TRAINING COACHING MISSION RELATIONSHIPS LEADERSHIP

COMMUNICATE PLANNING INSPIRE ATTITUDE MENTORING

CUSTOMER LOYALTY DEVELOPMENT VISION

LEADERSHIP PEOPLE RELATIONSHIPS MISSION COMMUNICATE

Service

EXCELLENCE

Management

PLANNING INSPIRE COACHING ATTITUDE CUSTOMER LOYALTY

MENTORING TRAINING LEADERSHIP RELATIONSHIPS MISSION

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LEADERSHIP PEOPLE RELATIONSHIPS

Jim Johnson

Service Management Excellence

Professional Development
For Technicians Series

Jim Johnson

esco press

Service Management Excellence:
Professional Development for Technicians

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PREFACE: A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

If you're already a service manager of just about any ilk, there's a better-than-ever chance that *one* of the reasons (there are many) you are in that position is because you were good at something else. That something else could have been HVACR or appliance repair, or perhaps you started your career as a plumber, an electrician, an automotive technician, or another trade. Whatever skills you demonstrated in your trade or area of technical expertise, that's what they were: trade or technical skills.

And, that's good. After all, everyone wants to advance in their career, and one way to do that is to pursue and take on the responsibilities a supervisory or management position.

There's just one problem with this process. In the same way that it's likely that you "moved up" to your present position because of your technical expertise, it's also likely that you made that transition without a great deal of opportunity for training and preparation in the areas of communication skills, customer service, dealing with different personalities, managing people and leading a team.

And sometimes, getting the information that you need to be as effective as possible at your new (or maybe even not-so-new) position, can be a difficult and time-consuming task. Even attending a one-day workshop on supervisory skills can be a major undertaking when you consider not only the expense of attending the training, but also what it takes for you to take the time off (meaning: "get away from *the* phone, *your* phone, emails, etc…") so you can concentrate on learning new skills, and then find the time to follow up so you can put what you learned to practical use.

Take heart. This book is for you. It's a no-nonsense approach to being an effective supervisor, manager, department head or small business owner. Whether you are already a service manager or aspiring to be one, you're sure to find something here that will give you the knowledge, practical skills, and tools you need to get your job done.

That said, I want to point out that some of what you'll read here will be enjoyable, even a little fun, and simple common sense, subtle things that might make you think, "Hmmm…I'll have to give that a try". And some things will hit hard. So hard, that at first, you may be tempted to dismiss the idea altogether. That can be a normal response to new information that, on the surface, sounds either "too simple", "too radical", "too touchy-feely", or looks as though it might "sound OK in theory, but in the 'real world' won't work."

But I also want to point out that everything in this book has been put into practice by somebody, somewhere, and it has worked, not just in theory, but in practice.

Will you adopt every idea you read here and put everything into practice in every situation you deal with in exactly the way it's described? That's not likely. Nor is it likely that you'll agree totally with everything I say or suggest.

That's OK. Just keep an open mind and take the time to pause when you need to and think about your specific situation, or a specific person in your organization, and how something you read here can benefit you or provide you with some insight on what to do about that specific person or situation in your organization.

And then take what you want and leave what doesn't work for you at the moment behind. Taking this approach means you'll get the most out of your investment of time here.

JJ

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dedication:

For Peggy Lee

Thanks To:

"When a writer has an idea for a book it's nothing more than that, just an idea. When a writer uses a keyboard and composes Word files to put into a book it's nothing more than that, just composing files. An idea and using a keyboard doesn't result in a book without help from others.

First, thanks to Esco Institute for their help in creating a book from an idea and files. Thanks also to the service managers I reported to throughout my career as a technician. Whether you did your job well, or whether you didn't, I learned something from you. And thanks to the technicians who reported to me. I learned from you too."

Chapter 1

Taking or Starting Over

Whatever your specific situation in service management and supervision, you're facing some challenges, (among them being the person responsible for making sure that everybody you supervise knows what they're supposed to do in any given situation) and you need to know how to meet those challenges.

So here you are…. You've always kept a good work ethic, strived to keep learning, dedicated yourself to doing your job in the best way possible, and you've been promoted. And, you've made the decision to take on your new responsibilities because that's the way you move up the income ladder; the way you keep advancing in your career. Or, maybe you've made the decision to leave an employer and get your own business started, and part of that is hiring, supervising, and managing employees. Or, maybe you're not exactly brand new at this management thing and you're looking for information on how to do your job or manage your business more effectively than you have in the past.

Whatever your situation, sometimes there are things you need to know and consider that are, well, not exactly comforting to know or consider when it comes to supervision, but, as they sometimes say in Texas…"If you have to swallow a bucket of frogs, you might as well get the biggest one done first." So, we'll start out with some of that less than comfortable stuff.

Some Hard Facts About Service Management/Supervision

- Management is not a popularity contest.
- Management is not easy. That's why many people either don't do it well, or don't do it at all.
- Often, the biggest personal challenges we face as supervisors is overcoming fears. The fear of change, the fear of failure, and the fear of not having complete control over our lives.
- The only real "job security" we have is our knowledge and skills.
- A supervisor's best protection against lawsuits (yes, you *hate* the idea of having to deal with this issue, but you know you might *have to* sometime) is <u>knowing the right thing to do and doing it consistently.</u> 73% of employee versus employer lawsuits are won by the employee and the amount awarded can often be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.
- 15% of your success as a supervisor is related to your technical skills.
- 85% of your success as a supervisor is related to your people skills.
- People in a work environment don't want to be managed. People want a leader, and a leader has to lead by example. (No, you won't be perfect all the time and you can be sure you'll be reminded when you're not, so just accept that.)
- It takes more than a desire to make more money or advance in your career to be an effective supervisor. It takes dedication, hard work, being open to constant self-examination, and a willingness to consider what everyone, whether you report to them or whether they report to you, has to offer in the way of advice, suggestions, and criticisms.

There's an underlying philosophy to succeeding at it, and it's simple. The underlying philosophy that will allow you to develop these 10 skills is the willingness to accept responsibility.

Some people may harbor the belief that that it's difficult accepting responsibilities, that some people just "aren't cut out" to take on the challenges of accepting responsibility. But, here's a simple way to think about it. Anyone who thinks that accepting responsibility is difficult or complicated, needs to consider how much responsibility they accept every time they get behind the wheel of a car.

Everyone who drives a car accepts the responsibility to do several things simultaneously and do them just right all the time. And the bottom line on driving is that if someone isn't simultaneously doing all the things it takes to drive a car, and doing them just right consistently, the end result is disaster.

So, if you're one of the approximately 95% of the population, who regularly engage in driving an automobile, you're already on your way to developing the necessary skills to effective supervision, so let's get started with the one at the top of the list…practicing leadership. There's a difference between being a leader and being a manager.

Here's a quote for you to consider about this subject….

> *"If there's anything I've learned in my 27 years in the service industry, it is this: 99 percent of all employees want to do a good job. How they perform is simply a reflection of the one for whom they work.*
>
> *~President of Hyatt Hotels*

What are your thoughts about above quote? Do you agree with it? Are you of the opinion that "you can't find good help anymore", or "these kids today don't want to work, they're just interested in how much money they're being paid"?

Or do you work in an environment where the culture of the organization is such that it fosters support of such a philosophy? If so, we invite you to consider this:

What you expect is exactly what you're going to get.

And, no, we're not talking about some space-cadet, new-age, touchy-feely, unrealistic, pop-psychology idea here. We're talking about an honest-to-goodness, down-to-earth, matter-of-fact, realistic approach to understanding how the world works. It's a fact. What you expect is
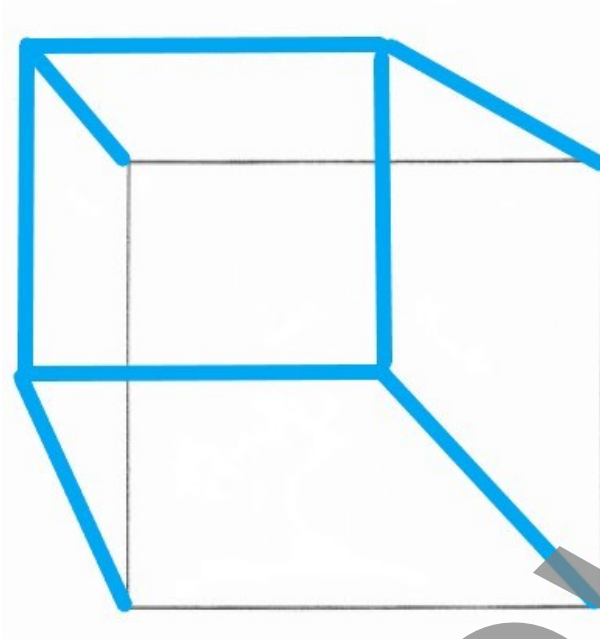
Figure 1-3: An alternate perspective of this drawing is shown with the smaller opening highlighted up and to the left, now at the fore-front.

With the alternate perspective highlighted with color, the smaller segment of the cube that is up and to the left is now at the fore-front, showing the second perspective of the same drawing.

In either Figure 1-2 or 1-3, you can see the two perspectives by shifting your gaze that brings one segment or the other to the fore-front of the image. Our point here is that this is a visual representation of the ability to see the bigger picture as a service manager.

