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How stereotyping affects customer service

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HOW STEREOTYPING AFFECTS CUSTOMER SERVICE

by

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University of Massachusetts
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of the requirements for the

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ABSTRACT**How Stereotyping Affects Customer Service**

by

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This paper presents different ways in which stereotyping affects service in the hospitality industry. Specifically the food service industry, this sector is where interaction between guest and employee is the entire experience. Stereotyping a guest happens in a number of different ways. The negative stereotypes that are associated with guests are what effects the type of service a guest receives. When a guest is unhappy with customer service the point of the whole experience is diminished. Finding a way in which to reduce the amount of negative stereotypes associated with guests is critical in improving service and guest satisfaction. Having satisfied guests is the lifeblood of the food service industry. Guests that frequent the restaurant keep the restaurant in business. In order to keep guests satisfied customer service needs to be unbiased. Having unbiased service means equal treatment for every single guest. Through implementing methods of training into organizations there is a way in which to succeed. The training methods teach employees to make more positive perceptions of guests, giving them more time to focus on customer service.

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Part I

How Stereotyping Affects Customer Service

Introduction

This paper looks at how stereotyping guests in a hospitality setting affects the type of customer service that the guest receives. The type of stereotyping that employees of an organization assign to a certain guest before or during guest employee interaction. When they have a certain predetermined belief about the type of customer that they are dealing with they begin to base the way they are going to provide customer service to the guest. There are different aspects of stereotyping, in terms of how and when employees begin to stereotype customers. The actual service that the guest receives as a result of these stereotypes in terms of customer expectation and when they feel they are receiving bad service. The literature will help lead to the conclusions on how different methods can be used to reduce automatic stereotyping. This includes how to train and coach employees on creating unbiased service.

Purpose

The purpose of my Pro Paper is to investigate how and why stereotyping affects customer service, through the use of research and literature review.

Statement of Problem

Stereotyping customers is a problem in the hospitality industry. When employee's stereotype guests and base their service on preconceived notions it can create problems for the

guest, employee and organization. The problem then arises when guests are dissatisfied with service based on employees profiling them.

Statement of Objective

The objective of this paper is to try to create unbiased service in the organization. Discovering solutions to the automatic stereotype that initiates poor customer service will be explained. Including teaching employees to try and not stereotype guests and base the way they are going to serve customers on preconceived notions.

Justifications

The paper demonstrates how stereotyping a guest affects the human relationship that is going on during interaction. How this relationship can cause the guest to feel they received poor service based on a stereotype. There are different ways in which employees apply stereotypes to guests. A few include non thoughtful stereotyping or thoughtful stereotyping (Wegener, Clark, and Petty 2006). This is stereotyping that occurs naturally in the brain according to cognition. Guests can sense the attitudes of employees during interactions which results in an experience less than what was expected. The main points in the research of the literature will include the following: When why and how do employees profile guests before or during service and how this affects the customer and their experience. The organization should be able to manage customer expectations while not stereotyping guests. For example knowing what the customer values in each transaction can help to reduce problems (Compton 2004). If managers are able to know what their customers value it can make it a lot easier in implementing those needs. The key is to implement them with an unbiased level of service. The negative experiences that guest have based on tension between the two parties involved, can affect the employee as well,

including size of their tip or even guests that choose not to return to that establishment. It is to the benefit of both the employee and the customer to have a social interaction that is as unbiased as possible.

In my research I will use literature reviews, and personal work experiences. Based on my findings I would like to implement a plan on how to incorporate an unbiased level of service in the organization. A plan that will include different ways to train employees to reduce automatic stereotyping that happens. Also, teaching employees how to word things differently in order to not seem bias when serving guests. Organizations should be able to find this information useful especially with employees who are engaging in customer service. They will be able to provide a way in which to teach employees how to avoid stereotyping guests in order to improve the quality of customer service. In doing this the employee, organization, and most importantly the customer will be much more satisfied with the level of service.

