



SURVEY SENSE

articles by The Center For Survey Research

Hospitality - Entertainment - Gaming - Travel - Luxury Culture

STANDARDIZING YOUR STANDARDS

Setting standards for yourself, your employees, a team, or your business should be one of your standard operating procedures. Without standards, how would you know how well you or others are doing? And just where do you set the standards? Setting standards too high can lead to a demoralized, lackluster group of employees. Setting standards too low can lead to complacency, lack of effort, and overall lethargy in your company.

Setting standards is not easy. It can change with each type of company or property, region, industry segment, brand, department or team. Can you imagine setting a standard for your hotel's sales team to be the same as for baseball players, for instance? A player that hits for average over .300 usually commands a salary in the millions, a bonus and is considered one of the top performers in his field! What if your sales department met those same standards and made sure your hotel was 30% full each year? There would be no "each year." You would be out of business!

What if the chef in your restaurant set a standard in the kitchen for the grill staff to meet the standards of a good NFL quarterback? While completing over 50% of his passes over a number of years might get a quarterback consideration for the hall of fame, having only 50 or 60 percent of your steaks and chops coming off the grill with the correct degree of doneness should only allow for consideration for the unemployment line.

Standards, when set, must be able to meet the expectations of management, as well as be attainable and workable for each employee. Helping to find the fine line between the two that will lead to peak performance is the forte of Ference Leadership and Strategy and The Center For Survey Research. With over 20 years of survey experience, we offer custom employee satisfaction surveys that aid in achieving the standard of excellence that management looks for in their service to guests.

Having reliable feedback from employees about training and development levels that are necessary to perform their job and thusly meet the standards set for that job is essential. Because surveys can be customized, they offer both the fill-in response and narrative response format. Employees can detail the pros and cons in total confidentiality as to their level of training and standards set for them.

Questions pertaining to how associates support each other within their department, the level of recognition by management for their effort and how performance reviews are conducted, are all important factors in determining the status of standards set.

Key to being sure that standards set are being met is the documentation. Standards that are merely verbally conveyed to associates may not be adhered to as energetically as those that are in writing. Printed standards of work and service should be handed to each employee upon their hire, or to each employee upon committing to a new standard. Additionally, where possible, posters listing departmental standards can be utilized as positive reminders. The standards should be enforced and overseen by management on an equal and fair basis, for all shifts and all personnel that deal with a given standard.

YOUR OPINIONS

Employee Satisfaction Surveys
Customer Satisfaction Surveys
Management 360 Surveys

OUR CONFIDENTIALITY

Professional Neutral Party
Reliable Feedback
Efficient, Timely Reports

REAL RESULTS

Reach Strategic Goals
Return on Individuals
Develop Trust and Loyalty



Gene Ference, Ph.D. is a service-industry insider. His degrees in management and organizational development from Cornell University are backed by over 30 years of industry experience. He is an accomplished speaker and group facilitator, routinely conducting management workshops, leadership retreats and strategy meetings. He has developed and implemented research surveys internationally, worked with Fortune 100 companies, contributed to client national quality awards, and designed appropriate strategies for optimizing human capital and growing organizational profits.

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Customers want and even need to know that a consistent standard of quality will meet their expectations, no matter the day of the week or time of day. There is no future for gaining guest loyalty when your kitchen cannot produce consistent quality of food, for example. Let's say that your head chef creates a masterful entrée that is thoroughly enjoyed by a patron one evening. That same patron, having raved to their friends or colleagues who they have invited to join them, frequents the restaurant two weeks later and orders the very same entrée. However, because there is another chef working that evening, the meal served is totally different looking and/or tasting. While the entrée is certainly a quality product, it doesn't meet the expectations of the customer and the result is disappointment.

In other words, both chefs should have the same recipe and each should be able to replicate the standard for this or any other food item that leaves the kitchen. Equally true, housekeeping personnel should have written standards of exactly how a room should be serviced, what essentials and amenities should be included each and every day, as well as have a timetable for completely servicing a room.

Including a chocolate on the pillow during turn down service one night, and not including one the next night, may lead to an unhappy guest when the guest's seven year old child is looking forward to a chocolate reward each evening, and not finding one, has a temper tantrum that ruins the night for an almost loyal guest.

In short, gathering employee suggestions and survey feedback, married with a detailed listing of standards can only lead to a win-win situation. Employees win because they know exactly what is expected of them and can strive to meet or exceed the goals set. The customer wins as well, with consistent service and quality, turning them into loyal guests and satisfied customers who in turn tell a friend, who in turn tell another friend,
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Don't be afraid to set the standard for peak performance and excellence!

Go For It, Make It Happen, and Enjoy The Best of ROI³
Return-On Individuals, Integrations, and Investments

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