**[EZ Speech Writers No. 14923]**

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Remarks by Vito DePadova on the occasion his remarks before a meeting of CVS executives and managers [time & place].

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Good [morning/afternoon] ladies and gentlemen . . .

i’d like to address my comments today to the question of how cvs, as a company, might wish address the problem of improving our mce scores in the pharmacy department. And i’m sure i don’t have to tell you the crucial significance of these scores for one of our most profitable and visible area of our operations. And i’m also reasonably sure that you all realize that the single most important factor in raising our pharmacies’ mce scores is the people who work there. from our licensed pharmacists, to our pharm techs, to the cashiers who ring up the orders, everyone in the back of the store can be an mce “hero.”

Now, there are two secrets to excelling at any service business, and the first ONE is . . .

***never be satisfied with satisfied customers!***

THAT’S RIGHT: WE SHOULD *NEVER* BE SATISFIED WITH SATISFIED CUSTOMERS HERE AT CVS, AND I MEAN *NEVER*. NOW DON’T GET ME WRONG. SATISFIED CUSTOMERS ARE GREAT, AND EVERY BUSINESS NEEDS ‘EM JUST TO ***STAY*** IN BUSINESS. BUT “SATISFIED CUSTOMERS” DON’T GROW A BUSINESS. CUSTOMERS WHO ARE MERELY SATISFIED DON’T GO AROUND SHOUTING YOUR PRAISES FROM THE ROOFTOPS (OR ROUND UP AN AUDIENCE TO LISTEN!). SATISFIED CUSTOMERS DON’T KEEP COMING BACK AS REGULARLY AS THEY USED TO ONCE THAT NEW RITE AID GOES UP AROUND THE CORNER. SATISFIED CUSTOMERS DON’T DO ANY OF THESE THINGS.

NO. THE ONLY KINDS OF CUSTOMERS WHO ENGAGE IN THESE KINDS OF BUSINESS-BUILDING ACTIVITIES ARE ***ENTHUSIASTIC*** CUSTOMERS.

LET ME ILLUSTRATE THE DIFFERENCE:

TAKE A WOMAN WHO WALKS INTO A GROCERY STORE AND PAYS FOR TWO POUNDS OF POTATOES. SHE’S A HAPPY LADY AND LEAVES A SATISFIED CUSTOMER, BECAUSE SHE GOT EXACTLY WHAT SHE PAID FOR. NOW LET’S SAY THAT SAME LADY GETS BACK HOME AND ONLY THEN DISCOVERS THAT THE GROCER’S GIVEN HER ***THREE*** POUNDS OF POTATOES INSTEAD OF TWO! WHETHER BY ACCIDENT OR DESIGN THIS LADY GOT MORE THAN SHE PAID FOR, AND FOR THAT REASON, SHE’S BECOME ONE HELLUVA [HECKOFA] ***ENTHUSIASTIC*** CUSTOMER! SHE’S REACHED THE HIGHEST RUNG ON THE LADDER OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION. AND THIS IS WHERE WE WANT AND NEED *ALL* OF OUR PHARMACY CUSTOMERS TO BE. THE QUESTION IS: HOW DO WE GET THERE?

WELL, THE ANSWER’S EMBEDDED IN THAT TALE OF THE LADY AND HER POTATOES, FOR THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL, EFFECTIVE, AND TRANSFORMATIONAL THING THAT ***ANY*** BUSINESS CAN DO TO TURN ITS SATISFIED CUSTOMERS INTO ENTHUSIASTIC CUSTOMERS IS TO GIVE THEM . . . ***SOMETHING EXTRA!*** . . . SOMETHING MORE THAN THEY PAID FOR . . . SOMETHING BEYOND WHAT THEY EXPECTED.

THAT’S IT. THAT’S THE WHOLE SECRET. IF A CVS PHARMACY WANTS TO MOVE ITS CUSTOMERS UP THE RUNGS OF THE LADDER OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TO A STATE OF ABSOLUTE *ENTHUSIASM*, THEN ALL IT’S GOT TO DO IS FIGURE OUT A WAY TO GIVE ITS CUSTOMERS “SOMETHING EXTRA” AT EACH AN EVERY VISIT, ON EACH AND EVERY PHONE CALL.