By the way, have you considered the idea that the term 'supervision' itself simply means that you must learn to develop super-_vision_?

We're not talking about the kind of super-vision of a comic book, T.V. and movie character in a red and blue suit with a cape, but simply the ability to develop the skill of having an above-average ability to see the big picture. When you develop that skill, you begin to learn the difference between supervising and managing tasks, systems and people, as opposed to practicing leadership while supervising and managing.

John W. Gardner, former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare directed a leadership study project in Washington D.C. and identified five characteristics that

skill and finesse, confident that you'll be able to get where you need to go without incident, and also confident that if something serious does occur, you'll be able to deal with it. To effectively navigate the assertiveness Interstate, you must do three things:

1. Commit to excellence.
2. Know the people on your team.
3. Use your skills to hire, develop, lead, and guide the people on your team.

We'll wind up this segment with details on #1 from the above list. You may decide to share your commitment with others, or you may decide to keep it private; a tool for your own personal motivation. Whatever you decide to do in regard to sharing or not sharing your personal commitment to excellence doesn't matter. What matters is that you commit to excellence and that you write it down. A model of excellence commitment is as follows:

> *A Service Manager's Commitment To Excellence*
> *What I Want My People To Understand About Me*
>
> I will move heaven and earth, if necessary, in order to help the people on my team do what they need to do and get it done when it's supposed to be done.
>
> I will consistently work to allow each and every person on my team to learn, grow and develop as a professional so they will be enriched in their professional and personal life.
>
> I will always have one person in training to replace me.
>
> I will require commitments from everyone on my team and, no matter how hard it is for me to do so, hold them accountable to those commitments.
>
> I will be willing to take responsibility and make the tough decisions, no matter what the circumstances; no matter who is involved.
>
> I will regularly ask four questions of everyone on my team….
> 1. "How can I make your job easier?
> 2. "How can I help you do a better job?"
> 3. "How am I doing at being your supervisor?"
> 4. "What do I do that gets in your way?"
>
> I will employ the U.S. Navy Now Hear This! philosophy and tell everyone on my team….
>
> "You don't work for me. I work for you. It is your job to get things done. It is my job to make sure you have everything you need to do your job well."

Jim's Notes On Chapter One

Whenever I consider the topics we discussed in this segment, there is an underlying idea that comes to mind:

Attitude

After all, attitude is the bottom line for any business, and the attitude of those who provide front-line customer service…. employees who answer the phone or perform the services and deliver the products people are buying….has to be a number-one priority. Without a good employee attitude, all the advertising, marketing, tools, supplies, vehicles, etc…in the world are efforts wasted. And, of course, discussions about attitude with service managers, service company owners or supervisors often centers on their frustration surrounding the subject. I hear things like "I'm not supposed to have to try and change people's *attitudes* about their work. That's something they're supposed to just naturally bring to the job for cryin' out loud."
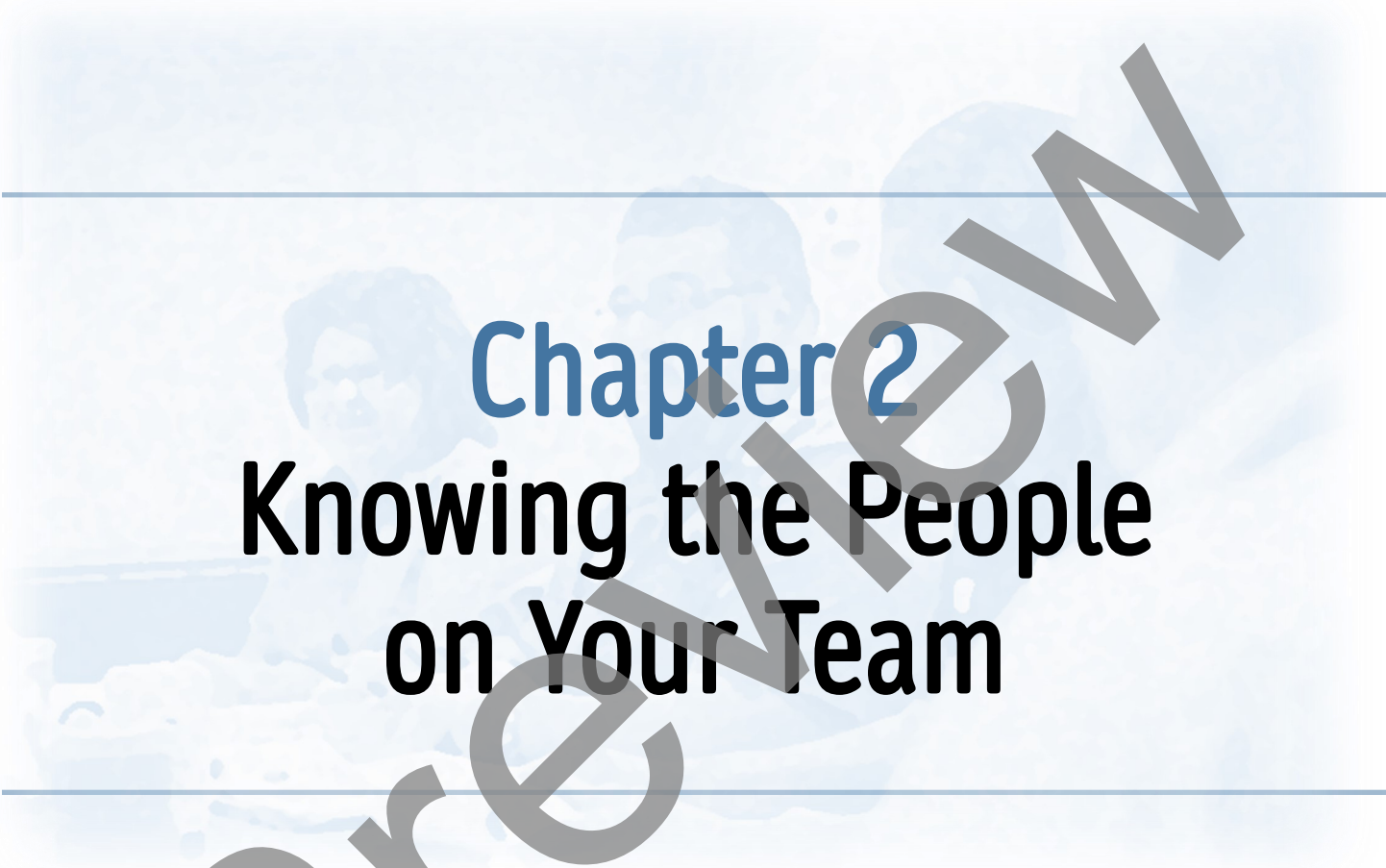
Well, in a perfect world, that might be true. But in a culture in which things are in a constant state of change, affected by advances (whether we want to consider them real advances or not) in technology and the natural tendency of things to change from one generation to the next, which means that it just isn't a perfect world, it's not true. It's a fact of life that it's now part of the job of being a leader to guide those in our departments and businesses who have direct contact with the customer about the best way they can do their job.

It's not an easy thing to accomplish, much less accept as a reality, but we just have to as is sometimes said about dealing with unpleasant things, or things we're just not going to change… 'Build a bridge and get over it'.

And part of building that bridge is considering that a person's attitude about their job is related to their aptitude. No, I'm not just playing with words here. I really mean that we have to think about the differences in customer service *aptitude* when it comes to leading our people. Here's an example…

Our son Jess works for a major player in the hospitality industry, and one of his tasks in management within a five-star resort that has both a hotel and condos on the property is to consider the cultural differences between his customers and the staff who takes care of them.

His customers often fly first class. The people on his staff likely don't.

Chapter 2
Knowing the People on Your Team

A scientist and his wife are out for a drive in the country.

Noticing a herd of sheep, the wife says, "Oh, look! Those sheep have all been shorn."

"Yes, they have," replied the scientist, "on this side."

"Take my building, equipment, all my money, my land, but leave me my people, and in one year I will be on top again."
~Andrew Carnegie

Four Personalities

A first step in helping those who report to you work harmoniously is identifying and understanding that people just naturally see the world differently, and while there are certainly many ways to identify different people and their different personalities, one way is to consider four different categories relative to a person's behavior and how they function in their work environment.

The Director

The Director personality wants their marching orders, and they want them clear and concise. When you're telling a Director what you want them to do, put it in writing and do it in bullet points (not too many so the list will be long), then get out of their way.

Directors are often people of few words, speaking directly, somewhat fast-paced, and high-volume. Director supervisors are task-oriented and often their common approach to things is "Just get it done". You know you're dealing with a Director supervisor when there are no guest chairs in their neat, orderly, organized office with maybe one or two pictures of their family that you can only see if you're seated at *their* desk.

The Socializer

The Socializer's philosophy is "never waste a crowd" and if their job takes them away from others or puts them into a cubicle, they see it as solitary confinement rather than just a workspace. Socializers love to talk. When communicating in writing with a Socializer, do it in paragraphs and keep using their name. In a Socializer's environment, whether it's an office or their service vehicle, you'll often see pictures, and they'll be in most of them.

The Thinker

The Thinker often communicates verbally with a slow, quiet speech pattern and their office or work area is often "organized" via piles of things everywhere, but they know where to find anything they need. A memo to a Thinker can contain an endless list of bullet points and they'll take it in stride. A Thinker is more about perfection that hitting a deadline.

