



ODA/Management Review Growing

A NOTE FROM JOEL

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Recent newsletters have focused on tools to build our business by learning to gather information from our customers. We've talked about gathering feedback and using listening posts to collect input.

These business tools rely on effective communication skills. How many times have you been at a store and at check out the cashier says "Have a great day!" or a little better: "Thanks for shopping with us, hope to see you again."

There is nothing wrong with friendly behavior, and in some environments that is right.

But both of these approaches tend to dismiss the shopper to keep the line moving. And certainly stores should pay attention to their cashier line, efficiency of flow is a very important customer service issue.

Many firms have had success with customer feedback postcards, mailers, email and phone surveys and questionnaires.

But I am looking for more than that, I am looking for conversations between your employees, the listening posts I have mentioned in previous newsletters, and your customers.

Interactions where you ask the right kind of questions to gather significant feedback.

These questions are not designed to dismiss the customer and keep

the line moving. They are questions which lead to building relationships and learning about the customer's needs, wants and desires.

They are the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How questions. They are the questions that help us learn how well we are really doing in the Marketplace. And they give us a path for continuous improvement.

Next time we'll talk about how to develop this management skill in your team.

Regards,

Joel



Joel McFadden
484.252.4490



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