Part II

Literature Review

Introduction

Looking at stereotyping through the eyes of sociologists and psychologists we can get a clearer look as to what exactly stereotyping is and different types of stereotyping that people engage in naturally. Including the different types of ways that people engage in forming stereotypes based on social interactions. As well as how thoughtful and non thoughtful stereotyping occurs. This paper will examine and explore how stereotyping affects human relationships. More specifically how stereotyping customers in a restaurant setting affects the level of customer service that they receive. The final aspect of this paper is how to manage customer expectations in order to understand what it is that they value, to reduce problems in service. This will incorporate how stereotyping guests from the beginning of an interaction affects the service they receive based on what it is the guest expects as part of a good experience.

Stereotyping

Little research has been done on stereotyping customers in a restaurant setting however there are multiple research findings on different stereotyping activities. “Classism involves stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination based on socioeconomic status. Classist stereotypes would involve beliefs attributed to individuals given their membership in a socioeconomic status category” (Fiske, 1998; Lott, 2002). For purposes of this paper only the literature dealing with stereotyping will be discussed. Classism arises when people make social distinctions between different classes of people which then begins to evolve the process of stereotyping individuals (Gilmore & Harris, 2008). Once people are categorized into a certain group it is easier to devise

greater individual distinctions among them. In a restaurant setting, once the employee is able to categorize the guest based on class it becomes easier to continue stereotyping that guest. For example an employee may conclude that a guest belongs to the upper class based on the way that they dress or talk. The employee has now assigned a class to the guest; this now begins a pattern of stereotypes that go along with that certain class. An example could be that the employee may think that they are going to receive a big tip, or that the guest might be too needy because they come from wealthy families whom are used to receiving everything that they want. Employees may direct better service to those customers who fit the pattern of expected large tippers (Harris1995). This is a classic example of how stereotyping a guest leads to alterations in the kind of service offered. However the stereotype that the employee associates to their guest may not always be true. People tend to continue to maintain their stereotypes of particular groups even after there is substantial evidence that disconfirms the actual stereotype that they are applying (Hamilton & Sherman, 1994; von Hippel et al., 1995; Hilton & von Hippel, 1996; Fiske, 1998). An employee may have multiple experiences where they feel a person whom they think belongs to the upper class gives larger tips. After having multiple interactions with these types of guests and they do not receive larger tips, they still will confirm with the same stereotype instead of not thinking that the stereotype is true anymore. So after there is evidence that not all supposed upper class people leave larger than usual tips, an employee may continue to attach the same stereotype to the next one and essentially not learning a lesson.

“Literature has indicated that stereotypes held toward lower socioeconomic status groups were generally more negative than those attributed to higher status groups” (Gilmore & Harris, 2008). Stereotypes are in use in the restaurant industry both positively and negatively. Stereotypes can be applied to everyone. They affect guests in the hospitality industry in both

negative and positive ways. For example the lower social class the employee feels a guest is the lower they feel their tip might be. The opposite may also occur; if an employee relates a guest to a higher social class they might feel their tips might be higher. Mary Harris conducted a study about the different factors that affected tips in a restaurant. “When asked about characteristics of waiters who receive large or small tips, most waiters and customers mentioned the waiter’s attitude and the quality of service” (Harris 1995). This supports the idea that when a customer feels like they are not being treated in an appropriate manner it affects the level of service they receive and in turn affects the employee’s compensation. One example of mistreatment is the fact that the employee has a perceived idea about how the customer is and adjusts the level of service they give to that customer. The customer senses the attitude in the employee and as a result of the customer’s dissatisfaction the employee’s tip is adjusted.

People will continue to stereotype against each other on the foundation of what their perceived social class seems to be (Fiske, 2000). It does not matter the amount of stereotyping an employee gives to a guest, they are still engaging in stereotyping the guest. The difference lies in the personal controlled beliefs between the employees who stereotype a lot and the employees who only have few stereotypic thoughts about their guest (Fiske, 2000). “People normally divide people into ingroups and outgroups, so that stereotyping is a normal function (Tajfel, 1969, 1970, 1981). This is why it seems almost normal in the mind of an employee to stereotype a guest. It seems almost like human nature for an employee to look at a guest and decide whether they have certain traits that they think are positive or negative thus categorizing them into the different groups.

