**Is Everybody at your Station in Sales?**

(I wrote this for *Radio Ink* back in 1998 when I was a Mileage Plus 100K Frequent Flyer.)

I like it when a United Airlines flight attendant addresses me by name, even though I know it's prompted by a computer printout. It still feels good to be recognized as an important customer. And because I do have a choice in airlines, the added recognition builds my loyalty. So, if United can get a flight attendant to call me by name, you might want to consider getting more of your internal support staff involved in providing customer service,

"As long as you're in business you're in sales" is a pretty good maxim. Does everyone at your station believe that? Rush Limbaugh has spoken about the "ratings insurance" that comes with being able to sell products with personal endorsements. Do your personalities understand that concept, or do they still speak of commercials as "interruptions?"

Do your copy writers and production peo­ple see themselves as the "creative types" or the "listener sales department?" There's a big difference. Copy writers who have actually test­ driven the car, visited the furniture store and met the client put more into the commercial than the usual handful of clichés.

Imagine the impact that a phone call or voice mail like this would have on a new client: "Hello, Mr. Voss. This is Linda from The Rocket 97.6. I'm the traffic manager, which means I'm the o ne who puts your commercials on the log so that they run as ordered. Because you're a new advertiser, I wanted to call to let you know that your first commercials will air at 7: 10 and 11:54 tomorrow morning. Tune them in on 97.6. If you'd like other times, please call me direct at 271- 3223. And thanks for your order, Mr. Voss."

All it takes to pull this off is a check-off box on the order form and a simple telephone script. And one more person in your station has become a part of the sales team. Getting calls from people other than the salesperson can motivate the client and the person who is serving the client. When more people at the station start thinking of the advertisers as "my customers," everyone wins.

James A. Belasco and Ralph C. Stayer wrote the book and appear in the video "The Flight of the Buffalo.” They believe in giving people in the organization "line of sight" to a customer. If you isolate workers from the end user and keep them in their you’ll develop a company full of “slot fillers” instead of a customer-responsive organization.

Suggested action: Give anyone on your team four hours a month to go see and talk with live, paying customers. Imagine the increase in productivity and responsiveness to customer concerns when your administrative people see themselves as part of the sales and customer service team.

When everyone starts thinking of the customer as "my customer" instead of "that jerk on Bob's account list," you will be on your way to building a high-performance culture throughout.

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