How to Be Delightful

In our hyperconnected, social-media-driven society, your organization needs to be obsessed with making and keeping your customers happy. Your organization needs to be more than efficient; it must be likeable. That's Dave Kerpen's premise in *Likeable Business* (McGraw-Hill).

In his book, Kerpen explores ways to make sure your organization is as delightful as possible to your customers. His lessons apply to your fundraising efforts as well as your relationships with your board members, funders, and partners.

And never forget that your customers include your employees. If they aren't passionate about their work and work together as a team, how can you create amazing experiences for your customers? It really is all about people.

Here are a few of the helpful action items Kerpen includes in his book:

- **Brainstorm and write down five things** you could be doing for your customers that you're not doing today.
- **Hold a meeting with your team.** Have everyone offer one way you can improve the organization. Write the suggestions down. Pick one, and make it happen.
- **Think of three delightful customer service experiences you've had recently.** What do they have in common? Create a plan to implement those elements into your organization.
- **Ask yourself, "What's unnecessary?** What can we get rid of? How can we make this simpler?"
- **The next time you're about to send a thank-you e-mail to a client, donor, or colleague,** write a thank-you note instead. Put it in the mail.
- **Write down one risk you can take** that would benefit your organization.
- **Ask your customers and employees what their favorite aspect of your organization is.** Then focus on that.
- **Write down one way you can be remarkable** in an interaction with a customer today and one way you can be remarkable in an interaction with a colleague. Then go be remarkable!

The more successful your organization becomes, the harder it is to be nimble enough to react to your changing environment. But as long as you're open to change, your organization will be able to learn, adapt, and succeed.

Adaptability requires you to achieve an overall vision in small bits, constantly pivoting as you go. You build your product or service, you measure results, and you learn from your mistakes or successes. Build, measure, learn, repeat – always making incremental changes along the way.

New Survey Highlights Nonprofit Threats

A new survey of nonprofit organizations across the U.S. pinpoints some areas of deep concern:

- **Nonprofits may be overlooking potentially disastrous liquidity issues.** Only 11% of nonprofits name liquidity as a top concern, but 53% maintain less than six months of liquid restricted net assets, and 40% have just one to six months of operating reserves.
- **Staffing issues pose a threat.** Retaining qualified staff is the most-cited challenge, named by 72% of respondents.
- **Anti-fraud practices vary.** Only 3% of respondents named fraud as a board concern, and just 9% of organizations maintain a fraud committee.
- **Cyber issues fly under the radar.** Despite high-profile hacks of nonprofits, just 18% of organizations say cybersecurity is one of the top concerns for their board.

Access the full report ("Nonprofit Standards") at bdo.com/nonprofitstandards. Also see these articles at NonprofitWorld.org:

The High Cost of Employee Turnover – and How to Avoid It (Vol. 31, No. 3)

Cybersecurity: Not Just for Home Depot Anymore (Vol. 34, No. 4)

The Bucket System: Managing Your Assets in the Face of Volatility (Vol. 35, No. 2)

Want to Avoid Fraud? Look to Your Board (Vol. 28, No. 5)

How to Alter People's Behavior

The authors of *Influencer* (vitalsmarts.com) contend that people will do their best to change their behavior if they believe two things:

- **It will be worthwhile** for them to change.
- **They can do** what is asked of them.

All you have to do, then, is make sure people believe those two things. Here's how:

- **Pinpoint a few vital behaviors** that will truly make a difference. Focus on changing those.
- **Connect the vital behaviors to the person's values, pride, and self-interest.** Help them discover links between their current behavior and what they really want.
- **Use stories to show why change is important** and how proud and happy people will feel when they make the necessary adjustments.
- **Figure out any missing skills people think they'll need.** Break those skills into learnable parts. Provide step-by-step instructions and positive examples.
- **Give people immediate feedback by a coach** as they practice their new skills.
- **Connect the newly acquired skills** to people's sense of who they want to be.

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