



**Thank You for the
Opportunity to
Serve!!!**

This will be my last correspondence to you as the CCSMG President, and I want to tell you what a pleasure it has been to work with such a wonderful organizational Board of Directors. I can truly say, that from the beginning, our efforts have been focused on serving you, our membership. Collectively, we are so proud of the 2004 Conference in Orlando, and the opportunities you were given to network with such a fine group of peers. Hopefully you were able to obtain support and encouragement, while being given the opportunity to share and absorb the many ideas that were presented both “online” during our breakout sessions, and “off-line” as you spent time one-on-one, or in small groups during your time together. The Disney World Organization was delightful to work with, and really helped us keep the necessary focus on you, the guest.

As I have lead the group this year, I knew the day would come, when I would turn over the leadership role to Kim Boyer, your 2005 CCSMG President, and there is no one more capable to lead us through the coming year. Kim’s talents have been evidenced by her long-standing commitment to the customer service profession, and more specifically the CCSMG Organization. She has a passion for the group that is truly second to none, and because she has served in various positions on the board already, there is no one person who knows as much as she does about the “inner-workings”, and structure of the group. I am very privileged to call her my peer, but more importantly, my friend. I look

forward to the fun and exciting things she will bring as our President for 2005.

Speaking of excitement, wait till you see the site for our 2005 CCSMG Conference, it is absolutely beautiful. Those of you who were able to attend the 2004 conference will remember the fact that we gave you a choice between three potential conference sites for 2005. Well, San Diego, CA won, and several of the board members were able to make a site visit to the San Diego area, and have found it to be a REAL WINNER!!! The Coronado Marriott (our conference hotel) is just beautiful, and their staff is excited about hosting our 2005 event. The hotel amenities are wonderful, and because they have their own ferry that crosses the bay to the mainland, it makes getting around quite easy too. The 2005 conference packets will be out shortly, and you will want to be sure to reserve your spot early for this dynamic and extraordinary event.

As I say farewell, I would be remiss if I didn’t mention all of the wonderful board members who have made my position so positive. I have already mentioned Kim Boyer, but the rest of the team is: Rick Nelson, Ayanna Young, Sheldon Ellis, Barb Melanson, Pat Shay, Will Barrett, Paul Mitchell, Sandy Rotolo, Joe Silvia, and Peggy Zimmer. These people are the real champions of the organization, as they work tirelessly to provide for the needs of our membership, and I appreciate them and their support throughout 2004. To our new board members: Ellen Hedden, and Michele Foust, I say thank you for dedicating your time and talents to the CCSMG Board. I know the time you serve will prove to be a great personal and professional reward.

In closing, I look forward to many great and wonderful things in 2005, and hope this correspondence finds each of you well beyond belief!!!

Sincerely,

Dwayne A. Pinnell

Dwayne A. Pinnell
2005 CCSMG President



Spring Conference 2005

*“Customer Service: It
Doesn’t Have to be a
Zoo”*

In the continuously changing world of customer service, it is probably safe to say that it sometimes feels like a zoo. As we face these challenges, it is important that we restore our energies and obtain tools that enable us to continue moving forward. The CCSMG has the answer!

The 2005 Spring Conference is being held May 25th through 28th at the Coronado Island Marriott Hotel, Coronado (San Diego), CA. Registration will begin on Wednesday afternoon from 3 pm to 7 pm. We will kick off the conference with an early reception from 6 pm to 7 pm, for first time attendees and mentors. The remaining conference attendees will join us at 7 pm. Informative keynote and breakout sessions will be held throughout the day on Thursday and Friday.

On Friday, May 27th, we will be heading to the world famous San Diego Zoo for our gala networking event. This will include a 45-minute, three mile guided tour around the grounds, followed by an evening of private dining under the stars.

The CCSMG Board spent a great deal of time reviewing the surveys after our 2004 Disney conference, and are planning the breakout session topics based on your feedback. Topics will include SAP, Six Sigma, and E-commerce, as well as open-forum discussions on Sarbanes Oxley, Customer Service Best Practices and Benchmarking. More details about the breakout topics will be mailed out during the 1st quarter of 2005.