As a service manager, you've also probably figured out that this is the group of people that tend to become technicians, mechanics, machinists, or welders, or go into other "hands-on" professions. The typical response to the "Do you understand?" question for this group…."Yeah, I think I've got a handle on it" or something on that order.

What these categories mean to you as a supervisor or service manager is an opportunity to further understand and communicate effectively with the people who report to you. No matter what your tendency may be, if you understand that there are differences that can lead to a mismatch in communication, and therefore difficulties in relationships, you can listen carefully to others, and, if necessary, adjust.

Does the person you're communicating with use a lot of "sight" words? If they do, they're likely leaning on the visual approach as their dominant information processing system. If they use a lot of "sound" words or phrases they're auditory. Or, if they tend to use "feeling" terms or phrases in their speech, then they are likely dominantly kinesthetic.

In most cases, we all tend to be dominant in one of the three major categories of verbal communication while using the other two as a kind of support system to make sure we understand things. An example of how two people with different NLP tendencies can get into trouble when they're communicating, consider the following is a conversation between two people in which there is a mismatch in their communication, and things are not going well.

In the example conversation below, the dialogue of one person is shown in bold print, and the other is shown in italics.

"You need to be able to see the results in advance."

"I think I've got a feel for it."

"But that's not enough. You really have to picture how it will happen."

"Oh, I know. You mean like putting your toe in the water before you jump in."

"Well, no, I mean extending your field of vision to include all the possibilities."

"Sure, you mean getting a firm grip on the potential problems and tackling them before they block your path."

Entire books have been written on this subject, so if you want to do more research on the pain/pleasure continuum and look deeper into what *motivates* people to go one direction or the other when it comes to this subject, there's plenty of information out there. You'll notice that we placed an emphasis on the idea of motivation here. That's because we want to present two points about that subject relative to understanding other's personalities and how they communicate.

The first point is that when it comes to the subject of motivation, what we need to understand is that as a supervisor, we can never really motivate someone else to do something we want them to do. We can only figure out how to encourage them to motivate themselves. The second point to understand is, because people (as we've been showing you in this segment), are all different, the things that motivate us as individuals won't necessarily motivate another person.

So, while *your* natural tendency to be more inclined to follow your desire to gain pleasure in your work environment (a trait commonly observed in many people who hold supervisory positions), may be what motivates you, it's not chiseled in stone that that's what will motivate someone you supervise. For example, you may feel as though you're banging your head up against a wall when you take the approach that "attending Wednesday's 6:30 AM Technical Update Session will help you in troubleshooting this latest generation of electronic control system" in your memo, and then find yourself faced with the fact that someone isn't excited about showing up for the training.

The reason that some people may not respond to your memo, which is composed from the perspective of gaining pleasure, is that what motivates them most is not gaining pleasure but avoiding pain. If you discover that a person is one who is more motivated to avoid pain than to achieve pleasure, you could explain that attending the training session will "help you prevent the frustration" of troubleshooting the latest generation of electronic control systems. The point here is that in order to gain rapport with the people you lead you first have to understand that they are of various personalities, employ different types of communication methods, and make sense of their world in different ways. So, it's a good bet that you won't be an automatic match with everyone, which means that you'll often find it necessary to adjust your behaviors and communication methods in order to achieve a match-up with others.

Often, it only takes the knowledge and understanding that people are different ...Socializers, Directors, Thinkers or Relators, that they communicate verbally from either a visual, auditory, or kinesthetic perspective, and that their MetaPrograms vary...with some purposeful observation along with that knowledge and understanding.

not what we're suggesting. The way we want you to consider MetaPrograms is from the perspective that there is neither "good" nor "bad" in any of the tendencies we're presenting, just different approaches that different people take to their life and their work.

The third type of MetaProgram is known as:

The Relationship Metaprogram: which describes the way people make sense of things by either matching or mismatching new information or factors with things and ideas with which they are familiar. There are four categories to describe this MetaProgram.

- Sameness Matchers.
- Sameness With Exception.
- Difference Persons.
- Difference With Exception.

Sameness Matchers use the least complicated approach to understanding things. From their perspective, they simply make sense of anything that happens to them (or what they have to learn relative to a new skill or update in their skills) by matching it up in some way as being similar to something they already know and understand.

If you were explaining a new procedure to a Sameness Matcher, you would only have to think of what is similar between the new procedure and the previous process…..."It's the same procedure as using the old form," would be all you would have to say, and even if there were differences on the two forms, the Sameness Matcher would barely notice. They would simply proceed with the use of the new form.

When explaining the same concept to a Sameness With Exception person, however, your task would be to mention that "It's the same procedure as the old form, except for the fact that you have to….. whatever." With that explanation, the Sameness With Exception person's thought pattern would be that they have no trouble taking instruction and direction from the person providing the information. Everything is "clear as a bell"….(especially if they are an auditory person).

A Difference Person takes a more complex approach to any subject, and begins their understanding of new information by searching for factors that are not the same, but different. They will often wind up agreeing with a Sameness Matcher who explains what is similar about something new, but only begrudgingly.

Jim's Notes On Chapter Two

It's been my experience that one of the most daunting challenges a technician making the transition to service manager (or service company owner) faces is the idea of getting over the feeling of needing to do what we often refer to as "honest labor." But the material presented in this segment is, in fact, a supervisor's "honest labor." Figuring out where people are coming from in their approach to their work and their life overall is hard work… a different kind of hard work than learning how to troubleshoot and repair things, or assemble things, but still hard work. But that doesn't mean that everything a supervisor needs to learn or be proficient at is totally foreign to them.
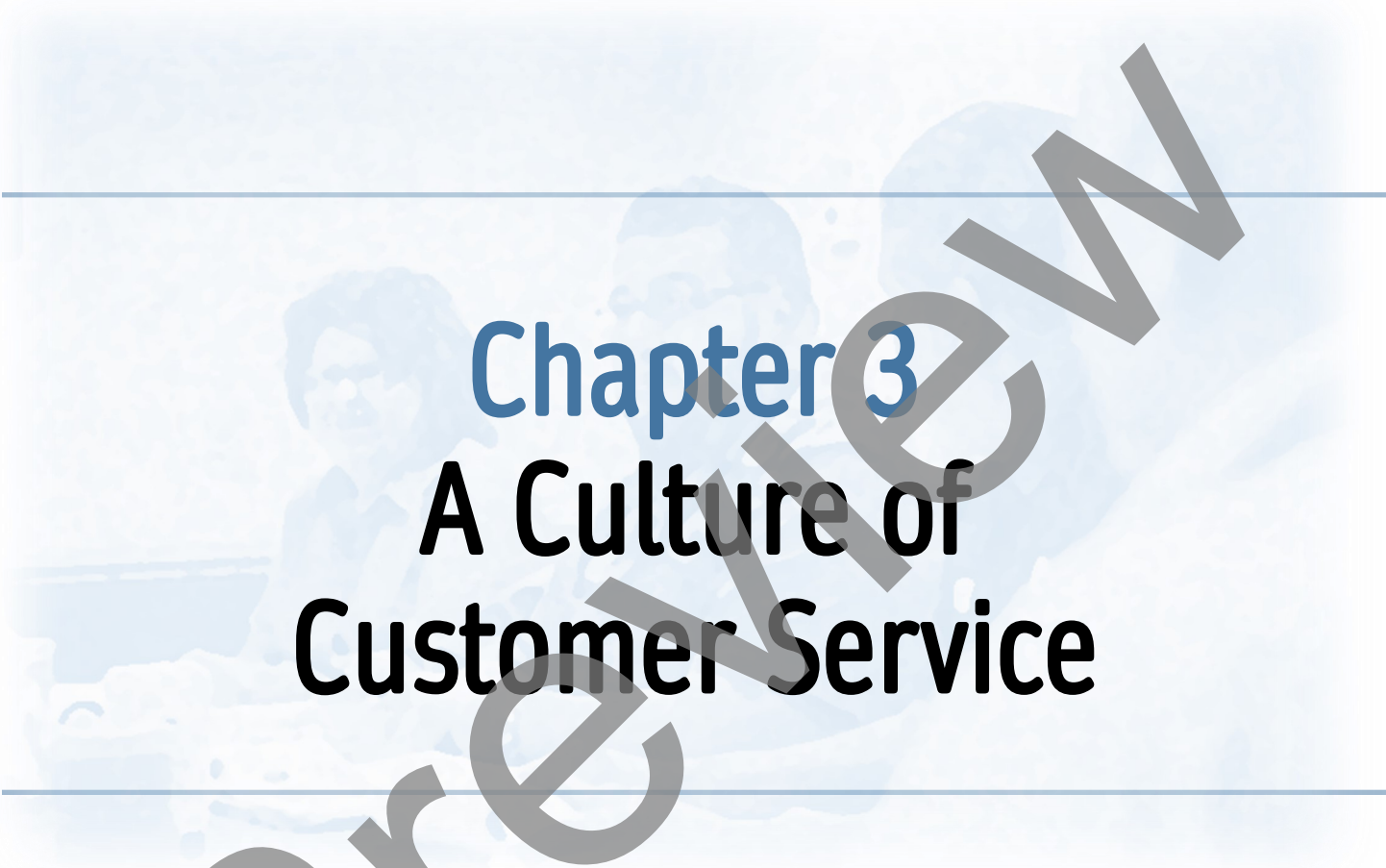
My first exposure to the science of NLP came about when a graduate student needed to observe a vocational education instructor in a classroom setting. After sitting in, he mentioned (and seemed impressed) that I was "using Neuro Linguistic Programming" in an effort to connect effectively with those who needed to understand the concepts being explained.