There are different ways in which stereotypes are formed. One example is studies on people’s views on others based on interactions. When an employee stereotypes a customer they

have a preconceived idea of the guest that they are about to interact with. This preconceived idea originates from somewhere. Gerber states, “people’s views of their personality attributes are affected by social interactions. Upon observing their behaviors, people make inferences about their personality traits” (Gerber 2009). Social encounters between employees and guests can affect what they think of them and what they think of their future guests. An employee can make judgments on a certain type of guests based on observing behavior in previous encounters either with that guest or with a guest that would fit a similar profile, in their mind. Evaluations are continuously building during the social interactions of humans; they are constantly changing (Gerber 2009). Based on employee guest interaction the profile they apply to a certain type of guest is constantly changing and molding. This infuses the employee to have direct stereotypic thoughts of guests during service. The more they work with guests and have interactions with them the more profound stereotypes will be of guests. “Social adaptation perspective explains what matters to people in social situations, including their interactions with outgroup members (Fiske, 2000). The way that employees are able to adapt to the encounters they have with guests also influences what they think about the guest. The human interaction between the employee and the guest has a major role in the type of stereotypes that are formed by the employee. All of the past and present experiences aide in fine tuning these stereotypes, because one function of the human memory seems to reinforce stereotypes (Fiske, 2000). Memory of all experiences combined aide in the stereotype of a guest.

Another approach in forming stereotypes of others is the evaluation of one’s self. Ideas that encourage stereotypes about other people can also come from the self evaluation of the individual making the stereotype. How one perceives themselves can have an effect on how they perceive others that they believe are in a similar category as themselves (Gerber 2009). The

perception of themselves can add or decrease to the ideas that they have of others. In literature, “Considerable evidence has indicated that individuals, self-evaluations and the evaluations of them made by others are primarily dependent on the social desirability of their attributed personality traits” (Wyer and Lambert 1994). An employee of an organization may have a certain idea of their self perception based on evaluations made by other people and made by them. What they think of themselves can have an impact on what they think of the guest they are interacting with. If an employee feels like the guest they are interacting with is similar in class and category this could affect what type of stereotype they place on the individual. Employees can respond positively to guests whom they believe might belong to their class more rapidly than to guests whom they believe are not in their class (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998). This type of thinking could also affect the type of service they are providing for the guest based on either a positive or negative perception of the guest. An employee can provide better service to a guest that they feel is in the same class as them based on a sense of trust. This is not fair to other guests in terms of providing an equal level of service to all guests in the establishment.

Thoughtful Stereotyping

Stereotypes have also been discussed as influencing judgments when social perceivers are engaged in effortful thinking about target-relevant information (Wegener, Clark, & Petty 2006). When an employee has time to sit and think about their guest it influences the stereotype they are assigning to that guest. For example if a table is waiting to be seated by the host and a waiter knows that they are going to be sat in their section they may already be making perceptions just based on the way that the guests look and act while waiting. Darley and Gross (1983) stated that “expectancy confirmation, then, does not always result from an automatic inference process. Instead, it occurs as the end product of an active process in which perceivers

examine the labeled individual's behavior for evidence relevant to their hypothesis.”(p.28) In other words for an employee to have a perceived bias of a guest they have to have some kind of evidence from a previous encounter, with a similar guest for example, in order to create that stereotype for a certain type of guest. Every experience that an employee has with a guest has an effect on the type of bias the employee assigns to that particular type of guest. Whether it is a business guest, a family, a solo diner, a tourist etc. the employee categorizes these guests differently. Each different category has a certain stereotype assigned to them. “Biased processing could include a number of mental operations that come together to influence the final judgment” (Darley & Gross 1993). A number of different types of experiences and encounters with these guests makes one type of biased per group based upon previously collected data. An employee sees the current guest that they have and has time to think about their previous guests and makes an assumption on the behavior of the current guest. Without even getting to talk to the guest or getting to know how they are there are already preconceived notions about them which start to enable either poor or great service. Neither of which is sticking to the norm of unbiased service for all guests.

