





You roll  
out the red  
carpet for  
our visitors  
in grand  
**LOUISIANA**  
**STYLE**

# Louisianatravel.com Virtual Visitor Center



**GUMBEAUX GATOR**  
**Goodwill**  
**Ambassador**  
**Extraordinaire**



**HEY DON'T FORGET ABOUT ME!**



## **Our Volunteer Team...**

Is always 'on stage' to present a warm and welcoming performance to our visitors!

# YOU ARE A VALUED VOLUNTEER

- Represent community/region/state/brand
- Sales ambassador
- Enthusiastic supporter
- First impression maker
- Directly reflect our commitment to hospitality and the visitor experience
- Deserving of a refresher in customer service



# WHAT CAN VISITORS STOP – SEE AND EXPERIENCE IN OUR AREA?

- a. Creole Natural Trail
- b. Museums & Art Galleries
- c. Outdoor Activities
- d. Casino Gaming
- e. Beaches
- f. Birding
- g. Festivals
- h. All of the above



10 Fun Things  
To Do In  
Lake Charles

# NAME SOME PARKS IN OUR AREA?

- a. Sam Houston Jones State Park
- b. Niblett's Bluff Park
- c. Lakefront Promenade
- d. Prien Lake Park
- e. Heritage Square
- f. CPPJ Parks
- g. Others?





# GLOWING REMARKS ABOUT YOUR ★ VISITORS CENTER ★

- Very cool – very clean – employees were very helpful – knowledgeable
- Excellent facilities – attractive lobby – friendly staff – very helpful
- Good coffee – nice lake – alligator
- A town with plenty of activities and great food
- Visitor Center...much more – ‘GATEWAY TO THE AREA’ – very inviting – first-class staff – went out of their way to help
- Enjoyable to browse and bring kiddos
- Good photo opportunity – walking trail leading to alligator exhibit



# GLOWING REMARKS from your Visitors

## ★ HISTORIC DISTRICT ★

- Stunning example of Victorian Grandeur
- Worth the Drive
- Nicely preserved
- Pretty Area – Varied Styles
- Live Oaks and Front Porches
- Beautiful area to visit



Charming – Proud Past – Preservation  
Echoes Pride and Ownership



# GLOWING REMARKS from your Visitors

## ★ ACCOMMODATIONS ★

### Positives:

- Clean – centrally located – **Holly and Staff** were amazing – great happy hour and lounge offering
- Beds were amazing; located close to casinos
- **Rodney** was super; didn't hassle a driver for a CC to secure a room; gave a late-check-out
- Housekeeping kept it clean
- Wonderful people – eager to please
- B&B: cozy, **Dan** is kind – hospitable – great chef (gourmet breakfast)
- Check-in experience...amazing
- Staff willing to show room in advance
- Contagious energy

### Negatives:

- Sticky bathroom floor
- 100 bed bug bites
- If you offer breakfast on your website...you should back it up
- Wi-Fi...Unsecure network
- Stained chairs in the lobby
- Ignored by front desk clerk
- Had to call 3-4 times for room service/housekeeping

Perception  
**IS**  
Reality



# **Spoke** and **Wheel** Concept

**The wheel:** Tourist/visitor

**The spoke:** Your hospitality team:

**CVB, Welcome Centers, Attractions,  
Restaurants, Lodging, Transportation,  
Recreation, Retailers, Recreation, Chamber,  
Convenience Markets, etc.**



# Servicing the Visitor

**A community-wide partnership!**

**Primary beneficiaries of the travel dollar:**

<u>Business</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Restaurants	32%
Retail	27%
Lodging	16%
Transportation	13%
Recreation	12%



# REORGANIZE — REDIRECT — REFOCUS

Are you willing to reorganize, redirect, and refocus your efforts to attract the changing visitor?

- ▶ John Nesbitt: “Want to sell, train, manage, and motivate? First you must entertain.”
- ▶ Harvard Business Review: “The Corporation is primarily a stage upon which you showcase your bid for employees, customers and prospects.”
- ▶ Nations Business, U.S. Chamber of Commerce cover story entitled, “Enter-tailing.” This new word is a combination of entertaining and retailing.