I had no idea what Neuro Linguistic Programming was, but, as it turns out, I'm the type of communicator that naturally weaves around through the visual/auditory/kinesthetic methods of communication because I'm not necessarily dominant in one of them alone. I discovered that by answering a series of questions like the ones in the NLP evaluation you'll find in Appendix A.

As you pursue your supervisory responsibilities, which, as you know is about 85% communication and only 15% technical, you can use an NLP evaluation to accomplish two things. First, take the test yourself without looking at the answer key. When you take this approach you're in for an enlightening experience about yourself.

You'll know if you're dominantly visual, auditory, or kinesthetic. Most people are dominant in one of the communication methods, using the other two as a support system. Once you "know where you come from" relative to a communication system, it helps you to figure out how you need to adjust when communicating with others who are not a natural match with you.

The NLP evaluation is something you can use for job applicants as well as for present employees. Of course, you'll need to be careful when involving those on your staff, asking them to complete the evaluation. It will take some explaining on your part, or even perhaps conducting an in-house training session on customer service and including the NLP evaluation as part of the process.

Chapter 3
A Culture of Customer Service

Sometimes, it can seem that some customers, no matter how hard you work to please them, will never be satisfied. But that doesn't change the fact that customer service is what it's all about for any business. And the task of service managers is to make sure that all the people they lead never forget that, and that they maintain a culture of customer service every time they deal with a customer on the phone or in person.

It is not your customer's job to remember you. It's yours to make sure they never forget."

~Patricia Fripp

Read any mission statement for just about any business, large or small, and it's likely that somewhere within it there will be a reference to customer service. And that's OK, for a start. The real issue for any business is not just customer service, but customer loyalty. With customer loyalty, you get two things any business needs to grow and prosper:
1. Repeat Business
2. Referrals

There is a cab driver in Dallas, Texas that understands customer loyalty. When you get into the back seat for the first time, you're surprised because it's, well, just not what you expect in a cab based on past experiences. First of all, it's immaculate and there is no odor other than that of being clean. There's a small cooler and you're free to help yourself to complimentary juice, soda, or water. And, if you don't want to use your phone or tablet to catch up on the news in the Wall Street Journal or USA Today, there are copies there for you to peruse while you enjoy a light snack if you like.

If you confirm that you're not in a hurry on your way to your hotel from the airport, you might find yourself viewing one of the sights in the area, complete with a narration about it. (No, you won't care about a little extra time on the meter.) When you arrive at your destination, the driver not only makes sure you have his information entered into your phone, he also hands you a business card (yes, he still does business cards) and makes sure you know how much your business is appreciated, and that you can call in advance to arrange your next trip.

In this world of Uber and Lyft, cabbies at an airport still pull up and wait their turn to move forward so they can pick up a fare, but not this driver. He's always booked and drives straight to a pick-up point to welcome his next fare. His customers get the best service he knows how to provide, and because of it, they're loyal to him. It's just natural that they think of him when they need to get to the airport or when their flight arrives. It's a classic example of the philosophy that you don't have to be a large business to implement simple ideas that ultimately result in customer loyalty.

offers a great deal of satisfaction to the individual once they're finished with a process. The idea of a culture of customer service (the bottom line of which is really customer <u>loyalty</u>) though, isn't a goal or accomplishment that has an end to it. It's a process where your people will be happy to be part of it because they come to understand that it's a journey that never ends.

And with that understanding, they begin to feel the personal satisfaction they get from knowing they are part of something big, enjoying smaller victories along the way as they take care of each customer by going above and beyond. Your job is to help them understand that they can be part of what is, unfortunately, often considered to be a fraction of the workforce that possesses both the attitude and the ability to regularly go above and beyond.

There are two methods you can employ to implement and maintain this above and beyond culture in your business. The first is to give them some examples of people who consistently go above and beyond. There are countless stories of customer service you can recount at your regular staff meetings or during a one-to-one interaction with one of your people.

Consider Pancho Thompson, a delivery driver in Cleveland, Ohio. He consistently makes his daily run in less than 8 hours, and has done so for over 20 years. Which makes him very productive, but that's not all there is to it. He is also a person who considers it part of his job to go above and beyond when it comes to customer service. Once, when delivering a T.V. stand to an elderly lady who was waiting for him at the door when he arrived, he not only brought the package into her home rather than just leave it on the porch and hurry off to his next delivery, he assembled it for her because he discovered that she lived alone and wouldn't be able to manage it on her own. And, by the way, he was still on schedule when he finished his run for the day.

The second method is to do something that is often scary for some supervisors, which is get the heck out of the way and let people do their job without being micromanaged at every turn. Remember, Part Two of your 3x5 index card customer service policy, is "Use Your Own Best Judgment In Any Situation."

That means, of course, that you need to be the type of supervisor who understands that *"lead my people"* (which is exactly what an effective service manager does) means empowering them to make decisions. It also means that sometimes an employee can make a decision you would have preferred they didn't make…OK, a mistake. When that happens, it isn't the end of the world, and supervisors who empower the people they lead, know that an opportunity, rather than a problem, has presented itself. It's an opportunity to learn, not just for the one employee involved, but a situation that needs correcting or even just fine-tuning can be the subject for your next regularly scheduled meeting.

What's that.....? Meetings can easily turn into nothing but a "bitch session" for technicians and you would rather avoid that. OK, we'll give you some tips on conducting effective meetings. But first, let's move on to the underlying goal of providing outstanding customer service: Your customer's relationship with your business.

Jim's Notes On Chapter Three.....

One way to become adept at customer service is to be a consumer yourself and watch closely how things are done when a business you're buying from does it well.

Often, we show up at a hotel very late in the afternoon to check in and prepare to facilitate a workshop the next day. Once when this happened at the Little America Inn in Flagstaff, Arizona, I discovered that the meeting room assigned to us (due to the arrangements being made by a third party who didn't do their homework) was too small for our group and wasn't going to work at all. Often, when this happens, I get nothing more than shrugged shoulders from the person at the front desk.
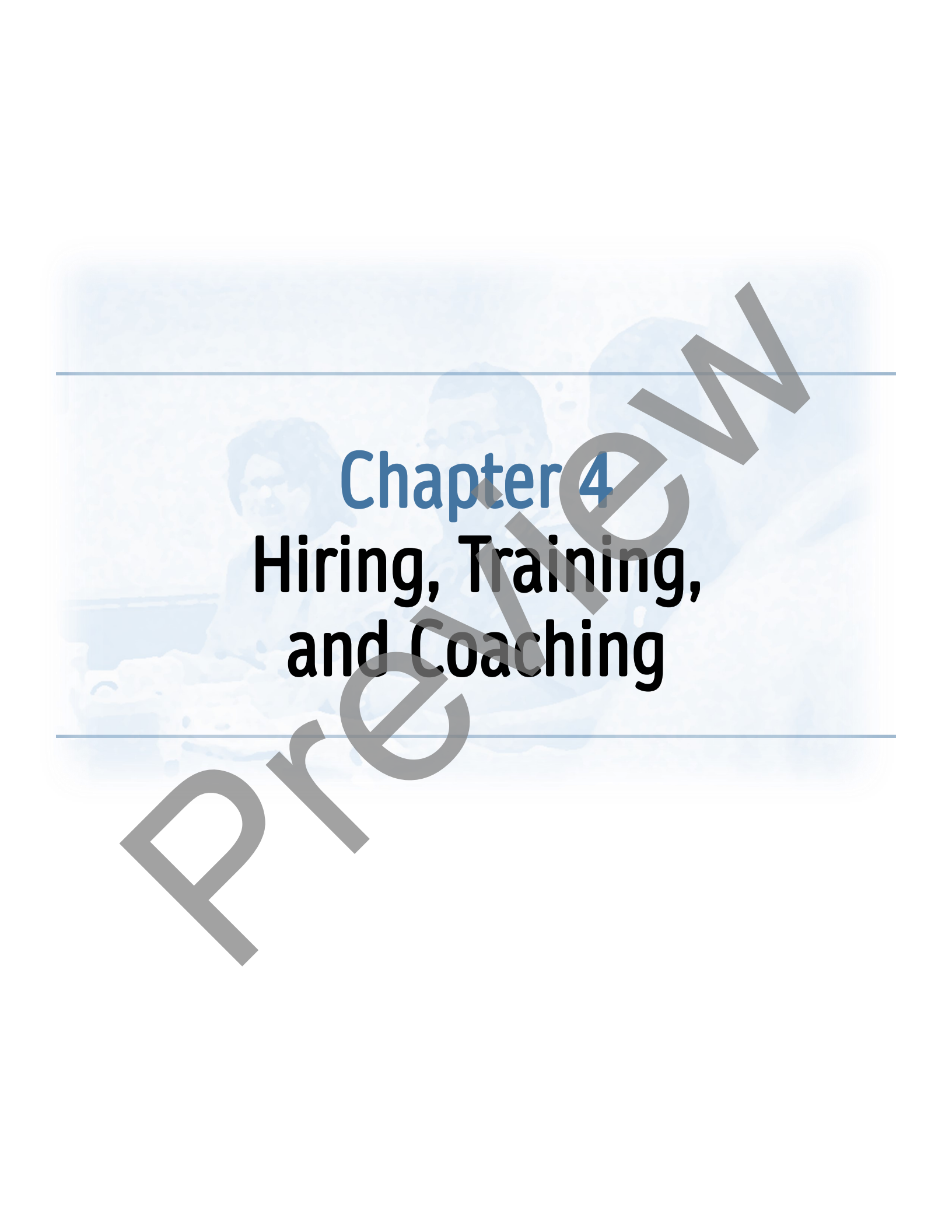
But this time was different. The young man (and I mean *young*) immediately picked up the phone and summoned a supervisor. When that person showed up, the young man said to him, "We need to get another room assigned for Mr. Johnson's workshop tomorrow. The one we have set aside for him won't do."