Conference Registration

Registration packets have been included in this mailing. The pre-conference registration rate is \$795, for registrations received on or before February 14, 2005. The rate for all registrations received after that date is \$895. You may register either by mail, fax or on-line at www.ccsmg.org. For added convenience, you may pay by check or credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express).

Please do not wait too long to register for this highly anticipated event. We look forward to seeing you in San Diego in May.





SHOPPING AROUND?



CCSMG works hard to provide its members with an annual conference that members will find exciting, relevant, and economical. The 2005 CCSMG conference, in San Diego, CA, will be no different. Compare the return on investment with CCSMG to other conferences.

CCSMG
San Diego, CA May 25-28, 2005
4 day conference \$795

Help Desk Institute 2005
Las Vegas, NV
5-day conference from \$1395

Call Center Week 2004
Las Vegas, NV
2-day conference from \$1999

ICCM 2004
Chicago, IL
3-day conference from \$1195

**North American Conference on
Customer Management 2004**
Orlando, FL
3-day conference from \$1695

SOCAP 2004
New York, NY
4-day conference from \$1495

****Price comparison not based early bird discounts and do not include pre or post conferences options.
Some comparisons based on 2004 events.*



Roundtrip Airfares To San Diego		
(From Cheaptickets.com, December 10, 2004)		
(Departing May 25th, returning on May 28th or 29th, 2005)		
	<u>W/O Sat Night Stay</u>	<u>With Sat Night Stay</u>
From Newark	\$302 (Continental)	\$302 (Continental)
From Chicago	\$297 (Frontier)	\$224 (United)
From Houston	\$249 (Continental)	\$279 (Continental)
From Atlanta	\$360 (Frontier)	\$360 (Frontier)
From Charlotte	\$480 (US Air)	\$469 (United)
From Dallas	\$319 (Frontier)	\$319 (Frontier)
From Toronto	\$390 (US Air)	\$452 (Continental)

Okay, so when you think of traveling to San Diego in the springtime when the weather there is *just perfect* (when is it not?), you hear “*Ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching!*” Not true! Above are some airfares currently available. The best advice for any destination: book early to get the travel times you want and the best available fare.



CALL FOR SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS

The CCSMG is now offering opportunities for sponsorship or exhibition at our 2005 Spring Conference in San Diego, California. Sponsorship is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your participation as a major player in the chemical, pharmaceutical, and petroleum industries, develop strategic positioning as an industry leader, and gain extensive visibility with the top customer service experts from these companies.

Exhibitor benefits include two full conference registrations, one industry related article in our quarterly newsletter “*The Pipeline*”, the opportunity to be a Presenter/Facilitator for sessions, and much more. Sponsorship benefits include all exhibitor benefits, plus recognition in the on-site conference program, introduction and verbal recognition during the event sponsored, presentation opportunities, and more.

The CCSMG also offers incentives to individuals who provide leads that result in an actual booking of a new vendor/sponsor. For more details, or if you are interested in becoming a Sponsor or Vendor for this year’s conference, please contact Sandy Rotolo at srotolo@genchemcorp.com, or call (800) 956-7467.



BACK AT THE THINK TANK

Yes, we will again have our familiar discussions at the upcoming CCSMG meeting in San Diego on “Customer Service Best Practices.” This is a group discussion on any relevant topic that happens to come up. We have discussed many different issues in the past, and in each case the shared information was valuable to the audience. We have discussed the following –

- Customer Surveys
- CSR Training
- Complaint Handling
- Lead Times and Communication to Customers
- Staffing Structure
- CSR Motivation
- E-Business to Touch less Orders

There was a lot of good discussion generated around the topic of CSR training at the meeting in Orlando. Everyone has some type of plan in place, but everyone is eager to learn other methods. Some of the ideas we discussed were –

- Have other departments make presentations at team meetings
- Meet with the sales force to exchange customer information, at least 2 times per year. Other times have a teleconference.
- Travel with sales force

- Assist the sales force by providing certain reports, but be cautious that they don't become totally dependent on Customer Service for those reports
- Rockhurst University will tailor a program for your company
- A small group of CSR's can be more challenging to train than a larger one
- Have CSR's attend CCSMG conferences (now that's a great idea!)

