

# With laser-like focus on service comes customer loyalty

Once or twice a week I pick up a sandwich at the same restaurant – Roly Poly, which is located just off Edwards Mill Road in Raleigh. I order my favorite sandwich every time.



## LEGAL FOCUS

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Last week, before I closed the restaurant door behind me as I entered, the cashier at the counter slapped my favorite sandwich on the counter with a theatrical oversized hand gesture and said: "Jim here's your Jalapeno Barbecue." (It's # 17 on the menu. Try it and tell them Jim sent you.)

I hadn't called in my order. She had seen my car drive into the parking lot

and placed the order before I parked my car.

What do you think the chances are that I'm going to switch sandwich shops?

That raises the question: Does your

team build customer loyalty?

Does your team settle for making edible sandwiches? Or does your team try to stun customers with their excellent service? If not, whose fault is that? Don't blame the proverbial "lazy next generation." There have always been "A" teams and "B" teams.

It's your job to set excellence standards for your team.

If all you do is give your team lists of ingredients, they naturally assume their job is limited to making edible sandwiches. Of course, that's the minimum any customer expects. You'll soon lose customers, if you just meet their minimum expectations.

How do you motivate employees to go above and beyond the call of duty?

Employees Enjoy Being Excellent. Instilling excellence standards would be really difficult, except for one thing – most employees like being excellent. They look for opportunities to be excellent. You should have seen the look of satisfaction the cashier had on her face when she

stunned me with her excellence.

**Excellence Throughout Your Team.** Sometimes we mistakenly believe people doing repetitive tasks are difficult to motivate to be excellent. That's about as wrong as you can be. Employees making sandwiches or taking cash from customers get bored. They yearn for something to make their time go faster. Little mind games help them do that. They can either get lost in their imaginations (and ignore customers in the process) or stun customers with their excellence. You can influence which they choose.

**Whose Customer Is It?** Are the customers your customers? Or do your employees have relationships with customers that are just as important as your relationships with customers? People take pride in establishing their own relationships. They want to be excellent to their customers. Your customers aren't as important as their customers. Make sure every employee thinks of customers as their customers.

**What Example Are You Setting?** If you aren't always striving for excellence, why would your employees have higher standards than you do? So, if your employees aren't excellent, the first thing you should do is look in the mirror.

**Excellence Tools and Barriers.** Are you giving your team the tools they need to be excellent? Or have you erected barriers to excellence? Why don't you ask your team? You might be surprised at the many little barriers to excellence you have erected over the years and the small inexpensive things you could change to help employees in their quest for excellence.

So, are you ready to train your employees to be excellent?

If you said yes, please don't.

You train dogs.

You lead people on an adventure toward excellence.

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## BOUND: After surviving the first year, founders now charting course to increase daily orders three-or-four fold

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Fast forward to late August. Michael Faber says the orders for journals are still coming in steadily. Bound now averages five to seven orders a day through its website and a few bulk orders per month. The company considers a bulk order to be more than 10 journals or memo books. Going after more bulk orders was the main growth strategy for Bound. Not any

more. Michael says that the new marketing push will focus on advertising on social-networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook.

"We're looking at getting more people to engage with us," Michael Faber says. "We think that's much more meaningful as a marketing strategy. We're looking at less big splash, more frequent, low-impact stuff."

During a recent three-way telephone

conversation, the founders shared their "state of the union," in which they laid out bullet points for where they were and plans for success going forward. "First was 'hooray, we've made it,'" Michael Faber says. The next two items on the list: year one – building and laying the groundwork; year two – ramping up and stepping on the gas.

But to do that, Bound's founders have to be able to put their ideas into useful practice, Michael Faber says. "We need to be

able to work on the business all day," he says.

To do that, Michael estimates that Bound will have to increase its daily orders three- or fourfold. And they are counting on the new social-network advertising push to lead them in the right direction. That outcome will decide whether Bound is to be written off as a hobby that was once fun to share, or whether it flourishes into a legitimate Bull City business.