

## “4 Eggs & 2 Yolks”

While I'd like to think it's because of my training expertise, it's more likely my advancing age and intolerance at work when I notice examples of both effective and ineffective customer service. And, let's face it: we all see these examples regularly. But, do we *recognize* them when we do?

The guy who lives across the street from me owns the local gym, and the two of us work out there every Saturday morning when I'm in town. After the fun (and regularly funny) workout, we routinely hit a nearby family restaurant known for its wonderful breakfasts. While I know she can't be overly pleased about waiting on two post-workout forty-something guys, the waitress, Maria, always amazes us with her positive attitude and level of service. She greets us by name, is prompt and attentive, even when she's working 10+ tables, and always gets our food orders correct, despite our inadvertent attempts to throw her off with yolk and whites combinations that would confuse Gordon Ramsay\*. And, while we always tip her well, I don't think one can truly appreciate good service until you experience the alternative.

On a recent business trip, I experienced the alternative. This time I was freshly showered, wearing a suit and ready to start the day. The waitress at the restaurant took over 5 minutes to greet me, messed up my order, and took a ten minute smoke break just before I was ready to pay my check. Essentially, everything that could've gone wrong did. Maybe I should've passed on the shower?

Consider the simplicity of this lesson: 1) Greet your customers by name. 2) Be prompt and attentive. 3) Get the order right the first time. Not only is Maria an excellent waitress, she's an excellent teacher, too.

\* Gordon Ramsay is host of Fox's *Hell's Kitchen*

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