

Customer Service for Social Change: *A New Model for Customer Engagement*



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Austin, Texas

In Our Time Today...

- Understanding Social Change
- Creating a Customer Engagement Culture
 - Supporting and Empowering Staff
 - Sharing the Responsibility for Customer Service
 - Creating a Welcoming Space
 - Getting the Right People in the Right Seats
- Tips for Customer-Facing Staff
- Customer Service Role Models
- Q&A

What Do These Visions Have in Common?

The majority of people seeking a pet go to a shelter first.

All pets are spayed/neutered, and vaccinated.

No dogs live on chains.

No pet is ever surrendered except as a last resort.

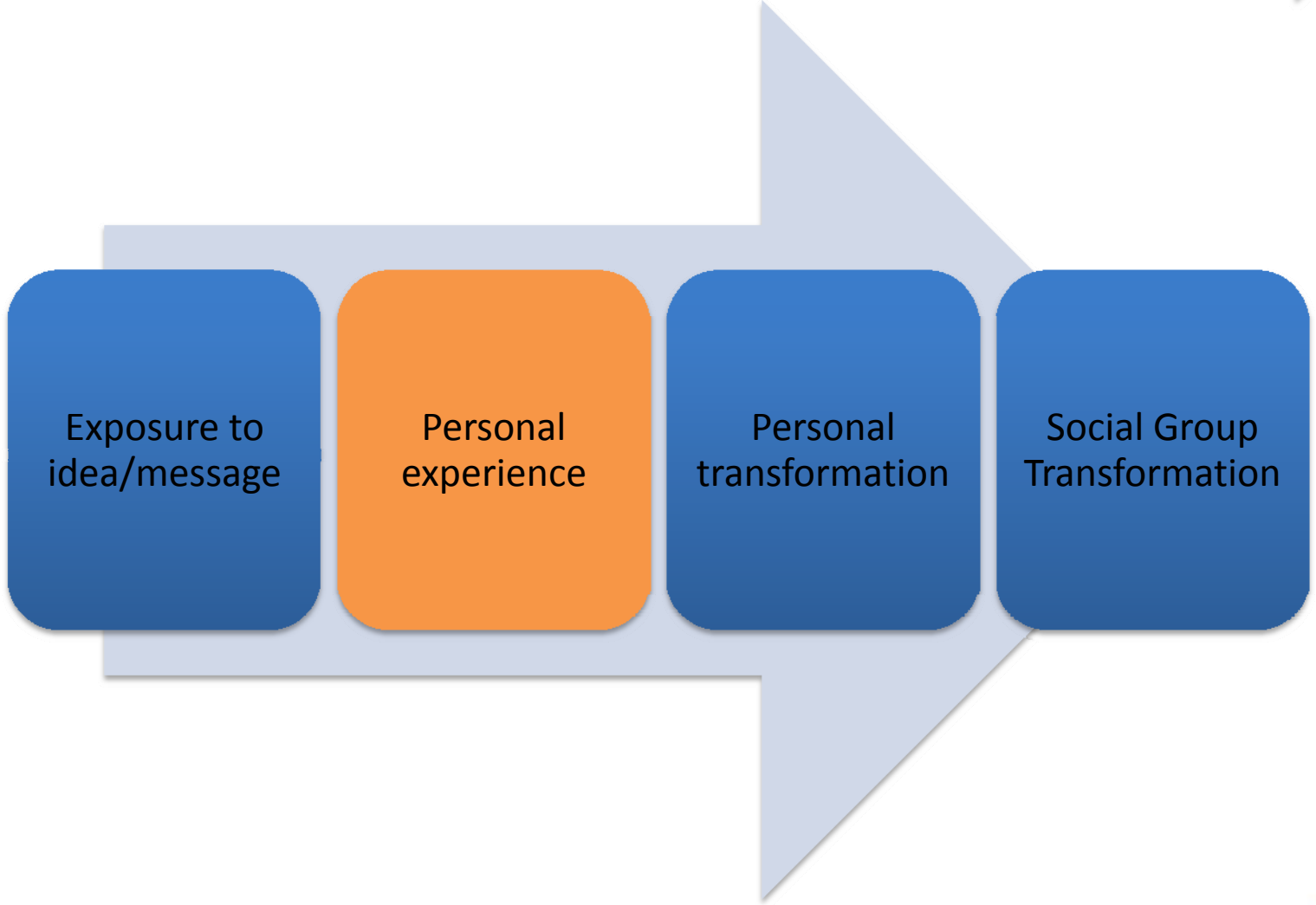
Social Change is...

A significant and sustained transformation of societal behavior patterns and cultural norms over a period of time.

HOW SOCIAL CHANGE HAPPENS



Exposure to
idea/message



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graph LR; A[Exposure to idea/message] --> B[Personal experience]; B --> C[Personal transformation]; C --> D[Social Group Transformation];
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Personal
experience

Personal
transformation

Social Group
Transformation

How Can We Create Social Change?



