

CAN PARKING SERVICE ENHANCE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE? 5 KEY POINTS

Think of parking, and you often think of convenience, cost, and the condition of the parking facility itself. But as in any service industry, people also play a big role.

Smiling faces and helpfulness go a long way in communicating a caring message to your employees, visitors and customers, even before they've entered the building.

Do you want them to walk in the door feeling grumpy or great? And when they leave, a pleasant parking experience will send them off in a positive mood.

That's the importance of making sure your parking operator's employees—from shuttle bus drivers to cashiers—embody your brand. Here are five key points to assess your operation:

- 1- Customer service reps, tollbooth cashiers, traffic attendants, valets, shuttle bus drivers: Take a look at their appearance, their willingness to help, and their general demeanor. Are they neatly dressed in a uniform? Do they smile genuinely? Do they know the answers to common questions and provide polite responses?
- 2- Have they worked at their jobs a long time or is there frequent turnover? Tenure is a good indication of how happy they are, and that happiness can rub off on your customers. Length of service can also affect the staff's knowledge and efficiency.
- 3- Does the supervisor have a service-oriented attitude, and does he or she inspire the same in each employee?
- 4- What are the core values of the parking company, and does top management embody those values? Do their

core values match yours? Do they use technology that enables you to communicate easily 24/7?

- 5- Does your company do anything to show appreciation for the on-site parking staff? Recognizing and thanking people will, of course, reinforce good service, but sometimes these folks are underappreciated or overlooked.

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If you answered no to any of these questions, it may be time to scrutinize your parking operation and the importance it plays at your facility and for your business.

Depending on the type of facility, parking employees may be on-site at all hours of the day or night. They work in the summer's heat and winter's frigid cold; in pouring rain, blustery snow, and high winds. They may need to assist people with locating their vehicles, give local driving directions, provide jumps for dead batteries, help remedy flat tires, and/or notify towing contractors if a vehicle is in need of service station repair.

An expert parking vendor will conduct stringent employee screening and training; provide technologies that enhance

service, simplify parking and payment, and safeguard and improve client revenues; and employ expertise in "green" parking practices, including green cleaning methods, and installation of electric vehicle charging stations and solar panels, and energy efficient lighting.

All of these efforts will add up to excellent, friendly service, and ensure that everyone at your facility has a positive experience each time they enter or exit.