Non thoughtful Stereotyping

Stereotyping also occurs when an employee does not think about it.

“Stereotyping should occur most when motivation or ability to think about the target is relatively low. This prediction is supported by many empirical investigations demonstrating increased use of stereotypes when people are under time pressure” (e.g., Freund, Kruglanski, & Shpitajzen, 1985; Kruglanski & Freund, 1983). Meaning that an employee is able to stereotype a guest as soon as they walk in because it is non thoughtful. For example, they might be able to automatically assume that they are cheap tippers, without even talking to them. They may make

this assumption maybe based on the way they dress. Tying it to the previous literature, assuming they make a non thoughtful stereotype of the current guest based on the way they dress. The reason could be that a previous encounter with a previous guest resulted in a guest dressing like a tourist and leaving a cheap tip at the end of the encounter. This associates that the employee is able to make a stereotype without even thinking about anything, just by looking at the guest. “One of the most consistent and prominent insights has been that there is often greater impact of stereotypes on judgments at lower levels of information processing” (Wegener, Clark, & Petty 2006). Employees may have a stronger stereotypic judgment of their guest when they do not have time to study and think about the guest. There biased would probably be much stronger than if they had time to study the guest and assign a different bias to them. Stereotypes can function automatically and appear everywhere at the unconscious level. Employees who stereotype actually avoid the trouble to think (Fiske 2004). The less that an employee has time to think about how their experience with the guest is going to play out the stronger the judgment is of the guest. However in both thoughtful and not thoughtful stereotypes the point is that employees are still making judgments on guests based on either no time to react or a small amount of time to react and make assumptions. This leads to the fact that customers are not receiving the service that they deserve.

Customer Expectations

Knowing what customers expect can help with reducing the guests dissatisfaction particularly if the employee is providing poor or mediocre service based on a stereotype. A business may have certain ideas about the way in which they provide service, price, and quality to maximize the business, but unless it is closely related to what your customers expect it will not work (Compton 2004). Management needs to be able to figure out what their different target

customers expect out of their business. In a hospitality setting, it is crucial for management to understand what kind of service their customers expect. In the hospitality industry service is what the interaction is all about. If this is done correctly then management can train and teach employees to know exactly what each different target customer wants. Specifically in the hospitality industry customers are the lifeblood of the business. Customers are the reason there is business and it needs to be done as flawless as possible. “Additional writings (Lynn & Grassman, 1990; Lynn et al., 1993), many of which are not based on empirical research (Dewey, 1992; Hohhertz, 1980; Romm, 1989; Schein et al., 1984; Shamir, 1983; Star, 1988), indicate or imply that a pleasant attitude and good service to the customer should lead to larger tips” (Harris 1995). Pleasant attitude and good service is a result of customer service without automatic bias. The employee is just providing a service to the customer without any conflicting ideas. Keeping the promise of what your service is all about along with these ideas is something that customers expect (Compton 2004). Being able to be friendly and courteous to guests without a discerning attitude due to a pre conceived idea about a guest is what should be executed. When an employee stereotypes a guest in any of the different ways discussed in the previous literature it automatically changes the way in which they provide service to the customer. This results in receiving service and value that is not associated with what the guest originally expected.

