

Strategies

Special Edition

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Top 5 Questions to ask regarding training your employees

1. Do you have good hiring practices and how do you know?
2. Do you offer new employees extensive training for new employees?
3. Is the vision for your company well understood by all employees?
4. Do you regularly review employees to assure they are getting the coaching they need?
5. Do your employees know the difference between controlling the conversation and controlling the decisions?



Skilled Employees Make the Difference by Julie Baka

Even though all of us know the importance of business and strategic plans, we often get in the habit of fighting fires and instant gratification. As a professional Trainer and Director for Quality Activities at PhoneSmart, I often am contacted by clients who have an urgent quality or training issue that they need fixed yesterday.

Of course we need to put the fire out so that it does not spread. As a company we must also find where these sparks are coming from. I often find that it starts with rushing the training and skipping the ongoing professional development of your employees. Our employees are our GREATEST asset and our BEST investment. As an industry we have maintenance plans for our properties. Does your company have a maintenance plan for your employees?

I recommend that you treat your GREATEST assets to a great plan. It will really keep you from fire-fighting situations. The following items should be in your employee maintenance plan.

First you must have good hiring practices. Hiring the best people that you can is very important. If your person is going to be responsible for phone sales and customer service make sure that part of your interview is done over the phone. Make sure that you call them when they are not expecting it. How do they greet you? Are they friendly? Is there a smile in their voice? If you do not hear these things in your phone call then they

are not naturally occurring and you will not hear them in their work interactions either.

Other things to consider when you are hiring are patience. Here at PhoneSmart we have a "Break Room Test" we literally set the person in the break room and tell them it will be a few minutes before the person they have the appointment with will be able to speak with them. We then let them sit and we send someone in to see how they are responding. Are they looking at the trade journals that we have in the room? Are they talking on their cell phones? Are they friendly and willing to say hello to the people who walk into the room? It is important that we hire people who are patient and curious. This is a simple way to check both of these.

Now that you have hired good people you must get them trained. A good new hire training program will consist of these basic parts: introduction, theory, application, practice, and review.

It is very tempting to jump straight to the application and practice. I was recently appointed to the Regional Library Board for my area. I spent 3 hours with the Executive Director and the President of the Board, for a preliminary introduction and history. Another 3 hour session is scheduled for the rest of my orientation. This is for a voluntary position.

KSSOA President's Message

As we enter the fourth quarter of 2009, I would like to take this opportunity to go over what KSSOA has been working on this year.

In January, KSSOA had its second annual gathering with our partner association, the Missouri Self Storage Owners Association in Las Vegas at the Inside Self Storage Conference and Trade Show. We discussed the impact the financial crisis has had on our facilities, and how we responded to the challenges presented in 2008.

In May, we moved our Spring meeting to the Kansas City area, for an excellent presentation of "going back to the basics" of boosting revenues through phone skills, and reducing expenses through property tax reduction techniques and general legal best practices.

We have set November 12 as the date for our Fall Meeting, at Crestview Country Club in Wichita. Programs will feature programs on sales skills, the Kansas and Oklahoma storage statutes, hiring and training your managers; and roundtables on a multitude of timely issues. There is registration information in this newsletter.

As we near the end of the year, hopefully, you will help the KSSOA board in getting the word out to other facility owners on the powerful membership benefits of our association. While we consider our most important mission is to be the collective voice of the storage industry in Kansas and local government circles, some of the other member perks include:

- Complimentary subscriptions to the SSA Globe and Self Storage Now
- A \$50 gift certificate to SSA publications and trade shows,
- Communication of powerful resources through Inside Self Storage, the SSA, MInico, and our other partners,
- And other powerful benefits.

Please help us grow so we can enhance our services to all storage owners throughout the state.

'See you in Wichita.

Larry Goldman, CCIM
President,
Kansas Self Storage Owners
Association



Do you spend 6 hours with your new hires making sure they understand where you came from and what your vision and mission of your organization is? If we want employees who buy into our goals, they need to understand what those goals are. Is your vision for your organization something that every employee knows and understands? Are you all rowing your boat in the same direction?

Another section of training that is easy to skip is the theory piece. Research shows that when adults understand the big picture of why we do things the way we do they are less likely to take short cuts. This is especially true when it comes to sales.

We think it is intuitive to always answer the customer's question. What we know from sales theory is that before we go straight to price which is most customers' first questions we must qualify our customer and sell our facility. It is also important to understand why it is important for the sales person to control the conversation and what the difference is between controlling the conversation and controlling the decisions.

Your employees now have the history, they understand your mission, vision and goals and you have provided them with basic sales training.