If you have a topic that you would like to have some general discussion about, plan on attending the Best Practices session in May and bring it up. Or if you just want to sit in and see what comes up, that is just as beneficial. Because, at these sessions, we talk about whatever the group desires. And it is fun! See you in San Diego!



REGIONAL FOCUS GROUPS - CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

You are invited to join or form a Regional Focus Group to benchmark and exchange methods on how member companies in your area approach core customer service competencies and processes.

The idea is to select a topic or topics from the annual conference's list of "Customer Service Best Practices" identified in the Breakout Sessions facilitated by Paul Mitchell of Syngenta, and Stepan Chemical's Eric Arneson's "How do you Measure Service" and benchmark them. These group survey/comparison sessions can be done by teleconference or if feasible,

face to face at the participants discretion.

Please contact me and we will make sure you get the most recent compilation of topics that are most discussed and identified at the conference sessions. Individuals at these sessions are interested in how member companies deal with these common practices, but the sessions leave little time for in depth discussion and comparison.

A small group of 2 to 3 companies participating in a Focus Group Session would provide some great insight as to how member companies approach and deal with these challenges that are so common to all of us. "Does someone else have a better mousetrap?" We intend to publish the results of these sessions in the pipeline as well as posting the activity and results on the CCSMG Website for the information and use of all members.

In August of this year a Focus Group from Morris County, New Jersey from three companies "Kicked Off" this effort by getting together and doing some comparisons. The New Jersey Focus Group published a comparison summary of their findings on six topics discussed at the session. Below is a summary of that session. Our thanks to General Chemical, Honeywell and Formosa Plastics for a job well done!



New Jersey Regional Focus Group Meeting

August 3, 2004

Attendees: *Kim Boyer, General Chemical*
Greg Galemore, General Chemical
Ellen Hedden, Honeywell

Lizabeh Henne, Formosa Plastics Corp
Howard Janson, Honeywell
Elena Kusman, Formosa Plastics Corp.

1) Call Center Organization

	Formosa	General Chemical	Honeywell
Alignment / Functional Reporting	Previously centralized, but now aligned by business division (USA only)	Primarily centralized (a few groups have their own CS groups)	Currently aligned with the business divisions. Efforts are underway to centralize the US Operations.
Inside Sales	Inside Sales is handled by Supervisor/CSR.	Inside Sales that reported into CS has been disbanded.	Conducting Inside Sales position pilot that is aligned with the Sales group (with a dotted line to Customer Service).
Systems	Legacy system (AS400). Some system limitations, but they have the ability to track railcar shipments through their website	Legacy system, with great limitations (HP3000). Organization currently exploring other systems.	Using SAP
Hours of Operation	8:00 am – 5:30 pm Supervisors are on call to provide for after hours coverage when necessary	8:30 am – 5:30 pm 24/7 After hours coverage handled by the CSR (volunteer)	6:00 am – 5:30 pm Earlier shift is to accommodate international customers.
Complaint Tracking	Most complaints are initiated by the CSRs or Sales and tracked using MS Word	Home-grown complaint tracking system. Complaints are entered into system and automatically e-mailed throughout the organization as necessary. Response time requirements have been established in conformance with ISO tenets.	Complaints handled through Salesforce.com. Anyone can initiate a complaint and enter into system.

2) Performance Metrics

	Formosa	General Chemical	Honeywell
Metrics	Measures many items, which are used in conjunction with the CSR/Supervisor's Personal Score Target. Many items are outside of the control of Customer Service, but are reflected on individual Score Card	Measures many items, including those both within and outside of the control of the CSRs. Current benchmarks are needed.	Many items are measured, including on time to request, (rather than on time to promise).