NOW YOU MIGHT THINK THAT THIS “SOMETHING EXTRA” BUSINESS IS A LOT EASIER SAID THAN DONE IN THE CONTEXT OF A MEDICAL DISPENSARY. AFTER ALL, WE CAN’T GO SLIPPING AN EXTRA HALF DOZEN VIAGRAS INTO EVERY ORDER WE FILL. AND OF COURSE, THERE’S NOT MUCH AN INDIVIDUAL PHARMACY CAN DO ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT’S LAYOUT, PRODUCT PRICING, SPECIALS, FREEBIES, AND THE LIKE, SINCE MOST OF THESE THINGS ARE DETERMINED BY CORPORATE.

SO WHAT’S LEFT? WHAT *ARE* OUR OPTIONS FOR GIVING OUR PHARMACY CUSTOMERS “SOMETHING EXTRA?”

THE ANSWER IS, VERY SIMPLY: OUR PEOPLE. I DON’T HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT PEOPLE ARE THE HEART AND SOUL OF *EVERY* SERVICE BUSINESS. AND ITS OUR EMPLOYEES, OUR PEOPLE, WHO ARE THE ONES WHO MUST PROVIDE THAT SOMETHING EXTRA FOR US.

SOMETIMES, IT’S JUST REMEMBERING TO SMILE AT EACH AND EVERY CUSTOMER — WARMLY, DIRECTLY, AND SINCERELY — NO MATTER HOW SLAMMED WE MIGHT BE WITH ORDERS. SOMETIMES IT’S JUST A HEARTFELT EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT THE CUSTOMER WILL “BE WELL SOON,” OR “I HOPE EVERYTHING TURNS OUT OKAY,” OR “I’M SURE YOU [YOUR SON/DAUGHTER/SPOUSE, ETC.] WILL BE BETTER SOON” — ANY OR ALL OF WHICH ARE INFINITELY BETTER THAN THE TRITE, TEPID, AND USUALLY TOTALLY INSINCERE, “HAVE A NICE DAY.”

AND ALWAYS, IT’S JUST BEING OPEN AND FRIENDLY AND ***THERE*** FOR EACH CUSTOMER WE DEAL WITH. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THE ONLY “SOMETHING EXTRA” OUR PHARMACY WORKERS HAVE TO GIVE IS THEMSELVES — IN THE WAY THEY TREAT EACH CUSTOMERS AND THE WAY THEY TREAT EACH OTHER. ***THIS*** IS WHERE OUR FUTURE TRAINING PROGRAMS SHOULD AND MUST BE INTENTLY FOCUSED: ON HELPING EVERY PUBLIC-FACING EMPLOYEE LEARN HOW TO PERFECT THE ROLE OF GIVING “SOMETHING EXTRA” OF HIM OR HERSELF THROUGH HIS OR HER VOICE, BODY LANGUAGE, AND PERSONALITY.

NOW I SAID EARLIER THAT THERE WERE *TWO* KEY SECRETS — TWO KEY REALITIES — TO ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN A SERVICE BUSINESS. THE FIRST IS TO NEVER BE SATISFIED WITH SATISFIED CUSTOMERS. AND THE SECOND IS TO ACCEPT THE INESCAPABLE AND TIME-TESTED TRUTH THAT:

***NOTHING GOOD REMAINS GOOD UNLESS***

***IT’S CONSTANTLY BEING IMPROVED!***

WHY HAS THIS BEEN A TRUISM OF BUSINESS EVER SINCE THE FIRST CAVEMEN SWAPPED SPEARS FOR HIDES?

BECAUSE THINGS CHANGE. TECHNOLOGY CHANGES. THE COMPETITION CHANGES. NEW PRODUCTS ARE CONSTANTLY REPLACING OLDER ONES. REGULATIONS CHANGE, THE WORKFORCE CHANGES, A STORE’S LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS CHANGE, AND SO ON. POLICY AND PROCEDURES THAT WORKED FINE 10 YEARS AGO OR EVEN 5 YEARS AGO, MAY NOT BE WORKING QUITE SO WELL TODAY. BUSINESS MODELS THAT WERE ONCE “STATE OF THE ART” AT THE DAWN OF THIS CENTURIES ARE EVEN NOW DEAD OR DYING. INDEED, AS THE PHILOSOPHER ONCE SAID, THE ONLY CONSTANT IN THE UNIVERSE IS CHANGE ITSELF. AND FOR ANY BUSINESS THAT DOESN’T KEEP UP WITH THE EVER-CHANGING PROFILE OF ITS MARKETPLACE, CHANGE CAN BE A KILLER.

