

Moments of Truth

In 1986 Jan Carlzon, the former president of Scandinavian Airlines wrote a book, Moments of Truth. In his book, Carlzon defines the moment of truth in business as this:

"Anytime a customer comes into contact with any aspect of a business, however remote, is an opportunity to form an impression."

From this simple concept, Jan Carlzon took an airline that was failing and turned it around to be one of the most respected airlines in the industry.

Some examples of moments of truth in Jan Carlzon's airline business are:

- when you call to make a reservation to take a flight,
- when you arrive at the airport and check your bags curbside,
- when you go inside and pick up your ticket at the ticket counter,
- when you are greeted at the gate,
- when you are taken care of by the flight attendants onboard the aircraft,
- when you are greeted at your destination.

All of these are main moments of truth, and notice that they are all controlled by people. There are many moments of truth that are not controlled by people, such as advertisements (radio, television, billboards, newspapers, etc.). The emphasis of this article is on the moments of truth that we, as people, have control over. These are the points of contact that our customers and clients have directly with us and our organisation.

Disney has taken the small moments of truth to an even higher level. They understand the importance that these small moments of truth have on their customers. They train their cast members (Disney's term for employees) to acknowledge the guest (Disney's term for a customer) with a smile or facial expression if within ten feet. If the cast member gets within five feet of the guest, they are to acknowledge them verbally. All of the little moments of truth, combined with the major ones, add up to the overall level of a customer's satisfaction.

So, manage your moments of truth. Seize every one of them, even if they are moments of misery, as opportunities to show how good you and your organisation are.

The Fish Philosophy

The Fish Philosophy is a set of simple, interconnected principles that everyone can tailor to their own life and work – old wisdom for a new day. When you choose to incorporate these principles – Play, Be There, Choose Your Attitude and Make Someone's Day – you'll see a positive change in the relationships you create at work and at home.

It is a simple, yet extremely powerful tool. The underlying view of the Fish Philosophy is that meaningful learning occurs, when the learner is directly linked to and involved with, the content being presented.

The 4 Philosophies are:

PLAY

Everyone can benefit from a little lightening up during the day. People who find ways to incorporate play into their daily lives approach their work, responsibilities and challenges with energy and enthusiasm. Some of the best innovations come from playing with ideas. Playfulness allows us to tap into our inner being - the child inside all of us. It is that person who won't hesitate to ask "why" or "how come". It is the person who looks at the world creatively and openly and who never hesitates to see the humour in it all.

The Fish Philosophy cont'd

BE THERE

To “Be There” for another person has a powerful effect as it is about giving others our undivided attention. Listening is a big part of being there but it’s more than that. Too often we listen like we are in a debate, our minds focused on gathering information for our own brilliant comeback, rather than being emotionally as well as physically present. It is difficult to hear what another person is saying if our minds are stuck on what we want to hear. Being truly present means suspending judgement while you’re listening and realising that this takes awareness, commitment and practise.

CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE

Many of us believe our attitudes are caused directly by outside influences like unpleasant experiences or negative people. While these things may act as triggers for our feelings, we can choose to either be subservient to these events, few of which we can control, or we can take charge of our own responses. Choosing your attitude is about being aware of what your attitude is and that it may affect others. Once we choose to accept that we are the only ones deciding our attitude at a particular time and place, we decide whether to keep it or shape it into something more satisfying.

The Fish Philosophy cont'd

MAKE SOMEONE'S DAY

To make someone's day means taking a genuine interest in the unique gifts of others. Spontaneous or planned, when we brighten someone's day we receive an internal gift that makes our life more meaningful. Making someone's day may mean taking someone out to dinner or telling a friend, from your heart, how much you appreciate them. It moves past being civil or pleasant to take an extra step we didn't have to take and that makes all the difference.