By creating
**TRANSFORMATIVE
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES**
for the people who visit
our shelters, clinics, and
events.

What Transforms Us?

New Information

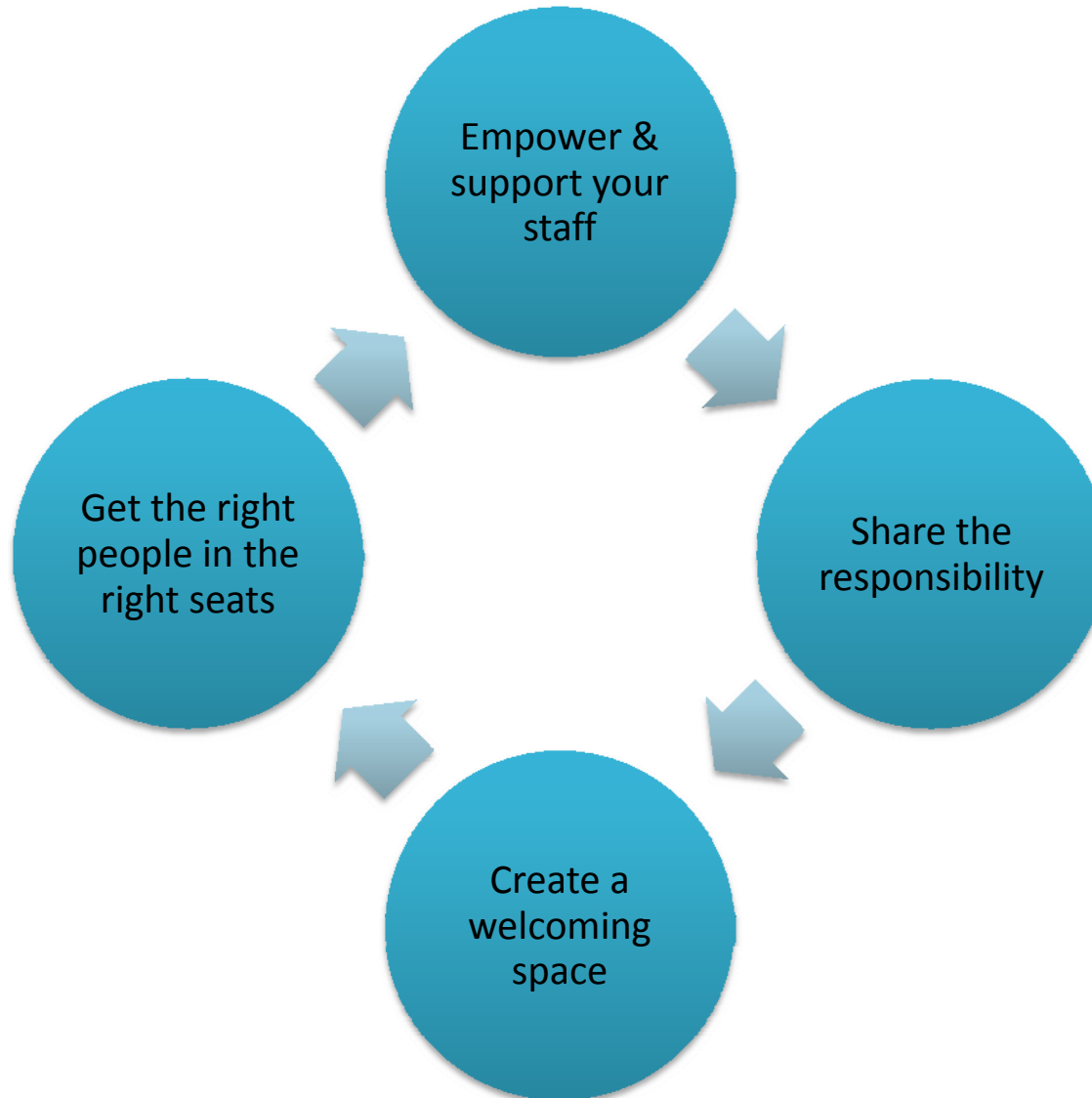
Presented by a trustworthy source

In a non-threatening way

That resonates emotionally

And is reinforced through a direct, positive, personal experience

A Culture of Customer Engagement





**KEEP CALM
AND
RESCUE ON**

Princeton Study on the Impact of Time Stress on Helping Behaviors

40% Stopped to Help the Victim Overall

63% of those not in a hurry stopped to help

45% in a medium hurry stopped to help

Only 10% in a very hurried state stopped to help

Supporting Customer Care Staff

- Be prepared to meet the needs of staff who are highly empathic towards people
- Customer care staff need to feel management cares as much as they do about people, and meeting the needs of clients
- Consciously eliminate negative language about people/clients from your organization's vocabulary
 - Examples?

