



PREVIEW

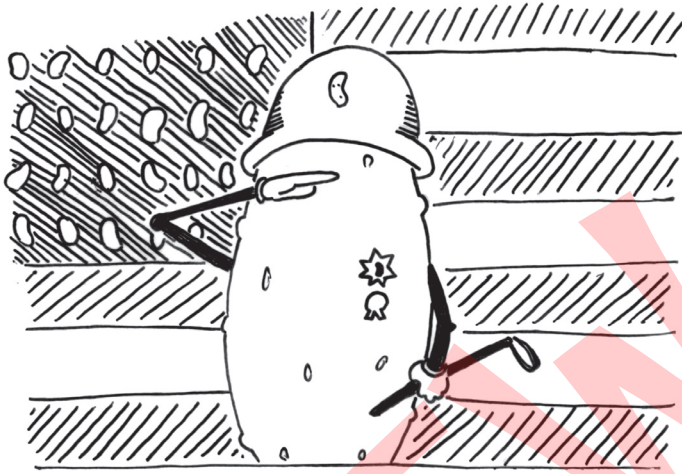
PREVIEW

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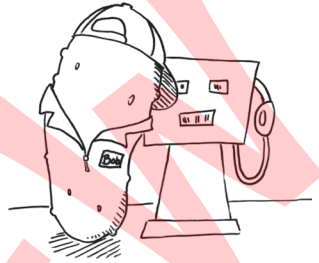
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A LIFE LESSON

“If our employees are not better people for having worked for us, we have failed.” — BOB FARRELL

I pulled into a gas station in Oregon. A very large man, well over 6 feet tall, approached as I rolled down my window.

“Fill ’er up?” he asked. (There’s no self-serve in Oregon.) Before I could answer, he said, “You’re Mr. Farrell.”



“At your service,” I said as I got out to stretch my legs.

He just nodded and made a little grunt through his beard as he began to pump my gas. He glanced over at me a few times, then he walked right up and put his huge hand on my shoulder.

“Don’t you remember me?” he asked.

I straightened up and studied his face for a moment but had to admit,

“I’m sorry, I don’t. I’ve met a lot of people over the years.”

“Well, I thought you’d remember me. I was in your training crew for Fremont, California,” he said.

“Fremont,” I said. “That was twentysomething years ago. There were a lot of good kids on that trip.”

We had pulled experience staff out of our Portland, Oregon, store to open the new store in California.

“But, help me out here. Why would I especially remember you?” I pleaded.

“Because you fired me on the spot,” he said bluntly.

“I fired you?” My jaw dropped; my mind raced back, searching for memories, but before I could speak, he said,

“I was only seventeen; you called my parents and put me on the next bus home.”

“I didn’t fire a lot of kids. Why did I fire you?” I asked.

“You caught me smoking pot in the motel room,” he said softly.

Bingo! The light went on. I remembered the whole incident. But I still wasn’t quite sure what this large man, who still had his large hand on my shoulder, was going to do.

“How are things going?” I asked with a tight smile.

He took his hand off of my shoulder, then reached and shook my hand.

“I never thanked you,” he said. “It was best thing that could have happened to me. I never did drugs again. I own this place, the station, the store. See those kids over there working the tires? Those are my boys; they don’t do drugs either.”

I shook his hand again.

“Nice to see you again, Dominic.”

“You do remember me!” he beamed.

“I remember you well; I always wondered how things turned out,” I said.

“Well, take a look. All I needed back then were some expectations. You set some high ones and I let you down, but I never did it again. Now I’m the one setting high expectations for my boys over there. Thanks for teaching me that.”

As leaders, we sometimes forget how much our actions affect the lives of those we lead. I believe that leadership is a high calling that always comes with great accountability.

PREFACE

I have been blessed with a wonderful life. My wife, Ramona, has enriched my life for more than 50 years. I have proudly watched my three daughters grow into beautiful people, marry and have their own families. And I have had the distinct privilege of working with thousands of people—good people—who have given me a part of themselves and their lives and taught me my greatest lessons about life and leadership. I am a better person because of them.

