



# **PINE RIDGE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SERIES**

### **MODULE II: CUSTOMER SERVICE BASICS**



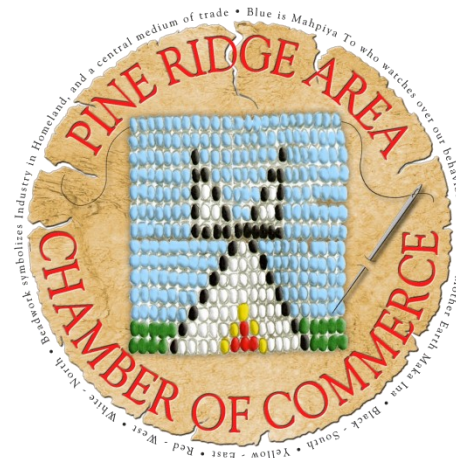
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 ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SERIES  
 MODULE II: CUSTOMER SERVICE BASICS

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS:

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# TRAINER PACKET

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
TRAINING SERIES

MODULE II: CUSTOMER SERVICE BASICS



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# LESSON ONE: LAKOTA VALUES

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The Pine Ridge Area Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Training Series are based on the Lakota values that were established by the visions of our ancestors and carried on by the courage of our relatives.



Mila Hunjska Tašunke or  
American Horse



## OWO' HITIKA BRAVERY

***"When the storm blows hard you must stand firm, for it is not trying to knock you down, it is really trying to teach you to be strong."***<sup>i</sup>

Working with and for others can be challenging but also rewarding. Working with others, especially people you do not know, however, requires bravery. Bravery is necessary to take new steps and to be gifted with new responsibilities. Moral courage and long-term thinking are necessary to be brave and to persevere through difficult situations or situations that might make you feel nervous, like working with customers for the first time.<sup>ii</sup> Being brave, and making these connections can be beneficial for family, community, and others.

As an employee or a business owner, there is the need to step out of your comfort zone and work with people who you may have never worked with before. Through making ethical decisions, promoting healthy services, and making economically wise choices while serving customers, responsible business owners and employees can walk bravely, ensuring a better tomorrow and enhancing employment opportunities for future generations of customers both on and off the reservation. As customers feel satisfied, greater opportunities for economic development will occur.

Patrick Pulliam Oglala Lakota 2010



## AHO' KIPA WACIN' KICIYUZAPI RESPECT

Part of your responsibility is to give respect to all things; **respect others, respect all creation, and respect oneself.** Thus the Lakota phrase Aho'kipa Wacin' kiciyuzapi. Aho' kipa means to value as one's own or

to respect one's own. Wacin' kiciyuzapi means to have regard for each other. In other words, respect oneself, but also respect others. This is how we complete the circle that leads to **generosity**. Respect includes maintaining a positive attitude, even towards customers who are upset or seem rude. Value customers, value their opinions, and value their emotions. A respectful spirit is important "to the everyday operation of an ethical and socially responsible business."<sup>iii</sup>

### GIVING RESPECT

By acknowledging the gifts from Wakan Taŋka, passed on from family, Tuŋkašila, and community members, you can then share those gifts with others. While working for and with customers, you can pass positive, healthy gifts through a smile; a warm character; a positive attitude; and through the products and services you provide. In other words, giving respect is a gift in and of itself and will lead to positivity in the workplace and throughout the community. All-in-all, continuing the circle of respect is success if you realize that success includes the ability "to contribute to the well-being of one's tribe, family, or future generations."<sup>iv</sup>



Two Bulls, 2012



## GREETING

The greeting is the first person-to-person step for excellent customer service. As soon as a customer enters the business, you have an important duty to honor and **respect** that person by greeting them. This lets the customer know that you are aware of them and will help them shortly. If you cannot greet them immediately when they enter, take note that they entered and greet them as soon as you are free. The greeting should be warm, welcoming, and whenever possible, personalized for the customer.

These same rules are even more important when your first greeting with the customer isn't face-to-face. If your first communication with a customer is over the phone or via email, it is important to strive to make that customer feel as warm and welcomed as they would if they met you in person. When you answer the phone, you should greet the customer, make them feel welcome, and find out how you can help them. If you are already working with a customer at the business and another customer calls, politely ask the person on the phone if they could please hold. Treat your customers with respect and have a good attitude and they will be much more willing to wait patiently. We will revisit the customer service experience later in the lesson.