Supporting Customer Care Staff

- Staff who serve others need to be cared for and engaged
- You can utilize the Gallup Q12 Resource to assess staff engagement
- Create visible, regular opportunities to recognize outstanding customer service
 - Internal Newsletters
 - Staff Meetings
 - Call Outs

Empower Your Staff

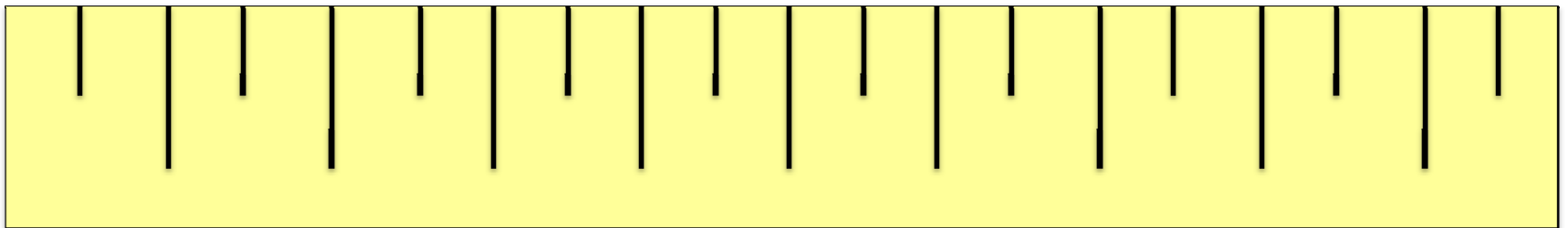
- Determine what all staff, vs. managers can do to ensure great service and resolve customer concerns ahead of time.
- Err on the side of empowering as many staff as possible.
- Think about permissions to:
 - Offer a refund?
 - Move someone up in line?
 - Offer free product?
 - Provide a discount on services?
 - Give a coupon for a future visit?
 - Send an email or note of apology?
 - Others?

Share the Responsibility: Adopt New Rules for Everyone



The 10 – 4 Rule

- If another human being is within 10 feet of you, you must make eye contact with him or her and smile
- If another human being is within 4 feet of you, you must make eye contact, smile, and verbally acknowledge him or her



Responding to a Complaint

All staff follow the same formula, every time:

1. Take the time to fully understand, and then acknowledge the complaint.
2. Apologize genuinely and sincerely. It doesn't matter what the problem is – we are always sorry if someone has had a bad experience with us.
3. Do whatever you can to solve the problem for them yourself, immediately
4. Thank them for sharing the complaint.

Create a Welcoming Space



Space Checklist

- ✓ Remove physical barriers between customer service staff and customers.
- ✓ Use signs minimally and well. Don't use signs as a way to avoid talking to customers!
- ✓ Keep the space uncluttered and exceptionally clean.
- ✓ Make sure the layout of your space is intuitive – it should be easy to know where to go.
- ✓ Make sure you have enough chairs and human comforts in your waiting area.

Getting the Right People on the Bus... Then in the Right Seats



Customer-Facing Roles

- Any role that deals with stakeholders needs to be outstanding at creating transformative personal experiences for people.
- Which roles are most important in your organization?
 - Shelter Intake
 - Front Desk
 - Adoption Counselors
 - Others?

Who's Right for the Job?

- What you want:
 - Genuine interest, and curiosity about other people
 - Happy people who get energized by being around other people
 - Highly empathic and compassionate people
- How to find them:
 - Watch for people-oriented behaviors
 - Ask this question: “Tell me about a time you broke the rules for a customer.”

Once you have them... Train them!

Customer Service Tips



Checklist for Personal Interactions

- ✓ Immediate non-verbal acknowledgement
- ✓ Quick verbal acknowledgement
- ✓ A personal introduction
- ✓ Be curious: Seek out their stories
- ✓ Build empathy: Share emotions
- ✓ Offer an act of service or hospitality

Let Go of “Educating” People and Embrace the Power of Stories



Remember What Transforms Us?

New Information

Presented by a trustworthy source

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Stories Are Transformative

- Storytelling is our most primal, ancient form of sharing information. We're wired for stories
- Stories build empathy between the teller and the listener
- Stories make the brains of the teller and listener synchronize. Our brains literally "sync up"

Remember Where You're Going



Customer Service Role Models

- Zingerman's Deli www.zingtrain.com
- Zappos www.zapposinsights.com
- The Container Store <http://standfor.containerstore.com>
- Southwest Airlines
<http://www.southwest.com/html/about-southwest/careers/culture.html>

Questions?

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Upcoming ASPCApro Webinars

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Transferring Animals Out 3/27

Foster to Surrender 3/28

How to Increase Lives Saved – Advice from a Big Government Agency
4/10

Hiring, Firing and Supporting Your Staff 4/30

The True Cost and Value of Pet Adoptions 5/02

A Road Map to New Hire Orientation 5/14