



Customer Service Notes for

Adopting Best Service Practices from Other Industries

“Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery”

As busy as WIC offices are these days, it can be difficult to maintain an ongoing culture of stellar service to participants. Busy caseloads and challenging participants are just two of the factors impacting service.

Consider borrowing best practices from other industries and implementing them as you work with participants.

For example, all of the Disney parks maintain the customer-friendly culture introduced by Walt Disney. The company believes that everything in its parks needs to emphasize outstanding service. Consider whether your WIC office is organized, restrooms are clean, and brochures are neatly displayed.

Nordstrom’s stores have long been lauded for their service. Associates are pleasant and helpful to customers. Be sure that all WIC staff are pleasant, helpful, and communicate in a positive way with participants.

The high-end Ritz-Carlton Hotels are so focused on service, that companies in other industries attend customer service training programs offered by the hotel’s Leadership Center. Be mindful of how you can treat your WIC participants like guests – from smiling to pronouncing their name correctly, to using positive non-verbal communication.

At many telephone companies, staff who are taking calls from customers are trained to smile when they pick up the phone. Some of these organizations even have mirrors next to the phones that serve as reminders to smile, since customers can “hear” the smile. Ensure that all WIC staff demonstrate proper phone etiquette – from the greeting to handling the call.

Also be mindful of your own experience as a customer, both in person and over the phone. If you like a particular technique used by a provider, think about how you can implement it when working with WIC participants.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Is your office open to adopting customer service practices from other industries that will enhance your participants’ experiences?
2. As a customer, are you on the lookout for techniques you can adopt when working with participants?

