

EDITORIAL

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“Yipee! It’s nearly Easter. Then Jesus will come and die for us again.” I was quick to correct my 5-year-old’s misconception but on later reflection, I wish I had taken time to share in her excitement about Jesus’ death. Where has my excitement gone? It seems all too easy to become busy, focused, or tired but these are simply ‘excuses’ that allow us to ‘just make it through the day’ rather than find delight in the day. “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24).

Delight is a feeling of pleasure, excitement and extreme satisfaction. An experience that brings delight is not only enjoyed at the time but leaves positive memories that are recalled and shared in the future. A child finds delight in so many things: a pretty flower, a puddle, a broken butterfly wing, a spider web, the way a slater curls into a ball, ice cream cones, giving handcrafted cards, and so much more. Children are adept at noticing things that don’t even register on the radar of an adult. We tend to have agendas, outcomes and schedules that place blinkers on our daily experience. The problem with this is that a typical classroom has at least twenty students who need to experience a little excitement, wonder and delight in their day.

Is it possible to create delightful classrooms? There is a lot we can learn from market research into what creates a delightful experience for customers; this ten-step recipe for delightful customer service can easily be applied to the classroom experience.

1. In advance, find out who your end customers [students] are, and find out what they want and expect.
2. Understand what you have to offer them that matches their wants.
3. Provide the goods and / or services to the customers [students] in a manner that is enjoyable.
4. Be sure that the customer [student] perceives value from the experience.
5. During the process, make sure that the customer [student] feels important and cared for.
6. Study their actions, facial expressions, tone of voice, hand gestures and analyse what your interaction should be.
7. Ask them if they would like some more of this or another product or service [activity or approach].
8. When completed, ask them how they enjoyed the experience.

9. Analyse their answer and “brainstorm” how to make it better the next time. Everything can be made better. Think hard!

10. Be ready for the next experience.¹

Jesus cared about those around Him. Jesus made people His priority. He wasn’t too busy for children. He wasn’t too focused to pass by Zaccheaus in the tree. He wasn’t too constrained by social rules to talk to the woman at the well. He wasn’t too involved with the crowd to be aware of ten lepers needing His attention. Jesus took the time to notice people and care for their needs. Jesus found delight in loving people and in caring for their needs.

A large percentage of teachers say they chose the profession because they want to make a difference. Jesus is the perfect example of how to make a difference. He knew how to care for individuals in a crowd. John Goodman, vice chairperson of TARP Worldwide, a leading customer experience research consultancy, says that one of the primary ways to create delight in a customer is to reinforce the feeling that he or she is unique.² In today’s world of mass production, information overload and time scarcity, your students want to know that you think they are special, that you notice them and that you care.

An ethic of caring is pivotal to fostering delight in others. When we care, we elevate the needs and desires of others to a level where they affect our decision-making. When we care, we are in a position to more naturally foster delight, wonder and excitement, and convey the knowledge, skills and values we seek to share. **TEACH**

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Endnotes

¹ Johnson, M. A. (2002). *What makes a good recipe for delightful customer service?* Retrieved from <http://www.customerdelight.com/recipe/>

² Alexander Communications Group. (2008). *Delight customers and increase first call resolution by empowering reps to be adaptable when solving problems.* Retrieved from <http://www.customerservicegroup.com/pdf/CSN0408docs.pdf>



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