THIS IS WHY WE MUST, ACROSS THE BOARD, AND CERTAINLY IN OUR PHARMACY DEPARTMENTS, IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM OF CONTINUOUS-IMPROVEMENT TRAINING. WE MUST IMPLEMENT A PROCESS THAT WILL NOT ONLY HELP EVERY CVS EMPLOYEE TO UNDERSTAND THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, BUT WILL ACTIVELY ENCOURAGE — AND EVEN INCENTIVIZE — OUR EMPLOYEES TO THINK UP AND PASS ALONG EVEN THE TINIEST IDEAS FOR WAYS IN WHICH WE COULD IMPROVE THE SERVICES WE DELIVER TO THE PUBLIC.

SO I SAY TO ANY CVS PHARMACY THAT NEEDS TO BOOST ITS MCE SCORES, AND KEEP ‘EM THERE, LOOK TO YOUR PEOPLE. IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, IT’S YOUR EMPLOYEES WHO’RE KEEPING THOSE SCORES DOWN, AND ITS YOUR PEOPLE WHO — WITH CORPORATE SUPPORT AND IN-STORE LEADERSHIP — WILL HAVE TO TURN THINGS AROUND.

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**SUGGESTIONS FOR SPEAKER/PRESENTERS**

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1. ***Preparation.*** There are only five rules for presenting an effective speech, and the first three of them are: ***Rehearse, Rehearse,*** and ***Rehearse!*** Unless you really feel you need to, you don’t have to memorize your whole script, word for word. But your eyes (and, more importantly, your “inner ear”) should see/hear the words of your script ***at least five times*** before you actually give the speech. And you should try to perform *at least one or two* of your rehearsal “read-throughs” for a live audience (family, friends, work colleagues, neighbors, etc.), so that you can actually hear yourself giving your talk out loud. You’ll be absolutely *amazed* at how this “Five-Time Rule” will totally prepare you to deliver your remarks easily, fluidly, and comfortably.

4. ***Personalization.*** The one thing EZ Speech Writers *can’t* put into your speech is your own heart and soul. Your script has certain sections highlighted in yellow where you’ll need to fill in certain specifics, like names, dates, or places, and so on; and some of the highlighted sections ask you to make choices about a piece of content or the form of its expression. We’ve left these items “blank” because we didn’t have enough information on your Order Form to fill them in ourselves. But however well your script might otherwise have captured the spirit of the moment: The feeling, the sincerity, the emotion . . . in short, the ***heart and soul*** of this speech . . . must come from you.

5. ***Presentation.*** Except if your speech is political or hortatory in purpose, don’t let yourself think of it as “giving a speech” or “delivering remarks,” or anything formalistic like that at all. Just think of it, literally, as ***having a conversation*** with your friends or colleagues, at home in your living room or kitchen, in the company cafeteria, wherever. Just think of it as “talkin’,” not “speechifying!” (This comes naturally, incidentally, if you apply the “Five-Time Rule” before each and every speech you give, and this applies equally to formal, academic, scientific, and technical speeches as well.)

But one final word of caution on the topic of *Presentation*. There are two types of speakers in the world. There are fast speakers and there are slow speakers. The southern United States, for example, is known for the slow, laconic, almost “lazy” tempo of its version of English speech (which, down there, averages between 95 and 125 words per minute). On the other hand, first-time visitors to New York City are often flummoxed by the 140-165 wpm tempo at which that City’s natives speak naturally, every day, even when they‘re relaxing at Starbuck’s. The point is, slow speakers (wherever they’re from) tend to be slow listeners, too. And whereas fast listeners can put up with a slow speaker, slow listeners are a very bad audience for a fast speaker.

So the bottom line is: ***Don’t rush***. If you’re not used to speaking in public — and especially if this is your first time doing it — you’ll probably have a few jitters right before your presentation, just like 80% of *all* Americans would! But don’t let these jitters rush you through your talk “just to get it over with.” If you’ve followed the “Five-Time Rule,” then you’ve got the words down pretty well by this time. And if during practice you set your speaking pace at right around 125 words per minute, you’ll come across just fine with all audiences!

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