

No one can make you serve customers well. That's because great service is a choice. Harvey MacKay tells a wonderful story about a cab driver that proved this point.

When the airport cab pulled up, the first thing Harvey noticed was that the taxi was polished brightly. Smartly dressed in a shirt, tie, and black slacks, the driver jumped out to open the back passenger door for Harvey.

He handed me a card and said: 'I'm Wally, your driver. While I'm loading your bags, please read my Mission Statement: "To get my customers to their destination in the quickest, safest and cheapest way possible in a friendly environment." This blew Harvey away. Especially when he noticed the inside of the cab was as clean as the outside!

As he slid behind the wheel, Wally said, 'Would you like a coffee? I have a thermos of regular and one of decaf.' I said jokingly, 'No, I'd prefer a soft drink.' Wally smiled and said, 'No problem. I have a cooler up front with regular and Die Coke, water and OJ.' Almost stuttering, Harvey said, 'I'll take a Diet.' Handing him his drink, Wally said, 'If you'd like to read, I have The Wall Street Journal, Time, Sports Illustrated and USA Today.'

As we pulled away, Wally handed me another card. 'These are the stations I get and the music they play, if you'd like to listen to the radio.' And as if that weren't enough, Wally told Harvey that he had the air conditioning on and asked if the temperature was comfortable for him.

Then he advised Harvey of the best route to his destination for that time of day. He also let him know that he'd be happy to chat and tell him about some of the sights or, if Harvey preferred, to leave him with his own thoughts.

'Tell me, Wally,' Harvey asked the driver, 'have you always served customers like this?' Wally smiled into the rear view mirror. 'Not always. In fact, it's only been in the last two years.

My first 5 years, I spent my time complaining like the other cabbies. Then I heard personal growth guy, Wayne Dyer, on the radio. "He had written, 'You'll See It When You Believe It'. Dyer said 'if you get up in the morning expecting to have a bad day, you'll rarely disappoint yourself'. He said, 'Stop complaining! Differentiate yourself from your competition. Don't be a duck. Be an eagle. Ducks quack and complain. Eagles soar above the crowd.

'That hit me right between the eyes,' said Wally. 'Dyer was talking about me. I was quacking and complaining, so I decided to change my attitude and become an eagle. I looked around at other cabs and drivers. The cabs were dirty, the drivers unfriendly, and the customers unhappy. So I decided to make some changes. I put in a few at a time. When my customers responded well, I did more.'

"I take it that has paid off for you," Harvey said. "It sure has," Wally replied. "My first year as an eagle, I doubled my income from the previous year. This year I'll probably quadruple it. You were lucky to get me today. I don't sit at cabstands anymore. My customers call me for appointments on my cell phone or leave a message on my answering machine. If I can't pick them up myself, I get a reliable cabbie friend to do it and I take a piece of the action."

Wally was phenomenal. He was running a limo service out of a Yellow Cab. I've probably told that story to 50 cabbies over the years, and only 2 embraced the idea. Whenever I go to their cities, I call them. The rest of the drivers quacked like ducks and told me all the reasons they couldn't do any of what I was suggesting. Wally the Cab Driver made a different choice. He decided to stop quacking like a duck and start soaring like an eagle.

How about you? Duck or Eagle? Quack or Soar!

The ball is at **your** feet!



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