

Foodservice Coaching Group™

The Win-Win Coaches!

Helping Accomplished Leaders Achieve Extraordinary Results!

How One Person Can Create Exceptional Customer Service... and a Profitable Company

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When a foodservice company gets into trouble, investors bring in outside help. John Walsh is a CEO who is often brought in to "turnaround" troubled companies who are drowning in employee issues, under performing financially, and poor customer service. He is very good at his work, one of the best.

What's amazing is that any foodservice leader, at any level, can do what he does...and they usually don't.

We had the pleasure of meeting John at a conference, and watched him in action. When we boarded a tour bus, John paused for a moment next to the driver. After a few words, he sat down and started talking to us...well, actually, he asked questions and we talked. By the end of the ride, everyone, including the driver, felt included and important.

This pattern was repeated in the restaurant. John worked his magic, resulting in excellent service. It was obvious that other servers were alerted to us, because everyone was attentive.

The hotel driver was waiting for us when we left to take us back to the hotel. He verified that we had a wonderful experience, and checked to make sure we didn't want to go elsewhere before taking us back...obviously a touch of extra effort.

The desk clerk addressed John by name, and other employees hovered nearby, looking for ways to take care of us.

So, who IS this guy? A rock star? Is he as rich as Bill Gates? Does he tip heavily? No.

John Walsh, although he is successful CEO, is very low-keyed and unassuming. However, John has mastered the Win-Win Leadership principles that we have been talking about so passionately, and especially the Win-Win Communication principles. He uses them every moment of every day.

Let's look at how he instantly connected with the hotel and restaurant employees.

1. He looks each person in the eyes, and asks their (first) name. He then says, "It's a pleasure to meet you!" while shaking their hand and smiling.
2. He'll continue with a gentle question and a positive comment. He'll spend a little more time chatting with the individual, building a connection. The difference is that John doesn't talk about himself. He's asking positive questions, probing the importance of the other person.
3. The energy around him is powerful. You feel his warmth and genuine interest. Later, he explained this that he is thinking "I like you" and also "I **am** like you" as he meets each person. John says, "I realize that people who are doing a process, e.g. serving, driving, cleaning rooms, are important so I recognize them and their vital role in customer service. This inspires them in rising to the top of their performance capability!"

It is obvious, in the way he creates a connection, he is thinking about each individual he meets in that moment. There are no other worries, concerns, or thoughts in his mind...his entire focus is the person in front of him.

Here's the rest of the story. John is often called in to turn around companies in trouble. He tells one story about investors who thought the company had six months to survive...and John told them after three days in the facility, that they had six days to 20 days at most.

John doesn't come in and "clean house," cutting people and costs. Instead, John comes in and talks to the employees, sharing information with employees and stakeholders – yes, you guessed it - people are smart and rumors are going around so let's be open and transparent - using the same "magic" we discussed. The results are astounding.

Employees are motivated and engaged. Employees and stakeholders want to be part of a winning team. They have creative ideas to cut costs. Service is improved dramatically, and results soar - like quality, cash flow and sales. And it all starts with the connection with each individual, and the principles and values that shape John's life and his actions.

The best news is you, too, can tap this magic. Just for today, for each person you talk to, clear your mind of everything except this individual – help each person to recognize the role they play is important. Put your entire focus on that person ***without talking about yourself***. Check to see if the person's energy level goes up...and let us know what happens.

Foodservice Coaching Group. is an executive coaching company that helps successful foodservice executives create a "Win-Win Culture" that inspires employees to produce exceptional customer service.

For more information on how The Coaches can help you with transformational change management within your company, please contact Kathy and David at 763-241-8010, or by E-mail at coaches@foodservicecoaching.com.