Having opened 157 successful restaurants, including Farrell's Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Parlours, I've seen a lot of customers. Most came back. Some did not. Our restaurants were successful because, in those early days, I realized that we needed to value the customer. That's when we began giving away pickles. At Farrell's, we gave away extra pickles with sandwich orders—but every business has “pickles” to give away.

What's a “Pickle”?

In the context of valuing the customer, a “pickle” is something special you do for the customer. It's a little something extra that sets your business apart. Maybe it's a handwritten note in a shipment or using the customer's name. Every business has its own type of pickles to give away. It's just a matter of figuring out what that special something is. At Farrell's it was personal service. It was singing “Happy Birthday” and giving kids a free sundae on their birthday. It was extra pickles.

Giving away “pickles” means adding your own special touch and having the courage to make things right.

Early on, I realized that great customer service happens when you realize the customer is the boss. But I also realized that it's not enough to take care of the boss. Leaders need to serve those who serve the customer. Regardless of how you refer to them—employees, associates, teammates, staff, crew—they need to be taken care of too.

“Leaders need to take care of the people who take care of the boss.”

The Original Pickle Story

The idea of giving away pickles was borne of an experience in our first Farrell’s Ice Cream Parlour. I will be forever grateful for this letter I received from a disappointed customer in Seattle. It changed the way I looked at business, customers and my employees. Here’s what it said:



Dear Mr. Farrell,

I’ve been coming to your restaurants for over three years. I always order a #2 hamburger and a chocolate shake. I always ask for an extra pickle and I always get one. Mind you, this has been going on once or twice a week for three years.

I came into your restaurant the other day and I ordered my usual #2 hamburger and chocolate shake. I asked the young waitress for the extra pickle. I believe she was new because I hadn’t seen her before.

She said, “Sir, I will sell you a side of pickles for \$1.25.”

I told her, “No, I just want one extra slice of pickle. I always ask for it, and they always give it to me. Go ask your manager.”

She went away and came back after speaking with the manager. The waitress looked me in the eye and said, “I’ll sell you a pickle for a nickel.”

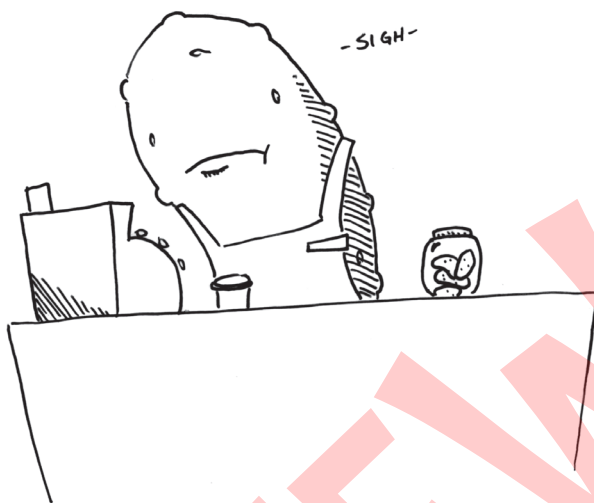
Mr. Farrell, I told her what to do with her pickle, hamburger and the milk shake. I’m not coming back to your restaurant if that’s the way you’re going to run it.

— The Customer

He signed his name and included his address. I wrote him a letter and enclosed a card for a free hot-fudge sundae. I assured him that we didn't run our restaurants that way, and I apologized. I asked him to come back. I tried to make things right. The story has a happy ending, but you'll need to keep reading to find out what happened.

I thank that unhappy customer to this day because the war cry of our company became "Give 'em the pickle!" If you ever doubt what you should do in a tough situation, "give 'em the pickle! Take care of the customer!"

That letter was a wake-up call for our leaders as well. We thought we trained well, but we realized our employees needed more from us. We weren't giving our employees "pickles," and we needed to start. That is where the concept of the leadership pickles came from.



INTRODUCTION

THE LEADERSHIP PICKLES

I'm amazed by the number of business owners and managers I've talked with who don't connect customer service with how they treat their employees. They talk about valuing the customer, and they share with me their customer service philosophy. But rarely do they mention the people who serve their customers. They seem perplexed and frustrated about why their business is struggling.