Developing customer loyalty and retention has been known as an important goal for service providers of all different kinds. “ Full-service restaurant customers evaluate not only food but various aspects of service experiences (e.g., special treatment, reliable services, familiarity with the provider, personal recognition by the provider, and comfort), in that full-service restaurants provide food as well as complete services to their customers (Kim & Ok, 2009; Ladhari, Brun, & Morales, 2007; Yuksel & Yuksel, 2002)” (Han, Kim 2009). A guest’s

previous experience with an organization can help them to form an attitude about the organization (Han & Kim, 2009). Just as an employee's previous experience with a guest can alter the way they think about certain guest, the same applies to customers. If customers feel as if they are not being treated the same as a previous service encounter they will begin to adapt that social interaction to stereotypes about the establishment. Stereotypes that not necessarily affect the establishment but just change the guest's perception of what they previously expected. Different social interactions at the establishment will help them to understand what the restaurant is offering and what their service is all about (Han, Kim 2009). Once this is decided they can either make the decision to frequent the restaurant or not, based on how they feel they were treated compared to what they expected. With repeated visits a customer can start to expect a certain level of service and treatment from the business. The social benefit is the emotional part of the relationship between the customer and the establishment providing the service (Butcher, Sparks, & O'Callaghan, 2002; Gwinner et al., 1998; Vazquez-Carrasco & Foxall, 2006). A guest dines in an establishment for the social benefit to them and how they are made to feel at their certain experience. This is what management needs to stay on top of and convey to employees in order for stereotypes to be minimized and an understanding of the clientele can be increased to provide quality service. Restaurant managers must be able to understand how important it is to improve the benefits for guests which lead to their perceived expectations. There is research that indicates the relational benefits that a guest perceives stems from their interactions with service employees (Gremler & Gwinner, 2000; Reynolds & Beatty, 1999). There is a correlation between what kind of service a guest receives from an employee and how they would frequent or recommend the establishment. This is an important key for management to know so that they may be able to improve their service and keep guests happy.

Conclusion

In conclusion to the literature there are different ways in which stereotyping occurs in the human mind. Some ways seem automatic and happen naturally without thinking. For example, when an employee sees a guest or has an encounter with a guest for a minute and they are already thinking of the different stereotypes associated with that particular guest. Other stereotypes evolve from previous experiences with similar guests and interactions that they might have had. A previous experience is the stepping stone for future guests of a similar class. Whether this experience was positive or negative it still affects the interaction between the two parties involved. Stereotypes can also happen when there is thought involved (Wegener, Clark, & Petty 2006). When an employee has time to think about certain stereotypes associated with the type of guest they are about to encounter. As well as perceptions of the self can affect how an employee views a guest at that time. If an employee feels like they are of the same class as the guest they may feel more comfortable and possibly give extra special treatment. All of these different aspects of stereotyping guests affect the relationship between the guest and the employee because there is no bias level of service applied to every customer that decides to visit the establishment.

Understanding what customers perceive as valuable in a service transaction is also vital to the interaction between guest and employee. Guests value certain things when visiting an establishment (Compton, 2004). The key is to understand exactly what it is that their guest perceive as valuable and important to them during their experience. Management needs to be able to apply what it is that guest value in the service experience to their employees so that they

may do the best possible job in achieving those desires of guests. The service experience between guest and employee plays a vital role in the way the guest perceives the establishment and in the end a bad service encounter can lead to it affecting the employee and establishment. A guest could show that they are unsatisfied by leaving a smaller tip, and by word of mouth which would affect the establishment as well (Han & Kim, 2009). The most effective way to deal with this is being able to understand exactly what customers expect from the experience and being able to convey that to employees. This should be done in a way that does not have to engage the stereotypes about each guest.

PART III

Introduction

Based on research discussed in the literature review there are multiple ways that employees may stereotype guests. There is also evidence that shows the effect that a negative bias about guests has on the customer service that is provided. It is clear that stereotyping guests is an unpleasant situation which may lead to discrimination and deprived service. The experience for the guest may not be what they expected due to poor service. There are ways in which to train employees and prevent such negative thoughts about guests. Training employees to reduce automatic biases using non stereotypical association and situational attribution training methods have been proven to be effective. Applying these types of training methods for employees is crucial in reducing the stereotypes that employees perceive about guests. The training is an efficient way of making the experience much more pleasant for the guest. Once the stereotypes are reduced there is more room for improved customer service.