The supervisor simply nodded and asked the young man for a suggestion on what to do as far as juggling the room assignments. There was no pretense of "I'm the supervisor here and I'll decide what to do". There was no ego, no being threatened by an 'underling'. The young man was the one who had "caught" this particular problem, and it was his to solve. The customer....me....was what mattered and there was no reason to waste time on anything else but the customer. I was immediately escorted by the supervisor to another room, and his only question was if it would suit our needs.

The next day, I went into the meeting room at 7AM to get ready for an 8AM start time. When I entered, I was greeted by Raul. He announced that he was there to make sure I had everything I needed and was more than willing to help with any set-up that needed to be done. Once the room was set up and people started showing up to check in, I noticed that Raul was still there, waiting at the back of the room, almost standing at attention.

Since I was caught up with greeting people and getting them checked in, I never got the chance to ask him why he was waiting there. Once my workshop was underway though, and it was clear to Raul that I had begun, I understood. It wasn't until that moment that Raul decided it was OK to leave the room. It was clear that his mission was to be certain that I was underway before he left to handle his next assignment.

Later that morning, I needed to communicate with a client in Kansas who needed confirmation regarding their employee's attendance at the workshop. When I entered the hotel sales office, the first person I spoke to assured me she would handle it. I went back to the meeting room to continue the workshop, and a few minutes later she quietly entered, nodded while showing me the paperwork I had left with her, then set it down on the table and slipped out of the room unnoticed by anyone but me.

Chapter 4
Hiring, Training, and Coaching

Sometimes, things are not as they appear. And when things are not as they appear in the process of hiring a new employee, the results can be around a lot longer than the tenure of the person that winds up being terminated.

Hiring the Right Person

Hiring the right person for the job is the first step in the ongoing process of developing people and molding the most effective team for your business or department. And there is a lot to be said about evaluation techniques, interviewing skills, and making hiring decisions, but there is one overriding factor to consider overall.

First, never be afraid in hiring. If you find yourself sitting across from someone at your desk and your impression of them is that they are extremely talented, even more talented and skilled than you have ever been or could hope to be, don't be afraid. Some supervisors have been known to pass up hiring an extremely talented candidate because of an underlying fear that they might wind up getting the job of the person who hired them.

Remember, part of a supervisor's commitment to excellence (Chapter One) is, "I will always have one person in training to replace me." So, when you encounter someone whom you think has a great attitude, will embrace your philosophy of customer service, and be a contributor to the effectiveness of your team, don't be afraid. Hire them.

Of course, there are some things to be afraid of when considering a new hire. There's an old joke from personnel and HR people that you should never hire anyone who is accompanied by their:

- Attorney with a tape recorder
- Bodyguard
- Teddy bear
- Police escort
- Mother

Telling someone why you hired them is a powerful technique to building self-esteem. The best work is not done for just a price. A leader needs both the head and the heart of a team member whose pride will not allow them to do less than their best in any situation.

Developing People

Once you have a new hire in place, there are specific steps you can take to contribute to their development and benefit from their being part of your team.

1. Lead, train, coach, and empower them. There's a risk with this but it's the best way to let people grow and develop. You need to have the "intestinal fortitude" to step back and let them do things on their own. Remember, some people will be scared about this because they may not have any experience working with an effective, assertive leader. Let them know early on that they can "fail forward" without putting their job in jeopardy.

2. Put goals and expectations in writing. A goal contract, a written agreement between an employee and a supervisor that outlines specific goals for the upcoming quarter or upcoming year, is an effective way of keeping on track.

3. Make sure people know what your vision is. When they know it, they'll want to pull with you. As we said previously, think of people as willing to get on board your bus and ride along with you, and be willing, if the bus breaks down, to get out with you and push.
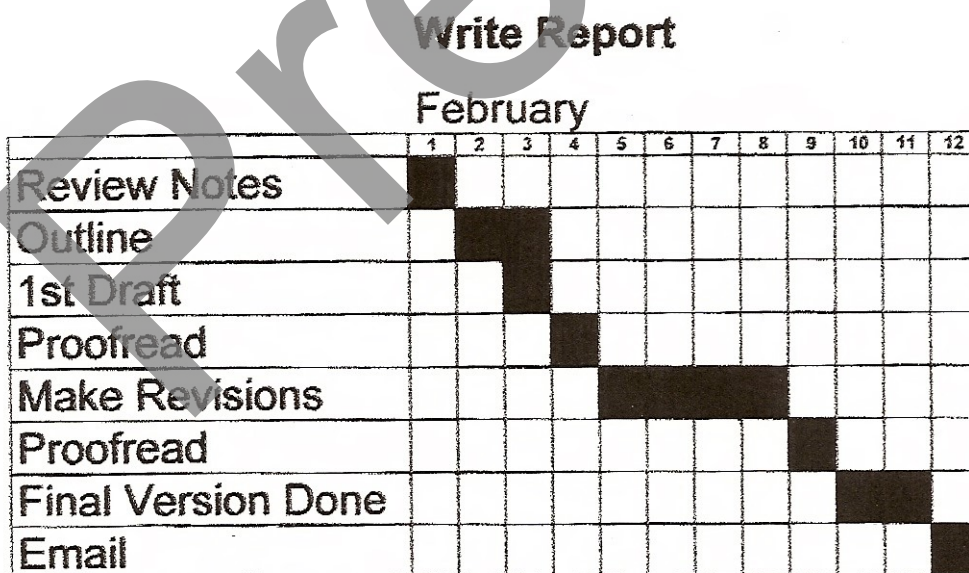

Figure 4-1: Designed by Henry Gantt in the early 1900s, a GANTT chart is a bar chart that illustrates a project schedule and simplifies the process of tracking progress.

If it fits the personality of your company, (and yours) you can make the numbers public. List the most important tasks of the individuals on the team and assign a specific number according to performance. Post it poster-size on the wall. When things improve, post the new number. All of the things we've listed above are hints on what to do from a nuts and bolts perspective. Underlying any procedure, though, is the attitude that is handed down by a supervisor. It's simple, and we've pointed it out before in previous segments: The attitude of the team is directly related to the attitude of the team leader.

> *"The greatest discovery of mankind is that a person can*
> *improve their life by improving their attitude."*
> *~William James*

Attitude and Effective Communication

It is the supervisor's responsibility to take a positive approach and maintain a good attitude. A fundamental fact to understand about attitude is that a key factor in attitude is physiology. And one of the most important factors relative to physiology is…smile! Smile genuinely. Smile so it reaches your eyes.

When a smile reaches your eyes, people know it's a genuine smile that comes from your heart. In human physiology, there is almost no control of the muscles around the eyes, but a high level of control of the muscles around the mouth. Which means that if a smile "reaches your eyes" it's genuine.

Another factor that influences your attitude is your physiology, which goes beyond smiling. If you were to stand up and assume "The Rocky Pose", a classic illustration of the triumph of human spirit over adversity, you couldn't help but be energized and affect your attitude. Consciously and purposefully keeping your shoulders back, your back straight and walking in brisk steps are all factors in adapting a positive physiology that leads to maintaining a positive belief in your ability to do your job which is, as we've said, to lead your people.

6. Have them write out their action steps in a timeline. Don't write out their action plan for them, give them all the time they need to write it, and then make a copy of what they wrote.

7. Let them tell you what happens if they don't solve the problem, what the results will be if there is no change.

8. Reinforce progress.

    ⇒Schedule a time to reassess.

    ⇒Implement the "LB", "NT" approach. Tell them what you "Like Best" about their progress and let them know what you would like them to accomplish for "Next Time".

    ⇒Direct them to write a memo, "I need you to write me a follow-up memo, stating what we agreed would be done." (Yes, we know how much resistance you may encounter when you tell a technician who isn't a "writer" that you want a memo from them but stick to your guns on this one. It will reap benefits not only for you, but for the technician in their professional development.)

9. Respond to the "It's not my job" comment:

    "Your job description includes other duties as assigned.

10. "Use the right language to close a session.

    "I respect your willingness to have this conversation."

    "I'm glad to see that you know you can do it."

    "I'm backing you up on this."

Dealing With the Unexpected

Since there's no denying that people are people, you should be prepared (at least as prepared as possible) for dealing with the unexpected during a counseling session:

Anger: "I need 30-minutes. At 11:30, we'll address this issue again." Then follow through, no matter how angry you might want to be at the moment. Call a recess.

Tears: Give them a Kleenex and say, "I need to take care of something else. I'll leave the door closed and be back."