3) Staffing and Training

	Formosa	General Chemical	Honeywell
Training Requirements	Company strongly encourages and supports all training efforts.	Forty hours are required of all CS personnel. Primary methods of training are videos, audiotapes, outside seminars, and in-house training.	Forty hours of training are required across the board. Career Pathing is made available to CSRs through the Inside Sales Positions and levels within Customer Service

4) Personnel Policies Within Customer Service

	Formosa	General Chemical	Honeywell
Reward Programs	Employee of the Quarter – throughout all levels of organization, employee nominated	Various programs within CS, rewards include participation in CCSMG Spring Conference, gift certificates, time off, etc.	BRAVO and Chairman's Award – corporate-wide reward programs

5) Master Data Maintenance (Customer and Pricing)

	Formosa	General Chemical	Honeywell
Master Data	Business Groups feed information into the system and publish an Excel spreadsheet on a monthly basis with all customer's pricing. The system does not capture pricing, so it must be entered on every order.	Pricing Reps maintain all pricing, which comes from the Sales and Marketing Groups. Reps maintain customer address info and instructions, but do not touch pricing.	Commercial Team feeds information to Customer Service (through Salesforce.com). Pricing Admin handles all pricing updates. Their system has the capability to handle mass updates, but this does not suit their needs. Customer Master Analysts set up and maintain customer profiles.

6) Conclusions (what worked within the scope of this meeting, what should be changed)

Positive Aspects	Opportunities for Improvement
Open Discussion	Parking
Sharing Information / Great learning opportunities	Uniformity in presentations/participant preparation
Copies of booklets	Deliverable – “actionable items”
Agenda	Diversity of participants (only 3 companies represented)
Timing/Allotment	
Group size (5-8 people, maximum)	
Antitrust	
Regional (local)	

**Next meeting – Date TBD (January/February, 2005)*

Please contact Will or Barb and we will be glad to try to match you up with an interested member company in your area. E-mail us at wabarrett@potashcorp.com. Telephone 847-849-4314, or barbara.melanson@silicates.com. Telephone 416-255-7771.

Have a great holiday.



Best Practices: Just How Good Are You At Customer Service?

by Nancy Friedman, The Telephone Doctor

Most of us think we are pretty good at customer service. We get up in the morning, get ready for our jobs, drive to the office, get a parking space (sometimes close, sometimes far), walk into the office, grab a cup of coffee, sit down at our desk and then...RING RING RING. Our phones start. It is usually a customer.

As Customer Service Managers, we are considered "the best". We know exactly how to handle the situation and how to make the customer happy. We know how to solve the situation, well, at least most of the time.

There seems to be real passion for us in the customer service industry. We live and breathe to help the customer. We really want to help. We go to extra lengths to make sure everything is "just right".

That is as it should be. That is why you are where you are. But let me ask you a question. As good as you are, once in a while someone in your department, or one of your employees will be handling the customer. How good are they? You need to ask yourself that. Have each and every one of them had the best and most effective customer service training they could possibly been exposed to? Are they going to the basics, no matter how advanced they are, or no matter how long they have been with you, or how long they have been in customer service?

Everyone needs refresher courses. It never hurts. As a matter of fact, when I give a program, whether it is basic or not, there is always someone who approaches me afterwards to tell me how they have enjoyed "going back to the basics" and hearing it all over again. The best never mind a refresher course. The best know they can always pick something up from someone.

I have been training corporations on customer service for over 16 years. During that time, we have heard what the customer likes best. Here are our Telephone Doctor's Ten Best Customer Service Techniques. By using even just one of them, you are bound to see an increase in satisfied customers. Whether you are already "The Best", or whether your employees need a refresher course, these ten techniques will be a welcome addition.

Ten Best Customer Service Techniques

By Nancy Friedman, Telephone Doctor

1 Be a DOUBLE CHECKER. Learn to use those exact words. Everyone loves it when you double check something for them. Even if you're pretty sure the item is out of stock or the appointment is filled, or there is no room available, it's always good to hear "Let me double check that for you." This particular phrase is a great stress reducer for the customer. It also says "You may be right. Let me see." Double-checking something offers that one more step. Going that extra mile; being sure. You will find yourself getting thanked much more often when you "double check"

something for your customers. (Even your boss!).