Here's a simple truth:

***“Unhappy employees mean
unhappy customers.”***

I have always had a burning conviction that a business must value its customers to be successful. But I have also learned that leaders must value their employees as much as they value their customers, or they risk losing both.

Would you have any customers if you didn't have employees to take care of them? Of course not.

Do employees stick around if they're treated poorly? Not for long. Research based on exit interviews suggests that the top reason employees leave a job is the poor working relationship they have with their immediate supervisor.

Now think about this: Almost seven out of 10 people who stop patronizing a business make their decision because an employee treated them poorly and didn't care. Indifferent employees can cost an average business losses of up to 30 percent. Employee turnover can cost businesses even more.

You might believe that behind every indifferent employee is an indifferent manager, but that's usually not true. Most managers care deeply. It's just that their focus is usually on the wrong things.

Your Biggest Challenge: Leading, Not Just Managing

It's easy for your day, your energy and your attention to be consumed with all the things that fly toward you. The minute you walk into work, things start coming at you: Communications. Problems. Deadlines. New programs. Shipments. Customer problems. Employee problems. Product delays. Delivery issues.

Most days, the hat you wear as manager may feel more like a hard hat; there's lots of stuff flying at most managers throughout their day. Leadership? Who has the time? If only your employees would just do their job so you can do yours.

The truth is, your job is both managing *and* leading. But leadership is not something to set aside until you have time. It takes commitment to be a leader all the time.

Warren Bennis, one of the most successful business leaders in the world, has a good quote on the subject:

“Managers are people who do things right, while leaders are people who do the right things.” — WARREN BENNIS

Management by Example: Being the Best *You*

It's not easy to be a leader. Doing things right is hard enough, but doing the right things is even harder. It's a choice you make every day. Leadership is about consistently being the best person you can possibly be, and that's different for everyone. Only you know exactly who that person is.

Believe me, I know how hard it is. But I am here to tell you that the payoff is worth it. Doing the right things means making time for your employees. It means showing them that they matter and that what they do is important.

Management by Walking Around: Personally Checking In

Leadership is about making a conscious choice to be your best. It goes without saying that you can't be a leader from your office. You need to be on the floor. You need to be among your employees and your customers.

“You can't coach the players without watching them play.”

In my book *Give 'Em the Pickle*, I talk about the importance of “visible management” and “MBWA—management by walking around,” phrases coined at United Airlines by Ed Carlson. When he became president of United Airlines, he took his top executives and visited every hangar United used and every airport they served. He spent time with the employees, and they felt as though he genuinely cared about them. And he did.

There's a reason why anyone who is working to be elected to political office is out shaking hands. Sure, it's a good photo op. But it's more than that. It's connecting on a human level. Would you vote for someone who didn't make a conscious choice to be out with common folks like us? If your job were based on electoral votes instead of hiring or promotion, would you have gotten the job?

Good leaders know that to be the best they can be, they need to be among the people. Ed Carlson knew it. Politicians know it. At Farrell's, we called it carpet time. I used to tell our managers to walk around the

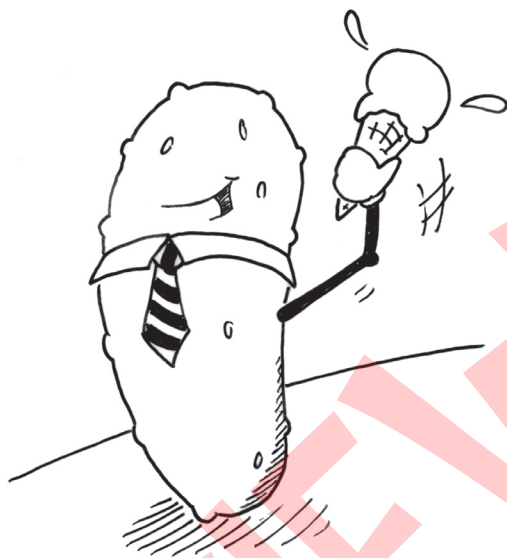
dining room with the coffeepot, connecting with customers by refilling their coffee cups. Then I'd tell them to put the coffeepot down and walk through the kitchen to find out how the dishwashers are feeling. How about the cooks, waiters and waitresses? What kind of day is the cashier having? How are things going for your employees?