**Anybody can pour a cup of coffee, pass out a map or brochure, give directions, be a tour guide or sell Lake Charles/SW Louisiana as a destination...**



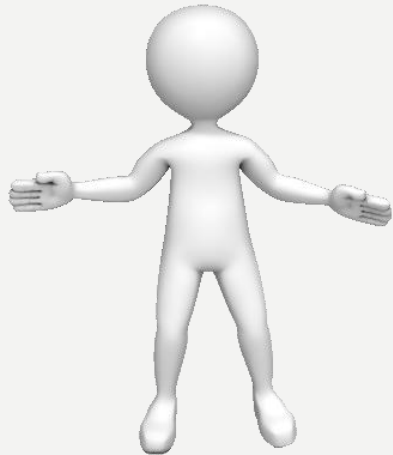
**or can they?**

The organizations that are the best at these things, recruit people with a positive attitude and good interpersonal skills and transform them from

**ORDER-TAKERS TO SERVICE PROVIDERS.**

The quality of our team is the  
“difference-maker” between an  
**ENGAGING AND ENERGETIC**  
**VISITOR EXPERIENCE VS. a**  
**LIFELESS, ROBOTIC ONE.**

It can also make the difference  
between a **SATISFIED VISITOR** and  
an **DISSATISFIED VISITOR.**



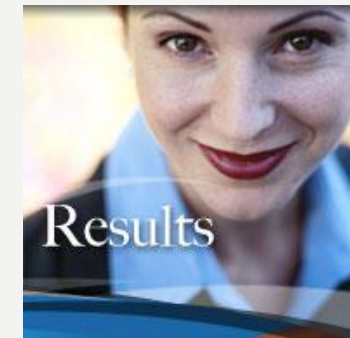
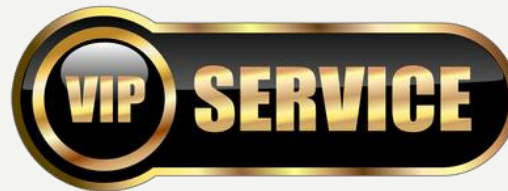


# KEY VISITOR EXPECTATIONS

- Attention
- Assistance
- Results
- Respect
- Understanding
- VIP Service



R-E-S-P-E-C-T



# The Self-Test Formula for Customer Service

## Knowing & Doing are Not the Same!

- Be friendly and accommodating first.
- Attitude proceeds service.
- First impressions are priceless.
- Give customers options.
- Don't confuse policies and procedures with customer service.



# Ground Rules for Great Service

- Project **OWNERSHIP** vs. RENTERSHIP
- Remember your **OWN EXPERIENCES**
- Project **FULL ATTENTION**
- Praise the “**TALKERS**” over the “walkers”
- Take “**FIRST-PERSON**” responsibility
- **ASK** probing questions
- Ensure a “**HAPPY ENDING**”
- Every interaction ends with a “**THANK YOU**”



**A memorable service experience doesn't just happen!**

# ONSTAGE... CREATES THE MAGIC

- Is more than a physical location
- It's an attitude
- When you are **“ONSTAGE”** you become a **CAST MEMBER** – a critical part of creating an illusion of a smooth – seamless – memorable experience



# RED – YELLOW – GREEN

When a visitor calls or walks in your door  
...an opportunity and choice awaits you:

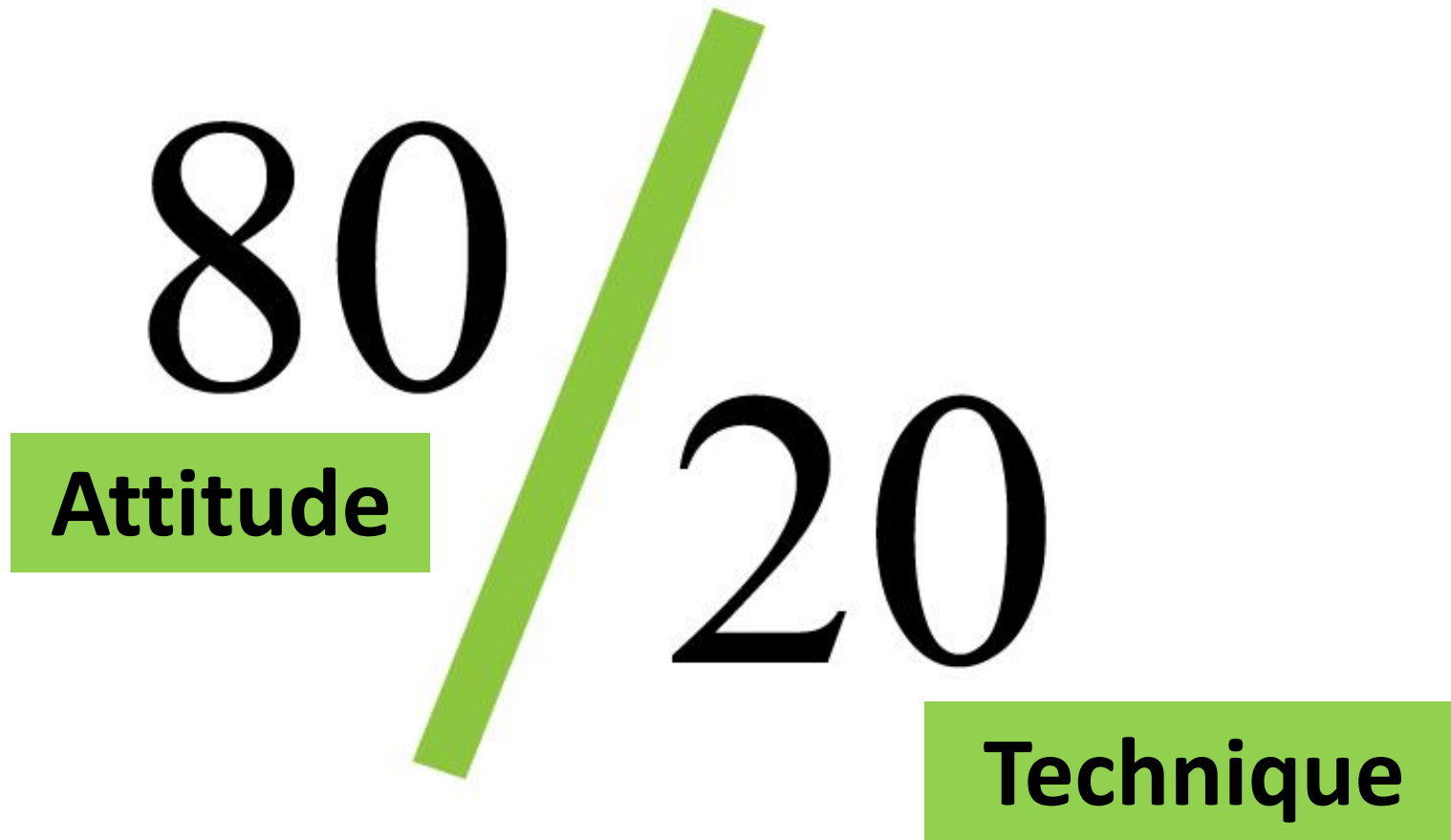
**MO'**: **M**issed **O**pportunities

**ECHO's**: **E**very **C**ontact **H**as **O**pportunity

The “VISITOR’S PERCEPTION”  
of good or bad service is a direct reflection  
of your community, region and state.



# Customer Service Is...



# High tech is important



**HOWEVER, IT'S ALWAYS  
SUPERSEDED BY 'HIGH TOUCH'**

# **YOUR DAY GOES HOW THE CORNERS OF YOUR MOUTH TURN.**

A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.





# DOES STRESS EVER SNEAK UP ON YOU?



Your attitude in how you handle it makes all the difference.

**What can we learn from this toddler?**



# Effective Communication

## COMMUNICATION DYNAMICS:

1. **Verbal** – your choice of words
2. **Vocal** – the tone of your voice
3. **Nonverbal** – your body language, facial expressions, appearance, eye contact, posture



What two key communication words can you unscramble out of these six letters?