Methodology

“Stereotype application represents the use of stereotypes when responding to a group member (Kawakami, Dovidio & vanKamp 2005).” When an employee automatically applies a stereotype to a guest the relationship is already jeopardized before anything has happened. Using training to reduce the use of these applications is the most current effective way of correcting the problem with stereotyping guests. Training employees to make situational explanations for guests instead of dispositional explanations for guests and the negative stereotypes that they associate with guests, would reduce automatic stereotyping, Stewart, Latu, Kawakami, and Myers described this as situational attribution training. The training involves

constant practice in making situational attributions to negative stereotypes that employees associate with the certain type of guest that they are dealing with. For example, an employee might have a family with small children that sit down in their section of a restaurant. The employee might make the automatic stereotype that the family is going to be extremely needy and make a mess all over the table; they might also think that their tip might not be substantial for the amount of work they might have to potentially engage in. Using the training techniques correctly would allow a manager to teach the employee a different way to think about the family that sat down. Instead they may say these attributes about the family, that, for example, -there are five people eating instead of two so I might have a larger tip because of the chance of a higher check average. The mother might want to have a glass of wine because this is her time to enjoy a meal with her family, this would also increase the check average. Introducing to employees that not all children behave badly is another good example. So now they should be able to go to the table with the thought that these children are well behaved. The training involves identifying neutral or situational attributions associated with the negative thoughts they make. It is a way to teach and train employees how to think differently and in an unbiased way about their guests. Extensive training for employees using this process will help to reduce automatic stereotyping of guests. "...studies suggest that targeting the attributional pillars on which stereotypes are built is a potentially important strategy to reduce racial bias and improve intergroup relations (Stewart, Latu, Kawakami, & Myers 2005)." The key for management is to be able to teach employees how to identify what it is that each statement they make about a guest is negative and what is positive. Focusing on keeping the negative attributions out of the thought process about guests is what will make the training effective. Finding different ways to constantly change the way employees think about guests is the main point. It is almost like

having a more positive outlook on the guests instead of automatically applying a negative attribute.

There are other ways to reduce automatic stereotyping in employees. “One particular interesting means to reduce automatic stereotype activation is non-stereotypic association training. In a series of studies, Kawakami, Dovidio, Moll, Hermsen, and Russin (2000) found that extended practice in non-stereotypic responding is capable of reducing the subsequent activation of stereotypes (Gawronski, Deutsch, Mbirkou, Seibt, & Strack 2008).” Employees are going to have to be able to continuously practice non stereotypic training in order to visibly reduce it in the workplace. This training method involves practice in dealing with actual stereotypes. Employees are given stereotypes about different people and they have to respond in a non stereotypic way. For example going back to the family, the stereotype shown to the employee might be, Families are loud and messy in the restaurant. Based off of this example given to the employee they need to find a way to respond in a non stereotypic way. There response could be the family is a party of five or six instead of two. This may cause an increased guest check and the possibility of an increased tip. Since each guest is different each stereotype is different and with practice employees will be able to recognize more and more how they make negative connotations about guests. Once they are able to see and acknowledge the negative stereotypes they make with guests it will become much clearer to associate positive comments about guests. Through using this training technique employees are able to recognize how to associate statements about guests that are non stereotypic thoughts. Then they may be able to begin to practice it more and more in the workplace. Practicing it more in the workplace allows for more time to increase the quality of customer service.

Results

The results of the different studies involved with training employees to reduce automatic stereotyping have a positive outcome in each of them. “Results showed a significant effect of the training such that automatic stereotype activation was considerably lower after than before the training. This reduction was still present 24 hours after the training, providing clear evidence for long-term effects of the training task (Gawronski, Deutsch, Mbirkou, Seibt, Strack 2008).” It is evident that once employees learn a different way of thinking it can actually alter the way they think and treat people even outside the workplace. Once there is that positive change in the way in which employees view guests it will affect the customer service positively as well. What employees think about a guest affects how they treat them. The way that the negative associations that employees make of guests can be changed is by teaching them through instance learning. The goal of non stereotypic association training is to be able to teach employees how to react to guests and their interactions in an unbiased manner. Using situational attribution training also reduces the amount of negative information that an employee assigns to a guest. Both types of training methods if used correctly can be effective in the reduction of stereotyping of guests in the organization. Training employees to understand why and how this can help them as well as make guests have a more enjoyable experience is also part of the fundamentals of having an effective program in the organization.