Denial or Contradiction, such as "I didn't do that.": "I understand what you're saying. It doesn't change the fact that we have to deal with this issue."

Silence: When dealing with this behavior, you can let them know you are leaving the room for some "think time", or you simply need to be able to sit in silence longer than they can.

Jim's Notes On Chapter Four....

If you're someone who buys things, you likely know about Costco. They started out as a company known as Price Club and they have become the most successful warehouse store chain in the U.S. One of the reasons they've been able to accomplish that feat is their philosophy on employee development.
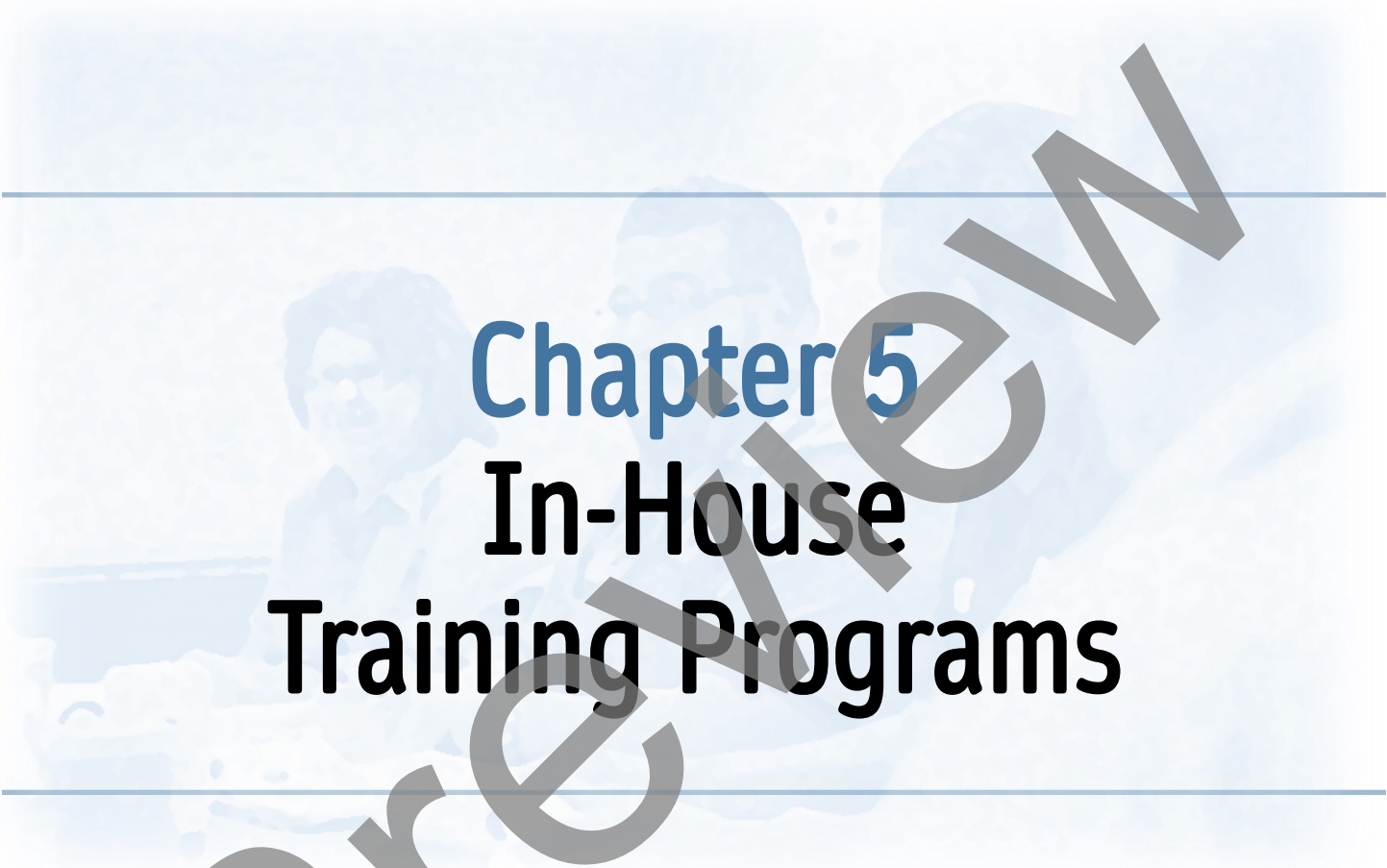
Their CEO, Jim Sinegal, has been quoted as saying that, "80 percent of management's job is to teach, teach, teach."

O.K., your organization isn't the size of Costco, but that doesn't mean you can't adopt their overall philosophy of employee development. From the perspective of service management, consider the idea that everything, everything you do and say is, essentially, providing a teaching opportunity for those who report to you, both in the service and administrative departments you may manage. I mentioned earlier that a technician-turned-service manager often has some difficulty dealing with the idea of no longer being involved in what we refer to as "honest labor".

Well, effective leadership is your new "honest labor" when you become a service manager. And, it's often a lot more work than the skills you used to get into that supervisory position. You need to be constantly aware of the needs of the technicians and others who report to you and what you can do to help them along their way from both a professional and personal perspective. Every time you assign a task, give advice on what to do about a given situation, conduct a meeting, counsel, delegate, guide, mentor, or communicate in any way with the people who report to you, you are, in essence, teaching.

That's what the 80-percent idea is about, which leaves you 20 percent of your time to accomplish the other tasks that are your responsibility as a service manager....paperwork, and your own learning and development.

Chapter 5
In-House Training Programs

It's easy for people to get off track when they're sure they're working with correct information, even when the information is actually wrong. One way to prevent that in an organization that strives for excellence is through the implementation and ongoing operation of an in-house training program. In any service industry, an in-house training program that provides for both the development of technical and soft skills is a necessary component of an organization's commitment to excellence in customer service, whether that organization is large or small.

"Training is not an expense. It's an investment."

Whether a technician is as "green" as can be, or they have a decade of experience in performing service work, there is a need for ongoing training and technician development. Often, service managers don't implement an in-house training program, and they have a variety of explanations, some of which are:

⇒ "We're so busy just keeping up with service calls; I just don't have the time to put training information together."

⇒ "I don't always know what I need to do in order to make sure technicians get the information they need."

Perhaps you've heard somebody say something along the lines of the above, or maybe you've even said (or at least thought) them yourself. There's no doubt that getting training accomplished on your own site is a challenge, however, as we all know, it can provide a great deal of benefit for both new and experienced technicians. Often, service organizations struggle with the task of keeping technicians up-to-date, and with bringing along new technicians, not because they aren't sure what information to provide, but how to get it accomplished. There are some of the basic things that are fundamental to establishing an in-house technician development program.

The first thing we'll consider is a simple philosophy because of one more quote you might hear from a service manager or service company owner about providing training, "I'm a technician, not an instructor."

We also want to point out that this drawing is incomplete until the technician, on a cue from you, makes it complete. In Figure 5-2, the illustration is a carbon copy (almost) of the technician's workbook page.
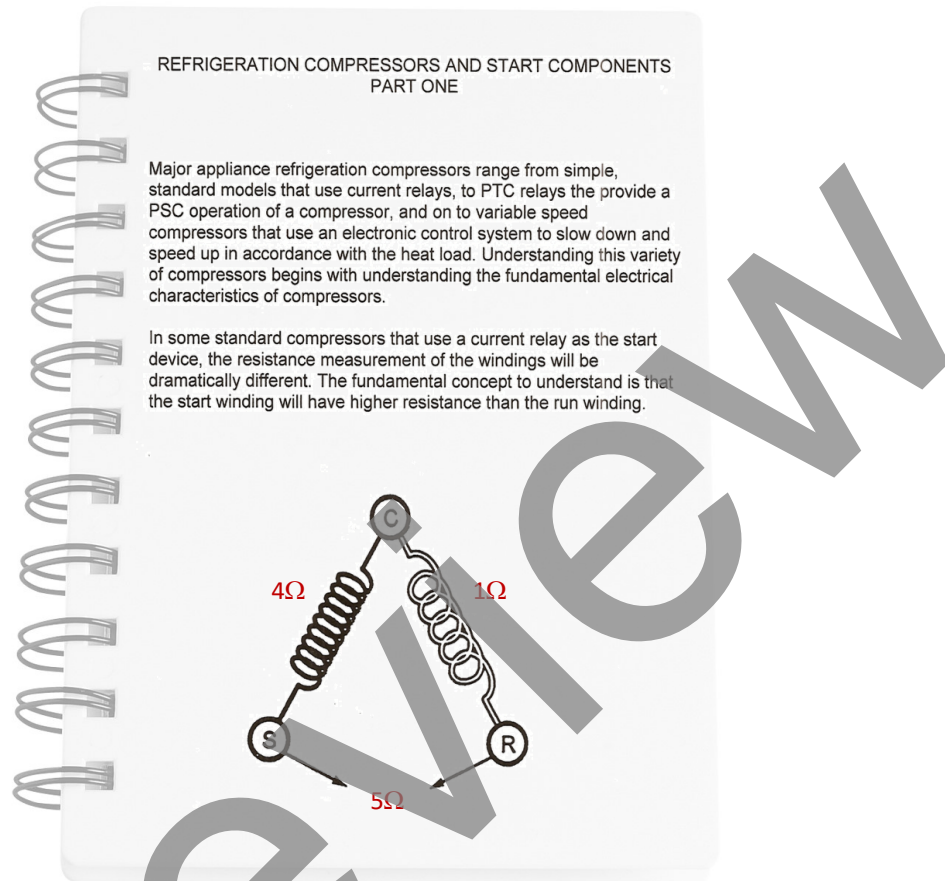

REFRIGERATION COMPRESSORS AND START COMPONENTS
PART ONE

Major appliance refrigeration compressors range from simple, standard models that use current relays, to PTC relays the provide a PSC operation of a compressor, and on to variable speed compressors that use an electronic control system to slow down and speed up in accordance with the heat load. Understanding this variety of compressors begins with understanding the fundamental electrical characteristics of compressors.

