Delivering Customer Satisfaction, Part II

By Norb Slowikowski

This article defines what the foreman can do on the job site to create a high level of customer satisfaction with the general contractor’s superintendent.

The foreman needs to adopt the principles of the “R-A-T-E-R Concept” and deliver that concept through day-to-day actions.

**R = Reliability**
- Consistency of action. Perform within authorized boundaries.
- Meet the schedule and deliver the scope.
- Follow through and do what you say you will do.
- Be visible and accessible.
- Lead the crew and maintain work flow.
- Demonstrate personal accountability.
- Satisfy general contractor’s needs and expectations in a positive, effective manner.

**A = Assurance**
- Become the expert in your job.
- Understand and help the general contractor’s superintendent to meet his goals.
- Know the strengths of your crew.
- Display a service attitude. Show you care about the total job.
- Be capable and confident in what you do.
- Meet the quality standard.
- Do everything you can to keep the work in sequence.
- Have a track record of achieving positive results.
- Provide ongoing planning and organizing.

**T = Tangible Results**
- Meet the schedule and time frames for each phase.
- Deliver quality work on time with sound safety practices in a positive work climate.
- Forecast needs-then plan for and deliver them.
- Keep striving for perfection.
- Only promise what you can deliver. Specify exactly how you will get there, then do it!

**E = Empathy**
- Clearly understand the general contractor’s position. Have a big picture focus.
- Display concern for the GC’s superintendent’s problems.
- Keep ongoing contact with the GC’s superintendent. Let him know you are there to provide service.
- Speak up at weekly job site progress meetings. When you have suggested solutions to problems, be willing to execute the solution.
- Be respectful of the GC’s superintendent.
- Understand before you react.

**R = Responsiveness**
- Respond to and resolve problems quickly-don’t procrastinate. Do not put critical issues on the back burner.
- Display a sense of urgency.
- Adapt to changing situations.
- Get the GC out of a jam when you can.
- Always have a target date for getting something done. Start right away.

These are the keys to maximizing customer satisfaction. Before you implement these keys, take some time to answer the following questions, and then develop your action plan for delivering a high level of customer satisfaction.

- What do your customers really want from you?
- Do you have the necessary resources (expertise, people, equipment, ideas, information) to give your customers what they really want?
- Customers buy value. Do you know what your customers value?
- Do you know what quality is in the eyes of the customer?
- What obstacles prevent you from delivering a high level of customer satisfaction?

**About the Author**
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