2 **PRETEND IT'S YOU.** If you are working with a customer, either on the phone or in person, and they need something, pretend it's you. What would you want to have happen? What would make you happy? What would make you satisfied? Here is a great place to remember the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have them to do unto you." It is amazing to see people treating customers one way, and then finding out that they would not want to be treated like that. One of the best examples of this technique was when I had my wallet stolen. Not one of the credit card companies offered any words of sympathy. All they were interested in was my last name and social security number. That was very frustrating. I know if it had been them, they would have wanted a little "TLC". Give your customers what you would like.

3 **GET INVOLVED.** Let your customer know you are on their team. If you are ringing up a purchase for someone, mention how nice their choice is. If you are helping someone with a trip of some sort, get excited with them. When customers feel as though you are a part of the package, they love it! Nor mentioning anything, tells the customer that you really don't care one way or the other. You don't even have to say those words and that is what not getting involved says to them. When you involve yourself with the customers' situation, things really go much smoother. You get the customers "buy in" and that is great.

4 **STAY FOCUSED.** Eye contact is critical in delivering excellent customer service. Heads that turn on a

spindle and look everywhere but at the customer, get very few good marks in customer service. Eye contact shows you are listening. If you are on the phone, eye contact is certainly difficult. We can, however, learn to stay focused on the phone. Don't type unless it pertains to what you are doing. Don't read something while you are on the phone with a customer. **STAY FOCUSED** on the caller. We need to stay focused even without eye contact. When you are not concentrating on what you are doing with the customer, mistakes can happen. There is an old saying my father used to tell me, and it is true. "You cannot do two things well, at once". You can do two things at once, but they won't be done well. So stay focused with the customer, whether you are on the phone with them, or working with them in person.

5 **DO SOMETHING EXTRA.** There is always something you can do for the customer that is extra. In most cases, it won't even cost very much. Example: keeping stock of penny lollipops for kids when they come into your store with the moms. Spend a few dollars if you have the budget for those "give-aways". Customers love that extra, oddly enough, even if they can't use it. The thought of getting something free is very special to the customer. Let's say, though, you really don't have anything to give away. There is nothing in the grab bag, so to speak. Well, that something extra just might be a special "thank you" to the customer, with a note, or even in person. Extra thank you's are always appreciated.

6 **SHOW YOUR TEETH.** (In Telephone Doctor language, that means to smile). There are many people who think they are smiling, but aren't.

Telephone Doctor's motto is: show your teeth. Smiling is one of the best customer service techniques there is. It is so frustrating to walk into a store, or call some place, and not see or hear a smile. (Yes, you can hear a smile). Remember, if your teeth aren't showing, you're not smiling. Try it. It's a lot of fun!

7 ASK QUESTIONS. A super way to offer superior customer service is to ask questions. Build on what the customer is talking about. Listen for one or two words that you can ask something about. Even a simple "Tell me more" will work. Once the customer is talking, you will be able to help them much better. asking questions is a way of telling the customer "You're special, and I want to help you." Unless you are asking about their weight or age, most questions are welcomed ones.

8 USE COMPLETE SENTENCES. One-word answers are semi useless in customer service. And one-word answers are definitely perceived as rude. "Yes", "no" and the like, tell the customer, "I'm not really interested in you or what you need." The other thing that goes under this technique is to remember that nodding is not an answer. If you are working in a face-to-face situation, and someone asks you a question, shaking your head is not an answer. We need to use words. The customer needs to hear you speak. It is very bad manners to just shake your head as an answer when someone is asking you a question.

9 CARE. Most people have what Telephone Doctor calls the care gene. Some of us use it more than others. We just forget we have it. Learn to care what your customers' needs are. Care what they are referring to. Care about

your customers, and they will take care of you.