In some standard compressors that use a current relay as the start device, the resistance measurement of the windings will be dramatically different. The fundamental concept to understand is that the start winding will have higher resistance than the run winding.

Figure 5-2: The session facilitator shows the same drawing that is in the technician workbook with added information.

What you'll notice here is that the text is the same and the drawing of the motor windings is the same, except in this illustration, the Common, Start and Run terminals on the schematic symbol are there to identify the wiring connections, and there is also information on the resistance readings of this particular compressor's start and run windings. This, as we mentioned, is your copy, the technician's copy won't have the information shown here until you provide it for them and they add what you've shown and explained.

As far as how to convey this information to those attending the training session, PowerPoint is one effective method. Developing the information with Word and using a scanner to integrate any necessary illustrations or wiring diagrams from manuals or tech sheets into the document
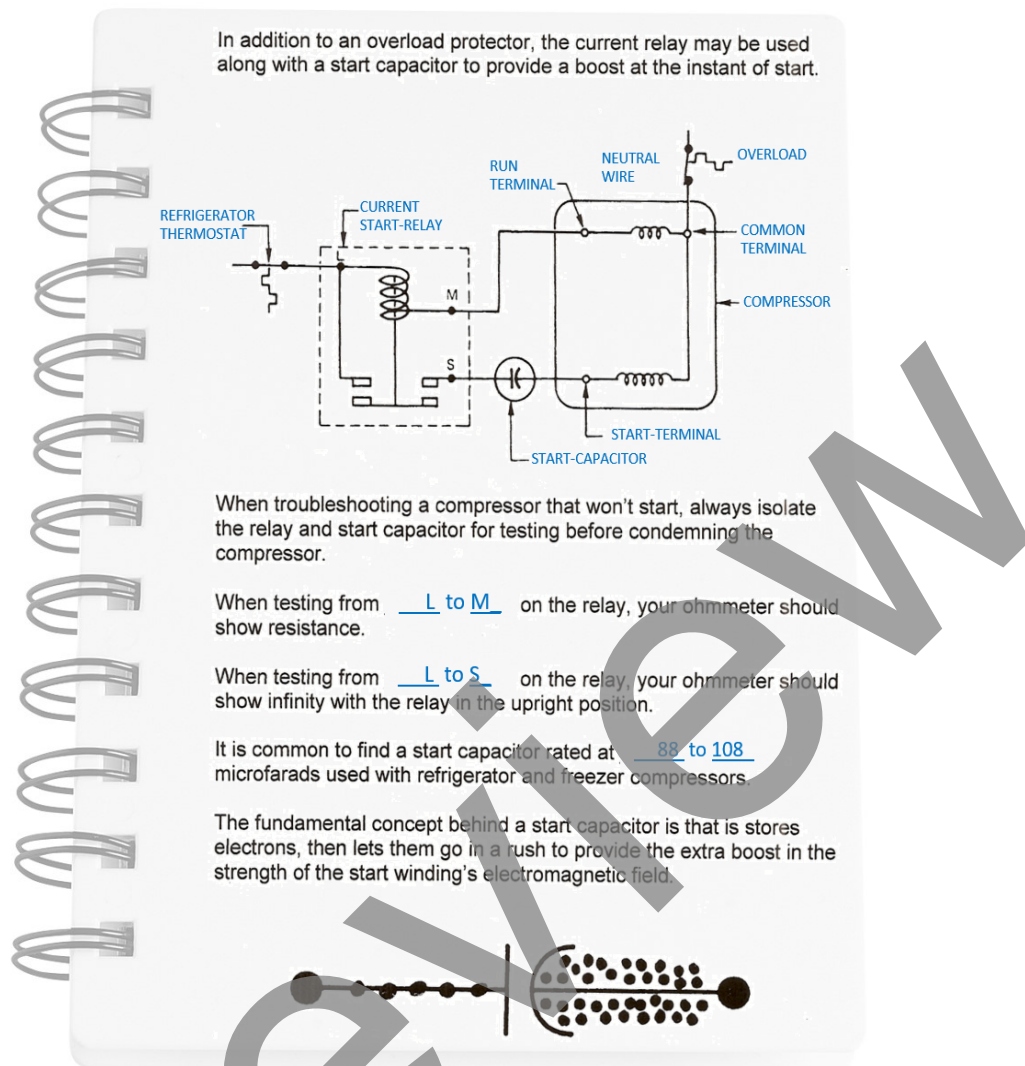
In addition to an overload protector, the current relay may be used along with a start capacitor to provide a boost at the instant of start.

When troubleshooting a compressor that won't start, always isolate the relay and start capacitor for testing before condemning the compressor.

When testing from ___L to M___ on the relay, your ohmmeter should show resistance.

When testing from ___L to S___ on the relay, your ohmmeter should show infinity with the relay in the upright position.

It is common to find a start capacitor rated at ___88 to 108___ microfarads used with refrigerator and freezer compressors.

The fundamental concept behind a start capacitor is that is stores electrons, then lets them go in a rush to provide the extra boost in the strength of the start winding's electromagnetic field.

Figure 5-9: A complete illustration of the image in Figure 5-8.

Once you've reached this stage in the training session, your attendees will be ready to move on to the next subject that will lead up to the understanding of variable-speed compressors, which is comparing them to the operation of a PSC (Permanent Split Capacitor) compressor that employs a solid state start device.

One of the elements of understanding variable speed compressors is method in which the current flow through the compressor motor windings is delivered via the electronic control system of the refrigerator. That being the case, an element of set-up for this specific session would include a simple explanation of alternating current.

This illustration, which picks up where you left off with the wiring connected only to the run windings of the motor, also shows the run capacitor you are about to interactively explain in the next illustration from the Facilitator's Guide, which is shown in Figure 5-15.

With this drawing displayed, what you're accomplishing here is more than just showing the wiring connections of a PSC motor.

However, since the run capacitor is wired in series with the start winding, the electromagnetic field of that winding is slightly out of sync with the electromagnetic field of the run winding, and the end result is that the motor operates more efficiently.
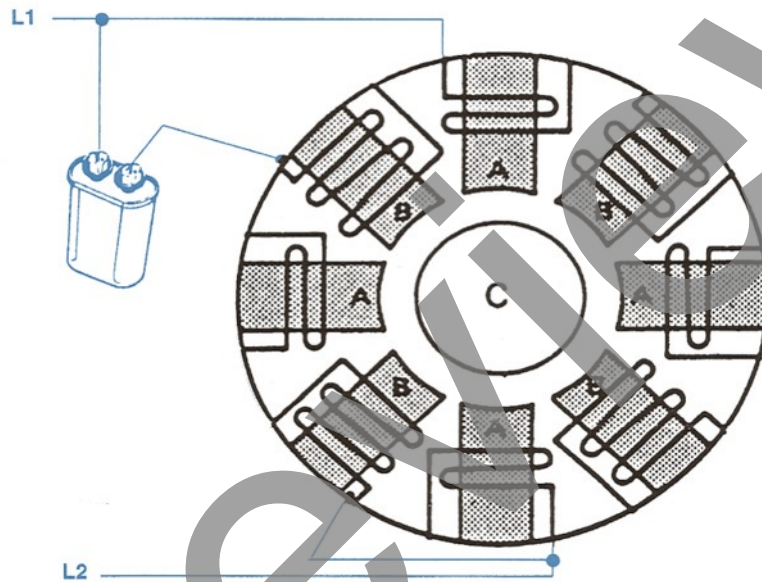

Figure 5-15: This illustration repeats the narrative and shows the wiring for the run capacitor.

Extensive studies in adult education in both the academic and vocational education areas show that when a method such as this is employed in providing training, the retention of the person on the receiving end of the information goes up dramatically. Without a visual aid system, and an interactive process on the part of the student, retention of information presented at a "talking head" session is approximately 10%, seven days after the training session.

"The best way to teach is through the eye and the hand. It is hard to retain what we hear, but people remember what they see and do."
~John Patterson

Jim's Notes On Chapter Five....