Think of greeting a customer as similar to a ceremony. The greeting ceremony, shows **respect** and **generosity** towards the customer, invites them into your business, makes them feel welcomed and appreciated, and shows them that you care.

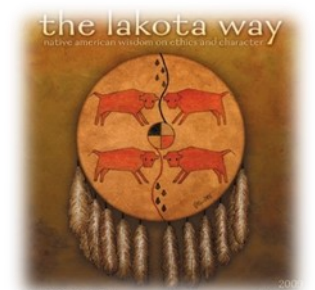
## ATTITUDE

Aside from the appearance of the business and yourself, the attitude that you demonstrate greatly affects a customer's first impressions of your business. If a customer walks in and sees you expressing a poor attitude, (i.e. slouching, ignoring them, texting, being sarcastic) not only are their needs probably not being met, but you are also communicating that you don't care about their well-being. If you needed a service and someone treated you that way; how would you feel?



## WHAT TYPE OF IMPRESSION DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE?

Pull out a piece of paper and watch the video below. While watching the video list all of the bad first impressions this hospitality employee makes. If you are taking this class online, double click the picture above or copy and paste this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3aR3yP4aKg><sup>viii</sup>





## **PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING**

Partner up with someone. Have one person in your group tell a story about how you became involved with this training and what you hope to learn from this training. The other partner practices the 5 steps mentioned above. Then, switch roles. Were any of the steps difficult for you as an active listener? If so, which ones were most difficult to practice?

## **LISTENING DEBRIEF**

Have students write down three people who they believe to be good listeners. After you have done this ask them if the people on their list fit any of these three categories:

1. Someone you like
2. Someone you love
3. Someone you respect

Afterwards, ask students what characteristics from the people they wrote down would be important to have, in order to be liked, loved, or respected by others.

## **NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Non-verbal communication is an important element for people to communicate. Facial expressions, eye-contact, eye movement, head movement, posture, hand gestures; these are all important ways in which we communicate with our bodies. How many statements do you make that would have completely different meanings if you could not use non-verbal communication with them? For example, if you look at someone, without waving or smiling, you could easily be blamed for staring. The nonverbal communication of smiling or waving completely changes the situation.

## **BODY LANGUAGE**

Your body language is an extremely powerful method for communicating to a customer. That being said, it is important to keep in mind what our bodies are communicating. Now, follow the instructor for an activity about body language. I am going to give you a series of instructions and as I do them I am going to act them out. Please act out the instructions as I say them to you.

1. Touch your nose
2. Scratch the top of your head
3. Clap your hands once





Talk about what each person did well and where each person could improve after everybody has had a chance to practice.

## **BUILDING TRUST**

Building a professional relationship is all about trust. Being true to your word is essential to building connections with people. Let your yes mean yes and your no mean no. In other words, like mentioned before, be reliable. Don't let people wonder if you will follow through with your actions. Follow through with Guss' principle of 'Indian Time,' were you take it upon yourself to get things done on time or early [see Lesson I]. Trust is built by acting upon what you say.

Trustworthiness and honesty are interconnected. Trust in other human beings and trust in oneself is essential for lasting, sustainable development.<sup>xviii</sup> It is easier to trust in someone or some entity that has faith, or trusts in you. The trust you build up with a coworker or a customer can develop into a lasting and meaningful relationship.

### **Activity: Trust Fall**

Gather into small groups of roughly eight people. All but one of the group members should form into two lines, facing each other roughly two feet from one another. Each person will tightly hold the hands of the person across from them. One person will stand at the end of the row, facing away from everybody. This person will let themselves fall backwards, while the people in the lines will catch their fall. Allow each person to perform this activity unless somebody is physically incapable of performing the activity. After each person has had a chance to be caught by the others, discuss as a group how catching others when they fall relates to good customer service, and how it feels as a friend and customer to have somebody there when things go wrong.



## **MAINTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP**

By showing care for others, listening to their needs, and being true to your word, you will inevitably develop connections with the people whom you work with and the customers you serve. Being a good employee helps with the creation of a sense of community of those around you. Maintaining a presence helps those around you, but also helps yourself. Being trustworthy, empathetic, and attentive to others will help build relationships that will last over time and become meaningful and mutually beneficial.