

ADMINISTRATIVE VIEWS

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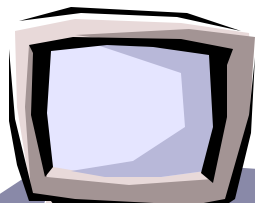
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Don't be Afraid!

Most times, when making a call on a prospective client that already has administrative staff, I try to introduce myself to them, and explain my services. If they understand that I'm not there to take their job, they can be an important ally in approaching the owner or manager about my services.

Over the past two months, I have spoken with many people that have escaped layoffs, and been assigned additional responsibilities to their already full-time positions.

When I explain my services, and how I can help them manage their time better, in most cases, it's the start of a



Time not worked (vacation - holidays - sick days- lunches) accounts for 13% of an employee's salary. *



* Source: U.S. Chamber of Commerce

wonderful business relationship. In those few cases where the current staff feels threatened, I try to help them understand how we can work together to make the company flow smoothly, and give them the time to do projects that they enjoy, and learn new skills that may help them get a promotion, or expand into different areas of the company that are of interest.

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service, while minimizing costs. Business Support Services can be an easy and cost effective way to provide both.

So many times we fear change, and new ideas, but remember, change is inevitable, it's better to be a part of it than to let it change without our input.

What Makes “Stellar” Customer

I spent more than 15 years in sales, and I attributed much of my success to the fact that I gave “stellar” customer service. It's something that was almost non-existent in the late '80's and much of the '90's. I've

been pleased to see it's re-emergence in the past few years. In my relationship, or should I say, partnership with my clients, I not only provide them with "stellar" customer service, but provide it to their clients, in many capacities. Here are some things to think about when working with clients.

- Keep a positive attitude - don't let your emotions dictate your response.
- Be a good listener. Many times, even an irate customer just wants to vent.
- Take a moment to think about your response to a situation before you respond.
- Take pride in what you do, and the company you work for.

Top Benefits of Outsourcing

The following information is taken from an article published by the Small Business Monthly 2000 Business Owners' Guide.

They say that U.S. businesses spend \$200 Billion to outsource noncore functions. Here are the

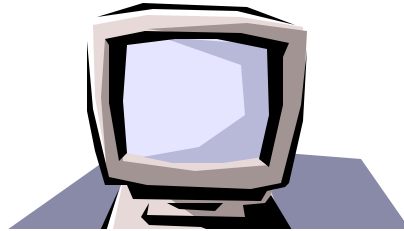
reasons why!

Time to focus on the organization's primary function. This frees internal staff to concentrate on product and service improvements.

Increased level of expertise. Don't spend time and money training and staying current in a noncore area.

Cost effectiveness. The expert already possesses the knowledge, skills, contacts and equipment to effectively complete the job.

Decreased overhead expenses. Contractors provide their own equipment and work off-site.



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Risk reduction.

Knowledgeable experts can provide sound advice and help reduce costs. Reputable organizations will guarantee their work, and they can generally be terminated with less time and effort than employees.

Flexibility. Outsourcing provides greater flexibility

to companies by allowing them to work on a project basis and discounting services when necessary.

Technology. Companies that outsource can focus time and money on remaining technologically competitive in core business functions. They also receive the benefit of the outsourced provider's up-to-date information, equipment and technology.

While outsourcing can provide a major financial boost to a company, choose your outsourcing partners wisely, since you remain responsible if their work is unsatisfactory. It is important that you define your needs and expectations clearly, and that both sides agree on schedules, compensation and criteria for satisfaction.

How to Choose a Service

Provider

When choosing a business support service provider:

- 1 Look for a person that has a personality that seems to be a good fit for your organization.
- 2 Interview at least 3 different companies to give you a comparison of skills, prices and services provided.
- 3 Don't automatically go with the lowest priced provider. Get a feel for their knowledge, years of experience, and scope of services they provide.

Many times, the lowest priced provider may have a lower hourly rate, but take more hours to complete the project.

- 4 Make sure there is some sort of contract or agreement in place BEFORE they start your project.

- 5 Ask for references, and investigate any certifications or industry involvement they may have. The more knowledge they have, the

Anybody Can Do That?

When I first started providing "administrative support", we were called secretaries. For some reason, that word became taboo. The work we performed was viewed as menial, something that anyone could do, but no-one seemed to want to be bothered with.

So, positions were created for our simple skills. We became administrative assistants, or executive assistants, and the type of work, and workload changed dramatically.

What didn't change, was the attitude of some who still felt that



So positions were created for our simple skills.

anybody could do what we could do.

Well, in some ways, they're correct. Anybody can become skilled in keyboarding, but what about grammar, punctuation, creativity, software knowledge, and basic business savvy? These are all skills that are learned and honed through experience and continued education.

I'm always humored by people that think my work is easy. They would be the ones that send out letters with bad grammar, punctuation, and formatting, or don't send out correspondence at all. I have great fun reading marketing pieces where words like, their-there-they're, two-too-to, flour-flower, and many others are misused or out of context. Sometimes I wonder if they even know that verbs have tenses that shouldn't be ignored.

What a horrible way to represent your company to a prospective client. I wonder how well their solicitation is received, when their basic literacy is lacking.

So, although you think "anybody can do that", ask yourself how "well"

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What's inside:

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Top benefits of outsourcing
How to choose a service provider
Anybody can do that

Internet Finds

Here are some great Internet finds, and a list of comprehensive search engines to find anything your heart desires:
To find mailing lists:
www.thinkdirectmarketing.com
To get computer hardware/software fixes:
www.nowonder.com

To create an e-zine:
www.zinecast.com
To build free banner ads:
www.infohiway.com/javascript/indexf.htm
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