

Harvey and the big cheese

Having a high service mindset will make you a winner whether you're selling eco-tourism or gourmet cheese, says **Patrick Lumbroso**.

Harvey is a lucky man. He lives in paradise. He has a great family and a business that is the envy of his entire community. The one thing I really like about Harvey is that we share a common philosophy. Harvey will tell you that the things that we do for free pay us the most, and that *having a high service mindset* helps make him one of the most successful people in his town of Monkey Mia.

Harvey runs an eco-tourist sailboat business on the Western Australian coast, but he doesn't see himself as a tourist guide. He is an entertainer and his boat, *The Shotover*, is his stage. He is passionate about the environment and he gladly shares with anyone willing to hear his inspirational insights into the wonders of nature.

Harvey is dedicated to the principles of constant and never-ending improvement. When he's not on the boat, he is attending presentations by biologists into the habits and behaviour of the wildlife in the area. By doing so, he improves his chances of being able to spot wildlife in the vast marine areas that *The Shotover* covers. He never cheats tourists on time spent on the boat and guarantees that if they don't love the Shotover experience, the cruise is free. Is it any wonder that his business is a success?

Understanding the nature of service

Having a high service mindset within your business results in client longevity and referrals. It costs you nothing, but brings with it plenty. Doing the 'little extra things' well and with care will give your business a competitive edge that other businesses will be too sleepy to follow.

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By *actively assist*, I am suggesting that the staff need to be mentally *present*. They need to constantly identify the immediate needs and consequences for a client and act with intent to help clients above and beyond the call of duty.

Taking initiative and personal responsibility cost nothing, but they show our clients that we care and that it makes good business sense to deal with our firm. This may include meeting with clients outside normal working hours or taking extra time to help explain complex issues in simple, easy-to-follow ways.

Cheese plus

Take, for example, a wonderful delicatessen that I visited recently. As I stood at the counter waiting my turn, a well-versed attendant asked a customer what she planned to do with the cheese she had just ordered. The customer replied that she wasn't sure. It was at this moment that the attendant sprang into action. With what one can only describe



as the passion and intensity of a lover's first embrace, he began to describe the most magnificent strawberries (on sale at a fruit shop two doors down) that would perfectly complement the delicate offerings of this exceptional *fromage*.

The attendant then leapt from behind the counter, grabbed several other accompaniments and promised the client that this would be the singularly greatest culinary moment of her life. If it wasn't, he added, she could bring everything back and she would receive a full refund.

Too good to be true, you may say, but hear me, this guy really loves his food and will gladly give of himself in order to inspire the same in his clientele. And he does this – the show, the passion, the excitement – all for no extra charge. Is it any wonder his deli does so well? I think he's been speaking to Harvey... ●



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