

## **Teamwork and Service – A Story of Success**

### **What a Combination!**

Recently my wife, Glynda, and I took a little vacation to Palm Beach, FL. Those who know me well know that a vacation still means taking the laptop and doing some work, even while sitting poolside or going to dinner.

I wanted to take her to a great restaurant in Pompano Beach that I had been to several times. The restaurant is Houston's and this particular restaurant sits right on the inter-coastal waterway. The weather was spectacular.

We arrived about 6:30 p.m. on a Friday evening. As we pulled up, the valets were on both sides of the car, opening the door for each of us. The restaurant has both indoor seating as well as 16 tables outside right on the inter-coastal waterway. The wait for a table outside was over 2 hours. We decided to wait for an inside table, where the wait was about 30 minutes. While we waited, we got a glass of wine from the outside bar and enjoyed the view.

When the greeter called us for our table, I noticed it had only been about 20 minutes. After being seated, it was just a matter of a couple of minutes more before a server greeted us and checked that we had enough to drink. A few minutes later, our main server introduced herself and took our appetizer order. The rest of the service that evening was outstanding and, for anyone who has dined at any of the Houston's family restaurants, they know what I mean by exceptional service and quality of food. I should point out that at no point did we ever feel rushed.

The teamwork in this restaurant was just as it is in most of their restaurants, and I want to share with you what happened when we finished dining.

Needless to say, there was still a wait for tables. I took note of the exact time we left our table. We walked up to the greeters podium and within 30 seconds a server came from the opposite end and was clearing off the rest of the dishes while a greeter approached to wipe down the table and set it for the next guest. As he was finishing wiping down the table, he used his ear piece to tell another greeter that the table was ready for the next guest.

This particular greeter already had the next guest waiting and began to walk to the table. She watched carefully as the young man finished setting the table and walked away in the opposite direction as the next guests were seated. This entire process took less than three minutes. Everyone knew what their job was and they performed those duties to perfection.

I stood and watched another table being cleared, the same process with different team members doing the jobs, in other words, AWESOME team-based service all the way around. The interesting part is that the service was so smooth and nonchalant that to most people it is “under the radar” service, meaning that the average guest has no idea why their experience is so good, they just know it is outstanding. Isn't that what we all strive for in our business?

The service continued as we waited for our car. There were numerous people waiting for a car and when ours arrived they had a valet on each side again to get the door for both of us.

Houston's family of restaurants is one of many organizations that practice team-based service. In lieu of teaching individuals how to perform, why not teach teamwork and maximize your benefits?

And, in case you are wondering, the servers at Houston's share only a small portion of their tips with the greeters and the service bar, and not with any of the other servers. This, along with the rest of the culture, helps in creating the mutual accountability that makes for an amazing team.

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A diverse, twenty-year background in real estate, mortgage banking, event planning, and production, as well as radio and television broadcasting, created a perfect storm that put Gregg Gregory where he is today. Gregg works hard to ensure that different personalities can work together successfully to accomplish your organization's mission, goals, and objectives.

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