

CHAPTER IV

COLLABORATION, MENTORSHIP, AND ADVISORY EXCELLENCE

Each experience has enriched my perspective, reinforcing the importance of purpose, quality, and impact in both professional and personal endeavors.

Let's embark on a journey through the realms of collaboration, mentorship, and advisory roles, examining how these experiences have enriched my life as a leader, colleague, advisor, mentor, entrepreneur, business partner, and father.

Revitalizing the Customer Service Industry

As a frequent flyer, there is a level of customer service that is expected in the air. The courtesy of stewards, attentive to the needs of the passengers, can constitute what makes for a pleasant flight.

Unfortunately, it has been my experience that effective customer service is becoming difficult to come by and it is of the utmost importance to restore its integrity.

On a recent flight to Rhode Island, I settled into my seat and noticed a "TV Not Working" sign glaring back at me. The first flight attendant who assisted me in solving the problem simply turned the TV off and back on. Though this was something I had already tried, my trust was with the professional. He insisted that I give it a few minutes and I obliged.

Twenty minutes later, I sought out another flight attendant. She said she would try to reset the monitor

from the main terminal and suggested I allow for some wait time. Ideally, this attendant would have followed up with me, but instead, I found myself seeking assistance once again.

It was a half-hour after that when I decided to press the flight attendant call button to get their attention for a third time. Surprisingly, no one answered my call. One can imagine how problematic this would have been if I were experiencing a medical emergency. I found myself questioning if this is how customer service representatives are initially taught to interact with customers, or if this type of disregard is developed over time.

Thanks to the readiness of phone cameras and easy access to social media postings, news channels have no problem finding material regarding passenger related incidents and mid-air conflicts among travelers and crew. Perhaps one way to solve the problem is to take a step back and observe how the customer is being treated by the professional. I am in

no way excusing ill behavior, there are certainly times when a customer irrationally lashes out on an employee, but what exactly causes a customer to get to this point? Does it have anything to do with the way a customer is being treated?

Some may blame the poor professionalism of various customer service representatives on recent COVID safety measures. Personally, I have noticed a major decline in customer service since before the 2020 Pandemic. Maybe this global crisis was the final blow to a once positive and efficient line of work.

The moral of this article is neither about the ill-working TV monitor, nor is it specifically about the airline business. It is about our responsibility to stand up for what we deserve as customers, and to take pride in the treatment of the consumer as business leaders. Effective customer service peered with a positive experience is a sure way to gain a favorable reputation for any business.

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The article *"Revitalizing the Customer Service Industry"* resonates deeply with my experiences as a mentor and advisor. Just as it advocates for rejuvenating customer service through innovation and technology, I've often found myself in the role of guiding organizations in DoD Manufacturing toward operational excellence. Collaborating with clients to implement modern technologies, streamline supply chains, and optimize processes has been a cornerstone of my advisory work. The emphasis on customer-centricity aligns with my belief that understanding and exceeding client expectations is essential for success in any industry.

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Why You Should Keep LinkedIn Connections Under 250

I separate my personal and professional social media profiles; they are appropriately utilized for vastly different reasons. I use LinkedIn solely to get relevant news on past, current and future

clients, and business network and industry highlights. The more focused and clean the feed is, the more beneficial it will be for business. Therefore, I find that connecting with 250 profiles is the ideal amount to effectively build a professional brand.

I underestimated the importance of social media earlier in my career. Presently, I see it as a great tool to achieve worldwide connections and push marketing tactics, but this was not always the case; I definitely did not do my homework before I signed up. After examining what led to successful business practices, I decided to revamp my account.

Based on my personal analysis, I found the following best practices lead to successful professional networking:

- **Know the difference between Facebook and LinkedIn** - LinkedIn is a site to showcase professionalism and network with others involved in a common field. It is not the

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