Management by Serving Pickles: Giving Your Employees Leadership Pickles

I told my managers that while they're managing by walking around, they should look for opportunities to lend a helping hand—this shows your employees you care about them because you're willing to support them in their jobs. They should look for opportunities to serve leadership pickles to their employees, so the employees can give service pickles to their customers.

What are leadership pickles? They're the things you do to motivate your employees, to show them you care about them, to help them see what good customer service looks like. This training guide gives you specific, effective strategies for serving these seven leadership pickles to your employees:

1. enthusiasm
2. urgency
3. confidence
4. encouragement
5. appreciation
6. integrity
7. service



CHAPTER 1

THE ENTHUSIASM PICKLE

When I walk into a new business, I can always tell who the new employees are because they are the ones who are still enthusiastic about being there. They are the ones with a smile on their face. They are the ones with a spring in their step.

Why is that? Everyone starts out that way, but why does it fade?

Here's the short answer:

because “there is nothing more difficult than generating enthusiasm for doing essentially the same thing over and over.”

That is why it's called work.

As a leader, it is your job to *spread enthusiasm*. It may be the most important pickle you give your employees. If you are not enthusiastic about the task at hand, how can you expect it of those you lead?

Think about photographs you've seen of the trenches in the First World War and ask yourself, "If I had been their leader, how would I have motivated those poor soldiers to get up out of the mud, climb out of those trenches and run headlong through barbed wire and machine-gun fire for the third time that day?" The sad fact is, without the threat of court-martial and a firing squad, your motivational tools in that situation are rather limited.

Thankfully, you are not in that leadership situation, even though at times it may feel that bleak. Threats and orders and fear will motivate people for only so long.

*Most great achievers are not well-rounded people,
but their enthusiasm covers most of their faults.*

— CHARLES CERAMI

None of us is perfect. Enthusiasm, though, covers up most of our faults.

Why is that? Enthusiasm is fun. It's contagious. It gets people moving. It creates excitement and energy.

Spread Enthusiasm: I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream for Ice Cream

As a leader, it is your job to spread enthusiasm. It adds fun to the job. It makes it OK for employees to enjoy themselves, each other and their customers while working.

A couple years ago, a friend told me about a new ice cream franchise that had opened. After watching a movie at the theater next door, she and her husband decided to enjoy the pleasant summer evening by sitting outside with an ice cream cone. She went on to say that they waited in line for almost 15 minutes.

Now, this is a lady who is verbal about her expectations as a customer and readily shares her dissatisfactions. So I thought I knew what was coming. We'd been through similar conversations before. I expected her to complain about the wait or question why the shop didn't have more employees working.

But she didn't. What came next surprised me.

She said they had so much fun, they didn't even mind the wait.

"You're kidding," I said.

"Bob," she said, "the employees were having so much fun, we had fun too."

"What were they doing?" I asked.

"Singing. Laughing. Tossing cones to one another," she said.

"Where was the manager?" I asked.

"He was at the front counter, scooping ice cream and leading everyone in an 'I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream' cheer," she said, chuckling again at the memory.

Show Your Enthusiasm: Nothing Great Has Ever Been Achieved without It

If I asked your team to describe you, would "enthusiastic" be on their list? I hope so. I meet far too many managers who never show their emotions. I wonder if they ever get excited about anything.

I've had managers ask me, "What if I'm not in the mood?" Who said anything about your mood? I didn't say you have to *feel* enthusiastic. I said you have to *be* enthusiastic. Before you walk through the door, you need to do what it takes to find and show some enthusiasm. Take a deep breath, reach down inside, and ... you're on. It's showtime!

If that's tough for you to imagine, think about enthusiasm as something you put on, in just the same way you put on your shoes. Mentally, give yourself a spring in your step. If you make a conscious effort to be enthusiastic, it will become part of who you are as a leader.

