I don’t know” into “let me see if I can find an answer for you”

Ownership & pride in what you do reflects what office does as whole

“TEAMWORK”

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## **Why don’t we go to “Infinity and Beyond”?**

What causes the it’s not my job attitude?

- You are overworked already
- Lazy co-worker
- Job responsibilities are unclear
- Only here for a paycheck

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## Lesson #7

Actors dressed as Disney characters are never allowed to say “I don’t know” to guests.

- Disney never wants people to feel as though they need to wander looking for information. If they pose a question to, say, a “Disney Princess”, the actor is expected to check with other employees or areas of the park to find the answer quickly.
- If Elsa doesn't know where the nearest restroom is, she's tasked with finding out before their kid's bladder gives out.

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## Lessons we learned

1. Never let “**backstage**” onstage
2. No “**stupid**” questions
3. Little things – “**WOW**” factor
4. Have **FUN** – Customer is #1
5. Don’t be a robot – Be **animated**
6. Choose your **words** wisely
7. It **IS** your job

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## **Key points to take away**

- Always remember who you are. You're there to help!
- Are things easy to find (in office and/or online)?
- Can any processes be simplified – forms, online, resources?
- What physical improvements can be made?
  - (layout or signage, language we use, dress code)
- How do they feel when they walk away from our office?
- Even small things can WOW someone's opinion of working with your office.

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## **Why all this matters so much**

We represent our **Judges**, our **Counties**, and the **State of Texas**

**We are “public servants” and...**

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Never forget – You are **STRONG** – after all  
you are a **SUPER CLERK!**