

5 THINGS ALL COMPANIES DO, BECUASE  
**GREAT BRANDS  
DON'T JUST HAPPEN**

(Slides and talking points)



Lake Superior Community Partnership  
B2B Conference, November 2016



# START INSIDE

with people, processes & systems

## **People First – Employees and staff are the most important customers!**

People are any brand's greatest asset. Whether you're a manufacturer or non-profit – people are essential.

There is no technology that can take the place of the human driving it.

If the employees are happy – customers are happy.

Great people want to work for great companies.

So, WHAT IS THE SECRET BEHIND HAPPY EMPLOYEES?

1. Being transparent, with a clear vision, mission and understanding of how the company will get there.
2. Clear performance expectations
3. Providing employees with training and tools
4. Recognize and reward performance

## **Processes & Systems**

Great processes and systems allows employees and the company to be successful.

Systems include:

- How to complain about a co-worker or your boss
- How to get successful outcomes when delegating a project
- Effective meetings

# MEASURE

Ask questions ...then celebrate!

## Measure

Decisions should be based on facts and strategies. Decisions based on assumptions are risky.

Businesses that learn and listen are more successful than those that don't.

What can you measure, report and celebrate?

- Employee Happiness – bi-annually
- Customer Happiness – depends on the business: B2C monthly, B2B annually
- SALES – depends on the business: For most, at least monthly
- Other organization goals, such as margins, fundraising, increased lead generation



# FOLLOW PLANS

while remaining flexible.

## Follow Plans

Every organization needs a plan including:

- Vision
- Mission
- Transparent annual goals
- Sales plans
- Budgets, etc.

“PLAN TRAP” – Happens more often in organizations with more than 50 people.  
PLAN on being flexible.

Always start meetings knowing how the topics for discussion align with the BIG picture.



# SWEAT DETAILS

Every time. All the time.

## Sweat Details – OUR FAVORITE BRANDS DO THIS BEST

Chefs love great ingredients.

Examples of brands:

- Very sexy Apple box, when you get a new product. Texture, clean white lines, etc.
- Wal-Mart, relentlessness for lower prices
- Every detail in a restaurant or retailer. Marquette Co-op is a great example!
- Hotel with the softest towels I have ever experienced.
- Nordstrom's has heavier receipt paper to PAY OFF "Everything is just...better!"

These brands are about two things: **Expectation and experience** (over-deliver every time)

How can you change this? Brand touchpoint inventory – make one change per month

Examples of SMALL things that jeopardize reputation:

- Typos
- Lack of consistency with identity and service
- Poorly formatted or outdated website
- Bad advertising – 10% off, bad design
- Staff doesn't email outside of work

# KNOW THE CUSTOMER



## **KNOW THE CUSTOMER**

Meet Frank – owner of Houghton’s “hottest” coffee shop. He knows his customers and spends time doing so.

Ask questions. Do more listening than talking and NEVER assume.

Pay attention to surveys

Package products to make your customer feel like you’ve designed something just for them, even if you repackage something else, changing some details and renaming it.



# DO NOT SELL

Teach, explain,

and always empower.

## DO NOT SELL.

Meet Paul and Ari, founders of Zingerman's World Famous Delicatessen in Ann Arbor. They've built a business on educating customers about cheeses, meats, breads, desserts, and more. They build value and empower the customer.

Sharing content online and vigorous staff training also helps your customers make smart buying choices.

Don't chase customers by trying to be something for everyone. You can't be everything to everyone. Decide who your ideal customer is and cater to them first!



## QUESTIONS?

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