Use Enthusiasm to Make Work a Game

Giving the Enthusiasm Pickle means that you make sure every day is *not* the same. It's your job to shake things up a bit. Change things around. Start fresh.

Why do you think employees dress in Hawaiian shirts at a supermarket? They're trying to make their day a little different. Good for them. They're trying to have a little fun.

What can you do to make things fun for your people?

Here's the simplest trick in the book: Make it a game. People like to achieve, and they like to win. So set some team goals.

Every morning before the doors open for business, a world-famous retailer you all know makes an announcement for the employees throughout the entire store. It's short and sweet:

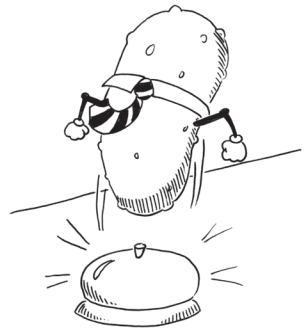
"Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for your hard work yesterday. Last year on this day, we rang up such-and-such in sales. Let's see how much we can beat that by today. Thank you. We're glad you're here. Have a great one."

The managers just set the bar. They let employees know that their leaders expect great things of them.

Give the Enthusiasm Pickle: Spread Good-news Rumors

But it doesn't stop there. The Enthusiasm Pickle is also about spreading good-news rumors. Throughout the day, everyone needs to know what the score is and how much time is left in the game. That's when work gets exciting.

I was in this gigantic superstore the other day, shopping for a new TV, and every 10 minutes or so I heard a bell ring somewhere in the corner and all the employees gave a big "Wooooo!" I didn't know what it meant, but it was working: They were smiling.



When someone is doing great work, stop what you're doing and tell that employee. It's like ringing that bell.

And make sure you tell the employee's teammates too. Spread some good-news rumors. There's something magical about hearing from your co-workers that the boss has been singing your praises. It can have more impact than telling an employee directly.

Enthusiasm is about letting people know that you expect great things to happen.

Get Carried Away with Enthusiasm: It Is Contagious

In an article titled "Quotations from General Colin Powell: A Leadership Primer—18 Lessons from a Very Successful American Leader," Powell talks about enthusiasm:

The ripple effect of a leader's enthusiasm and optimism is awesome. So is the impact of cynicism and pessimism. — COLIN POWELL

“Enthusiasm is contagious, and so is the lack of enthusiasm.”

When I first met Herb, I was struck by the passion he had for his job. He handled accounts payable for a small computer-parts company, and he loved what he did. Herb enjoyed getting up in the morning and going to the office.

The next time I ran into Herb, I could tell right away that something was different. After some small talk, we got around to chatting about his job.

“I'm looking to make a change,” he said.

“You seemed so happy with your job the last time I saw you,” I said.

“Yeah. I was. But now I have a new boss. I've given it almost six months, but things aren't getting any better,” Herb said.

“What's going on?” I asked him.

“Bob, I don’t really know. I just know I’m not happy. I rarely see or talk to my boss. I’m lucky if he emerges from his office by midday and I get a ‘hello’ from him. Sometimes I feel as though I am working in slow motion. Actually, I think we all feel that way. My last boss was always around. He was full of energy, and somehow he always got us excited about what we were working on,” he said.

So what had happened? In the course of six months, Herb went from being a satisfied, productive employee to an unhappy one looking for another job. His energy and passion were gone. The enthusiasm and energy of his former boss were contagious. His new boss’s lack of enthusiasm and energy was contagious too.

Malcolm Forbes once said:

People who never get carried away should be.
— MALCOLM FORBES

Get carried away! When you walk into the room, it should light up. When it comes to jump-starting your team’s day, you should be better than espresso! Nothing great has ever been achieved without enthusiasm. Remember that.

Be enthusiastic! Once everyone knows that you’re enthusiastic about great work, here’s what’s going to happen: Before long, your team will start bringing you news of great work, just so they can see you smile. I guarantee it. That’s how contagious the Enthusiasm Pickle is.