. Now it is time for application. This is the daily nuts and bolts of the work. This training we are all pretty good at. This is the part where we teach them about how to use our computer programs. How to fill in the blanks and what blanks are required to be filled in. Here comes the fun part, practice. At PhoneSmart we call it role-playing. We take the vision, the theory and the application and we pretend.

We pretend that we are customers with our trainees going through all the steps. We then coach after the role-plays to make sure that they have included the goals, theory and the done the applications correctly. We practice situations.

We practice specific phrases. We practice rude customers. We even practice what to do in an emergency just like the fire and tornado drills that you used to have in elementary school.

Your new employee has now been with your organization for a number of months and it is time to start the maintenance and professional development portion of your process. Review is an ongoing process throughout the career of your employee. It is important to go back and make sure that employees are still in touch with your visions and goals as well as going back to the basics of sales training. In our day to day work it is very easy to work on the applications and start skimping and forgetting the theory. Sometimes it is very easy to even forget the basics.

We become experts and we can nail the contract language but we forget one of the most important first lesson. Smile, be friendly and be helpful. That is really what our customers want. If you would like help evaluating and setting up a training program for your employees. PhoneSmart would be happy to help you with this.

PhoneSmart Training has the experience to help with all aspects of your training and your quality program.

Julie Baka,
Director of Training &
Total Quality Service,
1-866-639-1715 Ext.
4845
1-866-424-2120 Fax
julie.baka@phone-
smart.net

One such service we offer is our Feedback Shops, these are calls where we call and pretend to be a customer at the end of the call on of our coaches will go through the call and provide tips and critiques. PhoneSmart is also setting up a monitoring and coaching program so that we can help you keep in touch with your employee's real customer interactions and provide training for your employees who have forgotten or not mastered a skill or two.

KSSOA Annual Fall Meeting Agenda

Join KSSOA Today and Save \$15 When You Return This Membership Application and General Membership Meeting Registration Form with Fees Enclosed

Facility Name _____
Facility _____
Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____
Company _____
Name _____
Contact Name _____
Company _____
Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Send Mail to: Facility Company

Telephone () _____ FAX () _____

E-mail address _____

Website: http:// _____

If Vendor or Supplier, describe nature of product/service _____

Annual Membership Dues \$150 (\$135 if paid with the Fall meeting registration)
Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Member Signature _____

11:00 Registration & Networking

11:30 Lunch

NOON Update on KSSOA by Larry Goldman, president KSSOA

12:20 Hiring the Right Manager by Brian Byrd and David Mason, Landvest

1:00 Phone Skills by Julie Baka, PhoneSmart

2:00 Roundtable Discussions on Marketing, Technology & Finance

3:00 Kansas & Oklahoma Storage Legal Overview with Stan Masters, Masters Law Firm

3:30 Legal Q & A

Member on the Move-Rogers Strickland

This issues' member on the move is Rogers Strickland.

On May 4, 2007, Greensburg was devastated by an EF5^[4] tornado that traveled rapidly through the area, leveling at least 95 percent of the city.

The first rebuilt structure was The Care-N-Share thrift store and food pantry Rogers Strickland, owner and founder of Side-by-Side Ministries were glad to take on this build. **"The first building on Main Street is about giving. It's not about taking or making any money,"** said Strickland

Rev. Marvin George, pastor of Greensburg's First Baptist Church called the construction "phenomenal" as workers continued through days of heavy snow and winds, at one point having to chip through an inch of ice to install the roof.

"Every other construction effort came to a screeching halt, and they were still working," said George.

If you would like to recommend a member on the move send your suggestions and information to lgoldman@ccim.net

KSSOA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Kansas Self Storage Owners Association is to support the success and best interest of self storage owners within the State of Kansas through educational programs, state legislative representation, and access to vendor resources.

Fall Meeting
November 12, 2009, 11:00 am Registration
Crestview Country Club in Wichita
1000 N 127th St E
Wichita, KS 67206-2899

Facility Name _____

Contact Person _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

Names of persons attending (Please print):

_____ KSSOA Member? Yes No

_____ KSSOA Member? Yes No

_____ KSSOA Member? Yes No

For more information, visit our website at <http://www.kssoa.org>

Join KSSOA today and pay \$135 for initial Membership Fee

Total Registration Fee(s): _____

Membership Fee(s): _____

Total amount enclosed: _____

**FALL MEETING
EARLY
REGISTRATION**

Register before
October 31, 2009

**Take advantage of
these affordable
rates!**

KSSOA member:
\$65/individual,
\$50/guest
Non-member:
\$75/individual,
\$60/guest

**After October 31,
2009**

KSSOA member:
\$75/individual,
\$60/guest
Non-member:
\$85/individual,
\$70/guest

KSSOA Issue 01 October 2009



RE/MAX Commercial
10870 Benson Drive, Suite 2160
Overland Park, Kansas 66210