Applying stereotypes can be automatic especially during human interaction between employees and guests. The point of training employees to reduce these automatic stereotypes is to improve the quality of customer service that the guest receives, as well as training employees to use better judgment during the guest interactions. Using both the situational attribution method and the non stereotypic training methods on employees can help them to realize that there are different and more effective ways to approach a guest as well as more appropriate ways

in which to assign a stereotype to each guest. Practicing and incorporating these different training methods with employees should have positive results. The employees will be able to reduce automatic stereotyping of guests as studies indicate. Employees will also be able to incorporate that way of thinking in their life in general since studies also indicate that reduction in automatic bias continues well after training has taken place. The final result will be that the employee is able to provide better customer service to the guest. They are able to do this since there are not as many negative attributions to their guests that compromise the quality of service. Better customer service provided for the guest results in a happier and more satisfied guest, which in turn is better for the organization.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should incorporate more studies on the way customers feel they are treated when they are stereotyped. Studies should be done on what a guest expects out of the human interaction between an employee and the guest. It would be very useful to conduct studies on different situational interactions between guests who are being stereotyped by employees and guests who are not being stereotyped by employees. Finding out the differences in their experiences would help to understand how stereotyping really does effect customer service. Receiving feedback from guests would also help to understand what it is that they actually want from an experience. This could also help future studies with showing how stereotyping guests and poor customer service could affect loyalty to a certain organization.

Conclusions

There is sufficient research to show that stereotyping is something that almost happens naturally in human beings. Whether the degree of the stereotype is thoughtful or non thoughtful

it is still going on and is usually automatic. Stereotypes are attributed to people based on a number of different factors, whether from past situations, social status, experiences, even placing guests in ingroups and outgroups. Stereotypes do occur and it is the affect that they have on people that is where the problem lies. In this particular paper research illustrated the different ways in which employees stereotype guests. Now that the problem has been identified and how the problem occurs the next step is to find ways in which to implement plans to fix the problem. For now the most effective way in order to reduce the ways in which employee's stereotype guests is through extensive training programs implemented by the organization. The type of training programs that have been discussed in this paper that train employees how to respond and react differently to guests and situations in which they encounter every day. Situational attribution training and non stereotypical association training methods, both of which involve a change in the way an employee thinks. They train the mind to find ways in which to make the best of each situation or think in a positive manner instead of thinking negatively. Offering these training programs to employees will help them to conduct a different way of thinking about guests. When employees begin to reduce the negative perceptions about the guests they have more time to think about improving customer service. Without negative attributions to think and be upset about there is more room for making small details important to the customer come through. For example if an employee overhears a guest making a comment about their birthday they could bring them out a piece of dessert and explain to them why they did that. The employee is able to pay more attention to the guest when their mind is not bothered with negative associations that come with stereotypes. This is allowing them to be more customer service oriented. Once this training is complete the automatic bias is reduced and the relationship between employee and guest is much more unbiased. Unbiased service is the goal in

providing exceptional customer service. When service is unbiased there are no obstacles between the employee and a guest that is happy. A guest that has a great experience can turn into repeat business and is free marketing to advertise for the organization by word of mouth.

The great part about these programs is that they are able to fit into different organizations and their training programs. These training models do not have to be followed exactly. The point is to learn and study these different training methods. Understanding how and why the work builds the foundation for implementing a training model specifically designed for different organizations. The important part of this paper was to show the significance of reducing the stereotypes associated with customer service. Providing solutions to the problems is one step the next step is implementing the solutions in the workplace.

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