

American Fastener

JOURNAL

VOLUME 41 / NO 3

MAY / JUNE 2025

W.J. Roberts Co. Inc.
AMERICAN MADE ★ SPACERS & STANDOFFS
CRESCENT MANUFACTURING CRESCENT MANUFACTURING CRESCENT MANUFACTURING



CRESCENT MANUFACTURING

Quality Screws for
Quality Designs



JOHN TSCHOHL
PRESIDENT
SERVICE QUALITY INSTITUTE
4656 NINE OAKS CIR
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55437-1836

*****AUTO**3-DIGIT 554

PRSRD STD
U.S. Postage
Permit #335
St. Joseph, MI
PAID

American Fastener Journal
1741 Akron Peninsula Rd.
Akron, OH 44313
3702
P-4 P85

CELEBRATING

65
★ YEARS ★

ANNIVERSARY

DEVELOPING

High-Performance, Customer-Driven Employees

by John Tschohl



Across the world, few organizations are willing to invest in developing a high-performing, customer-driven workforce. Too many employees just show up with poor attitudes and work habits. Educational institutions never teach customer service. In a previous article, I talked about why companies are rapidly firing Gen Z employees.

Manufacturing firms spend millions of dollars on the maintenance of their equipment. Just because they use fuel to keep the machines running, without daily maintenance, they break down. In the service sector, we are dependent on people. I believe people break down more than equipment. The problem is the less you pay people, the less you value them. It means that you are going to invest less in developing their customer service skills and attitudes. The least paid, least valued, and least trained employees have 99% of your customer contact.

When you go to a vocational school or college, they don't provide one class of three hours and then graduate you. There is a curriculum of two or four years with a variety of courses and hundreds of hours of classes and homework. None of them have any courses on customer service, empowerment, speed, handling irate customers, or mastering the fundamentals of great service.

Employee turnover is high in most companies, so the attitude is: "Why spend money training them? They will all leave in 6-12 months." Besides, we think we have millions of potential customers and unlimited marketing money to acquire new customers. Only a handful of customers use word of mouth to grow. Amazon spends virtually no money on advertising,

and I believe it is the most customer-driven firm in the world. Last year, they grew sales by \$60.8 billion and had a profit of over \$30 billion. No one wants to copy their focus on exceptional service. I guess they make too much money.

Proven Process for Driving a Service Culture

This is the backbone of what Service Quality Institute delivers. I believe the principal reason most firms fail to deliver great service is that they do NOT understand the Service Strategy. Organizations that understand this can grow the value of their business by 25-1,000%. I teach laser surgery. How do you go under the radar and grab market share with a service strategy that is almost impossible to copy?

Your leadership team needs to also understand the Service Strategy and walk

the talk. It needs to go deep and has to become part of your culture. The reason I wrote the book "Relentless" is because most firms focus on this for a few months or years. It has to be a lifetime commitment. The book is \$27 for a hard copy and \$9.99 for online. (It makes an excellent gift for your key staff.)

You need the tools to train your staff. To develop high-performing, customer-driven employees, you must have a variety of programs that will change attitudes and behaviors, teach leading-edge customer service skills, and build employee morale and teamwork. The result will be record revenue. This is why I always share the results from service leaders like Amazon, Costco, Northeast Dental Dental, Wilderness Safari, and the Mayo Clinic.

Nine Principles of Creating a Service Culture (Relentless Strategy):

- 1. Focus on Strategy:** You must be "relentless," and it has to be a way of life.
- 2. Reduce Friction:** Remove stupid rules, policies, and procedures.

continued on page 43

JOHN TSCHOHL



John Tschohl, who became a millionaire by age 30, is the founder and president of the Service Quality Institute—the global leader in customer service—with operations in more than 40 countries. He is considered one of the world's foremost authorities on all aspects of customer service and success and has developed 18 customer service training programs that are used by companies throughout the world. His monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge at www.customer-service.com. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn, and X, formerly known as Twitter.

DEVELOPING HIGH-PERFORMANCE, CUSTOMER DRIVEN EMPLOYEES *continued from page 42*



- 3. Empowerment:** Empowerment is the backbone of great service. Everyone must be empowered.
- 4. Speed:** People today expect and want speed. You must drastically reduce the time for everything you do.

- 5. Training:** All employees must be trained in customer service with something new and fresh every few months. Ninety-nine percent of customer interaction is with your front-line employees. They are the least

trained, least valued, least paid, and the face of your organization.

- 6. Remember Your Name:** The most precious thing to a customer is their name. Remember it and use it.
- 7. Service Recovery:** When you screw up, you must keep the customer; all employees must practice the four skills of service recovery.
- 8. Reduce Costs:** Price is critical with all customers. Service leaders are frugal and always looking for ways to reduce costs. All my research shows service leaders are aggressive at eliminating waste and costs.
- 9. Measure Results:** You must measure the results of creating a service culture to keep top management passionate about this process, the financial investment, and the time required. ◀