

Turbo Leadership Systems™

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

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OUTSIDE THE BOX



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Steps
eliminated
speed up
service



TURBO
LEADERSHIP SYSTEMS

Ace Hardware

Yesterday afternoon I stopped at Ace Hardware. I had several things on my list including:

- a real straw broom,
- a paint brush,
- glue for a loose chrome strip on my car,
- bolts to put a kitchen table back together, and
- a replacement for my favorite garden tool which is especially good for digging out blackberry bushes.



A young man warmly greeted me, "Is anyone helping you?" He guided me from item to item, helped me pick out a wonderful broom, the bolts I needed, and so on until we completed my list except they did not stock the garden tool I wanted. He used his ACE catalog computer to see if he could order one for me. In just a few moments we located it, he assured me it would only take three days to get it, and my order was placed.



This was amazing customer service. It was what you might call an "old-fashioned" customer service experience. This experience reminded me so much of when I was just a little younger than him working in a small hardware store. I helped customers buy putty and nails by the pound, find special bolts, screws, tools, and paint the same way he helped me.

I was surprised he had the authority to order the garden tool without approval or permission. More than 50 years ago I could have written it down in our order book for someone else to read, try to locate the item over the phone, or ask our wholesale sales representative about it on his weekly visit, and then maybe order it.

Any steps, all steps eliminated from the process speed up service, reduce costs, and minimize the opportunity for error. Decisions slow the process and asking permission adds another step to the process. The young man is trusted by his boss and he trusted me - the customer.

I knew when I checked out with a real person helping me, no waiting line or a self-check computer, that I was in a business with real customer focus.

I was reminded of why I dislike going to the big box stores. If there were more locally owned hardware stores like the one that helped me find exactly what I wanted the box stores wouldn't exist. Their prices are no different, parking is difficult, the one thing the big box stores have is a larger selection. They are presumed to have "everything" you're looking for. Having everything you need isn't very valuable if you can't find it. And if you can't find someone to help you find it - what good is it anyway?

One thing is certain: When your customer service beats your competitor's customer service, you will have a competitive advantage that can't be beaten. It makes no difference if you are business-to-business (B2B) or business-to-consumer (B2C) when your customer service out-serves, out-performs, and out-cares for the customer no one can take your place. Everyone would prefer, when they can, to choose the local provider who provides great customer service.



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Fall **Leadership Development Labs** Portland, OR /Vancouver, WA

"Putting the Super in Superintendent"

Give Larry a call to schedule a FREE 50-minute workshop Call: 503-691-2867 or
email your request to: admin@turbols.com

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