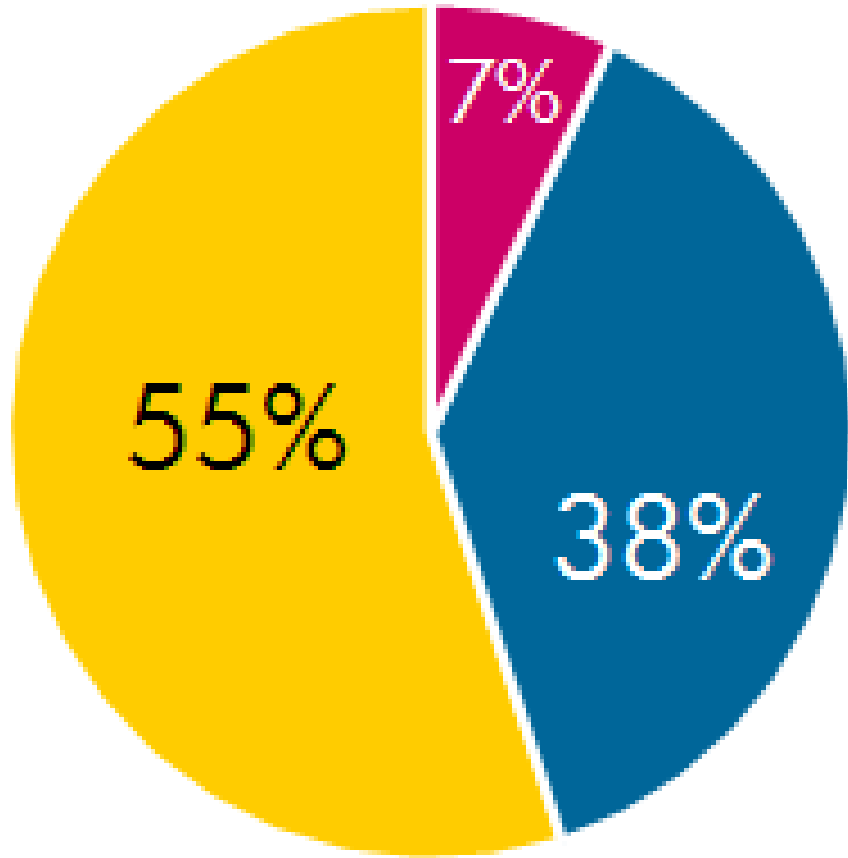
**Silent**

**nitles**



**Listen**

# HOW FACE-TO-FACE MESSAGES ARE INTERPRETED



## Elements of Personal Communication

- 7% spoken words
- 38% voice, tone
- 55% body language

# Invaluable Communication Tips

- ASK rather than tell
- BE SENSITIVE how you address people
- When in doubt...DON'T GO THERE
- Think BEFORE YOU SPEAK
- Tone is 5 TIMES more important than words
- Good manners are AGELESS AND GENDERLESS
- Project a friendly, enthusiastic and energetic tone



# Invaluable Communication Tips Cont'd.

- Smile
- Slow down
- Ensure your diction is clear and understandable
- Pause; use appropriate gestures
- Avoid jargon/slang
- Professionalism is noticed!