10 LAUGH PARALLEL. Laughter will lighten the load. Everyone likes to laugh. Some even in the darkest moments. Take the time to laugh and enjoy your customers.

Put any one of these Telephone Doctor customer service tips into action and watch what happens. You will have happier customers. Each technique intertwines with each other. Each can make customer service special. And wow, use all ten, and expect more business and happier customers, and a happier you.

Nancy Friedman is president of Telephone Doctor, an international training company specializing in customer service and telephone skills. She is a keynote speaker at conferences and meetings on these topics, and is the author of two best selling books, Customer Service Nightmares and The A to Z of Telephone Skills. Telephone Doctor offers audios, videos, books, CD-ROMS and on-site customer service training. Call 314/291-1012 or visit their web site at www.telephonedoctor.com

SPEAK OUT!!

Has your company had a success story or an experience that you'd like to share with our members? Do you have news of a present or past member? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Remember, as an added incentive, you'll qualify for one of the "prized" CCSMG Pipeline golf shirts. Please submit any articles, topics or announcements for the newsletter to:

Ayanna Young
ChemTreat, Inc.
4461 Cox Road
Glen Allen, VA 23060
Fax - (804) 798-4556
ayannay@chemtreat.com

If you are no longer part of your company's customer service organization, would you please complete the following statement, if appropriate, and forward to the Membership Chair as noted below:

"I am no longer in a Customer Service position. My replacement is _____"

Please fax the completed statement along with the address label portion of the "Pipeline" to:

Pat Shay
Membership Chair
Ashland Specialty
Fax - (973) 263-7888
E-mail - pshay@ashland.com

Double Dog Dare Points

By: Pay Shay

2004 Membership Chair

What are they, how do I earn them - and most importantly - what do I do with them. Now contrary to what you may have heard Double Dog Dare Points are not an effort to popularize alliteration by your High School English Teacher. Double Dog Dare Points are your reward for getting involved in CCSMG. How do you earn them? We offer Double Dog Dare Points for providing new contacts for our mailing list, or suggesting a new vendor contact who ends up signing up for the conference. Suggestions for info on the website, www.ccsmg.org, earns you points as well as. We'll keep the scorecard, you get the prize - we Double Dog Dare you.

CCSMG 2004 EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Cook Composites & Polymers
Phone (816) 391-6214
Fax (816) 391-6125
E-mail – pinnell@ccponline.com

VICE PRESIDENT

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General Chemical Performance Products, LLC
Phone (800) 631-8050
Fax (973) 515-3232
E-mail – kboyer@genchemcorp.com

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Celanese Chemicals
Phone (972) 443-4412
Fax (972) 443-3003
E-mail – jtsilvia@celanese.com

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Degussa
Phone (804) 452-5677
Fax (804) 452-0841
E-mail – Sheldon.Ellis@degussa.com

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Syngenta Crop Protection
Phone (336) 632-7194
Fax (336) 632-7470
E-mail – paul-1mitchell@syngenta.com

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National Silicates
Phone (416) 255-7771
Fax (416) 201-434
E-mail – bmelanso@silicates.com

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ChemTreat, Inc.
Phone (804) 935-2202
Fax (804) 798-4556
E-mail – ayannay@chemtreat.com

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Ashland Specialty Chemicals
Phone (973) 263-7781
Fax (973) 263-7888
E-mail – pshay@ashland.com

REGIONAL FOCUS GROUP

CO-CHAIR

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PCS Sales
Phone (847) 849-4314
Fax (847) 549-4650
E-mail – wabarrett@potashcorp.com

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RICK NELSON

VULCAN CHEMICALS

Phone (205) 298-3763
Fax (205) 298-2907
E-mail – NelsonRick@VMCMail.com

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General Chemical West, LLC
Phone (831) 630-6228
Fax (831) 636-6258
E-mail – srotolo@genchemcorp.com

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PEGGY ZIMMER

Zimmer & Associates
Phone (281) 227-2866
Fax (281) 227-2861
E-mail – pzimmer@mzimmer.com