**“The people answering the phones are a major competitive asset – or liability.”**

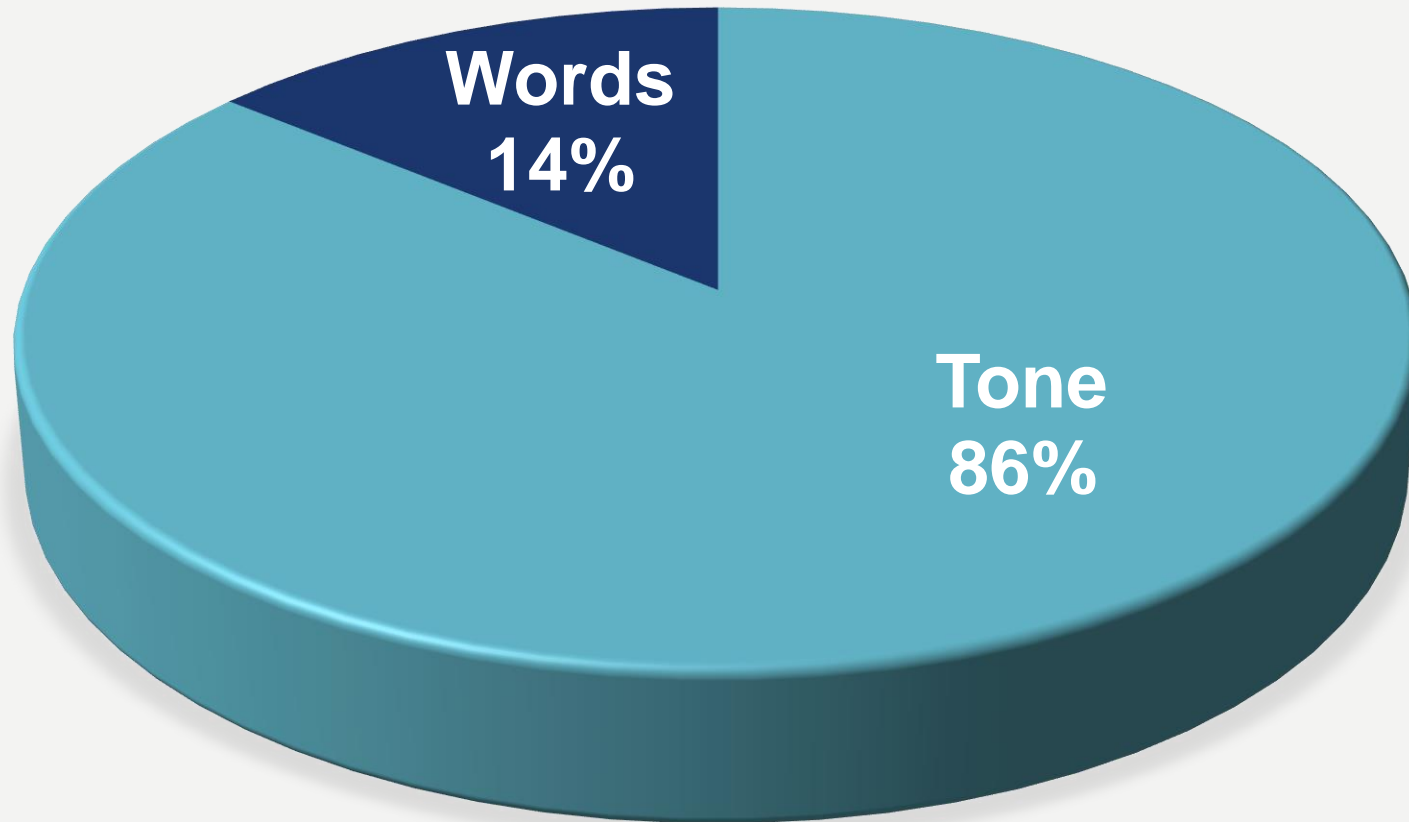
Tom Peters, Coauthor, *In Search of Excellence*

**To really thrive on your job, you need to be a competitive asset when you use the phone.**





# Telephone Communication



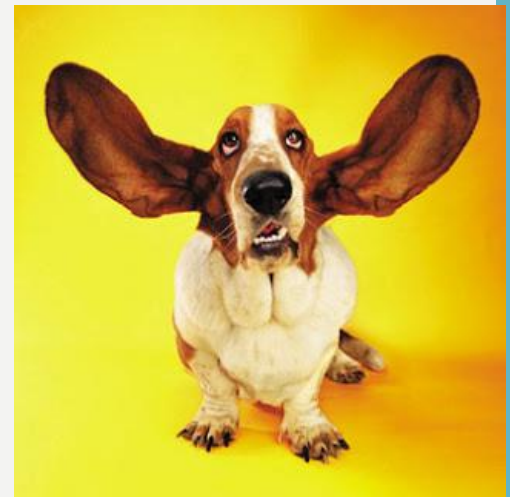


**Your vocal skills take  
front and center stage!**

**PEOPLE HEAR YOUR VOICE  
BEFORE YOUR WORDS**

# Listening...a Critical Skill

- Provides more information which equals more opportunity to promptly help
- Helps control the “foot and mouth” disease
- Makes the other person feel important
- You can assist more effectively



# Managing the Challenging Customer

**“It’s not that the customer is always right, but that the customer has to be treated with respect and dignity.”**



*Leslie Byrne, Former Director of the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs*

# Never compromise...

1. The best solution for the customer.
2. Your professional behavior!

Customers and coworkers are always listening and watching to see if your words match your behavior!



**The quality of your customer  
service will never exceed  
The quality of the people providing it.**



**"I've learned  
that people will  
forget what you  
said, people will  
forget what you  
did, but people  
will never forget  
how you made  
them feel."**

**Maya Angelou**





“Let no one ever come to you without leaving **BETTER** and **HAPPIER**.  
Be the living expression of God’s kindness:  
Kindness in your **FACE**, kindness in your  
**EYES**, kindness in your **SMILE**.”



READY FOR THE FEELING?



**Volunteers are paid...not  
because they are worthless,  
but because they are  
priceless.**



# Thank you for your Gracious, Cajun Hospitality

*This Group!!*



*Rocks!!!!*