In a public square in Florence, Italy stands a marble statue that is known worldwide as a masterpiece. It's Michelangelo's David. Well, not the real David. The sculpture that tourists visit in droves every day in the public square is not the original. It's an exact copy that was accomplished via laser technology. Italian officials wanted to preserve the tradition of the statue being in its original position, where Michelangelo intended it to be… enjoyed in the open, surrounded by the buildings in the square. The original statue is on display in a museum nearby, and the wait to get in to view it is usually about 4 hours.
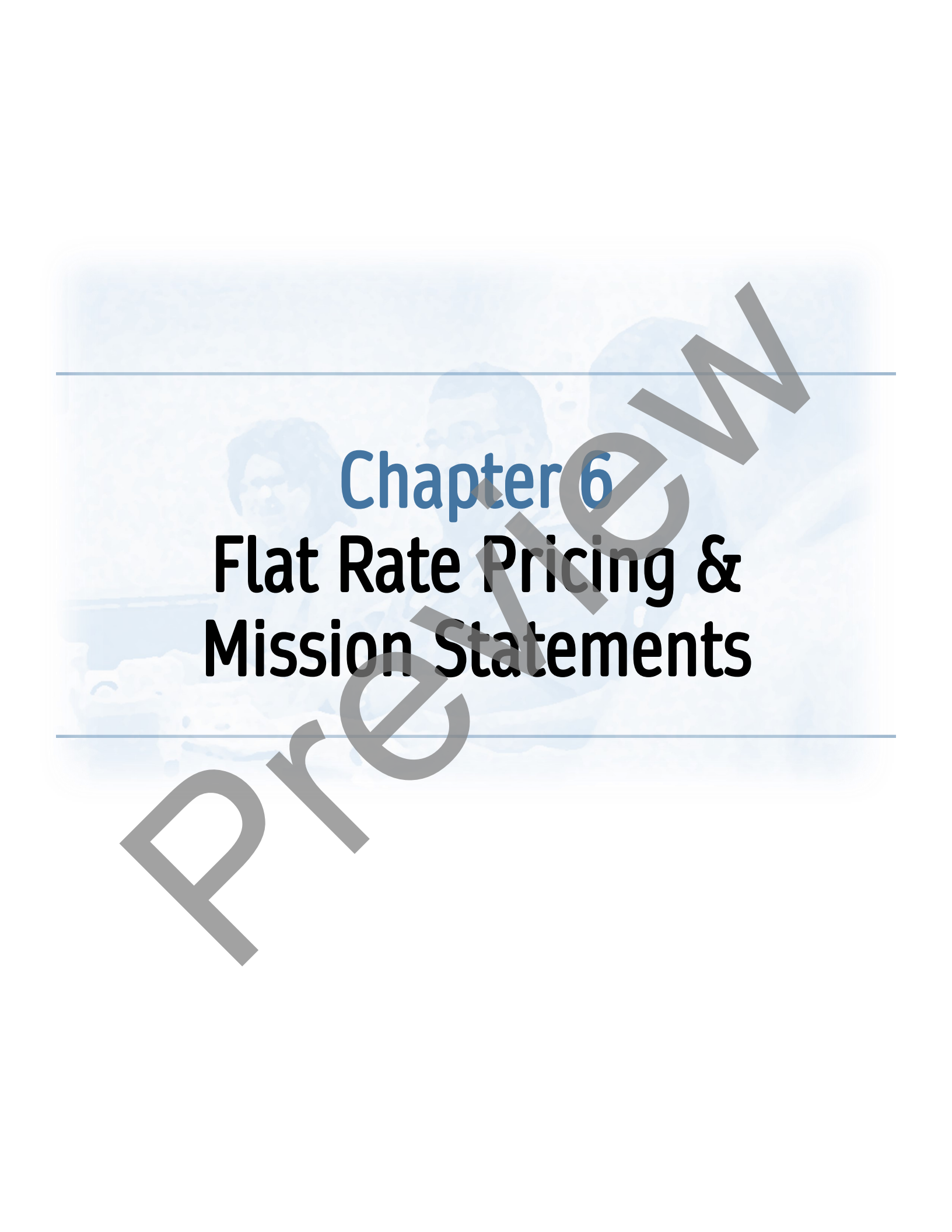
When you see either one, whether you are an art lover or not, you are amazed by Michelangelo's accomplishment. You are in awe of his skill as a sculptor. And of course, Michelangelo, in his lifetime, accomplished much more than just the statue of David. The ceiling of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican is just one more example of his skill as an artist.

Despite all of his obvious skills, and all the statues and paintings he was able to produce in his lifetime, though, Michelangelo always considered himself to be a student of art. At the age of 87, he was quoted as saying "Ancora imparo"……"Still, I learn."

Every year, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning News, one of the premier publications for the HVACR industry, conducts a contest to pick the best contractors to work for. There are categories related to company size, so smaller companies are on a level playing field while competing for the honor. And each year, when the top companies are chosen in all the categories, whether a large company or a small one, there is one common thread that runs through each of them.

They all have an effective in-house training program. Sure, some of the company profiles include things like reasonable wages or other compensation programs, benefits related to health care, and reward programs for employees. Not all of them have the same type and range of benefits, but, like I said, the one common thread that runs through each of their company profiles is an in-house training program that works.

The example I've mentioned is from the HVACR industry, but it could be any industry that employs service technicians. The fundamental idea behind providing in-house training so that employees feel as though they have an opportunity for professional and personal development fits anywhere. As I've said previously… people are people.

Chapter 6
Flat Rate Pricing & Mission Statements

A service organization that provides the best possible service to its customers is entitled to a fair price for their services, and they are also entitled to earn an honest profit in the process of delivering those goods and services. And the most effective way for a service organization to accomplish that goal is to use a flat-rate pricing system that fits their business.

Flat rate pricing makes the most sense for any service organization. We encounter flat rate pricing when we have our automobile serviced. When a customer calls a plumber for service, a flat rate price system lets them know how much they'll be paying for labor to get the job done. Electricians do flat rate. Many HVACR service companies use flat rate pricing. A fair percentage of appliance service companies use some type of flat rate price system. And flat rate is not only the best type of pricing system for the service organization, but also the fairest for the customer.

Often, it's assumed that a service organization will wind up losing business or hearing a lot of complaints if they went flat rate because of the myth that it means raising prices to a level that customers won't tolerate. While it's often the case that when a flat rate pricing system is implemented, rates will go up, that doesn't mean that customers are being ripped off. It only means that professional rates are being charged for professional services.

> *"The better the service, the less price becomes an issue."*
> *~John R. Dijulius III*

And here's a comment that you might hear from somebody who isn't interested in going flat rate, "Well, flat rate might work for you, but you don't know what *my* customers are like!"

Baloney. It doesn't matter whether you're in Los Angeles, California, or Spackle Junction, Arkansas. Flat rate works for any size service organization in any market when customers (not price-shoppers) are the focus of a service business. If you've considered flat rate but haven't done it yet, find an on-line discussion board to visit and solicit an opinion from somebody who isn't in your immediate market area.

The point is, you don't have to take our word for it. Talk to others and get their opinion. What you'll likely hear from them is that while they may have had some concerns about going flat rate, the exact opposite is what actually happened. Instead of customer complaints about price going up, they went down. The phone didn't stop ringing.

Once you have the average number of hours worked daily, you have to calculate the average daily individual wage. Multiply the average number of hours worked daily by the hourly rate of each technician.

Example: Technician #1 is paid $22.00 per hour, while Technician #2 is paid $16.00 per hour.

> **$22.00 X 8.36 = $183.92 average daily wages for Technician #1**
> **$16.00 X 8.57 = $137.12 average daily wages for Technician #2**

If you have employees who are paid overtime for extra hours, you need to calculate the overtime hours separately from the regular hours. Take the number of hours worked in this time period at regular pay and divide it by the number of days worked. Then take the number of hours-worked overtime in the same time period and divide it by the same number of days. Multiply each figure by the appropriate hourly wage.

Example: Technician #3 worked 520 regular hours and 100 overtime hours in 65 days.

> **520 hours regular wages ÷ 65 = 8 hours regular pay each day average**
> **100 hours overtime wages ÷ 65 = 1.54 hours overtime pay each day average**

Multiply the average number of hours each day at each rate. If technician #3 is paid $22.00 for each regular hour and $33.00 for each overtime hour.

> **$22.00 X 8 = $176.00 average daily regular wages**
> **$33.00 X 1.54 = $50.82 average daily overtime wages**

Add the average daily individual wage (including overtime pay if necessary) for each technician and divide by the number of technicians. This will give you the average daily wage.

> **$183.92 average daily wages for Technician #1**
> **+$137.12 average daily wages for Technician #2**
> **+$176.00 average daily regular wages for Technician #3**
> ** +$50.82 average daily overtime wages for Technician #3**
> **$547.86 average total daily technicians' wages**
> **   ÷3 technicians**
> **$182.62 is your average daily wage**

At your second mission statement meeting, at which you make more progress (no, you're not going to get it finished in this meeting either) by letting all those involved in developing the company mission statement that the best way for them to help in getting it done is to understand what their individual purpose is within the operation of the company.

Here are five questions you propose to them so they can consider what their personal purpose would be relative to the company mission statement:

1. Do you start most of your workdays with a sense of enthusiasm?

_____Yes   _____ Not Sure   ____No

2. Do you have a firm understanding of what you are really good at and what you enjoy doing?

_____Yes   _____ Not Sure   ____No

3. At the end of most days, do you feel a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment?

_____Yes   _____ Not Sure   ____No

4. Do you think that the work you do makes a difference in other people's lives or benefits them in some way?

_____Yes   _____ Not Sure   ____No

5. Do you feel that your life has a sense of meaning and purpose?

_____Yes   _____ Not Sure   ____No

(See Appendix A for a printable version of these questions.)

Heavy questions, no doubt. And there's also no doubt that when you propose these questions, most technicians will be uncomfortable answering them in a public environment. That's OK.

When you propose these questions either via PowerPoint or handing them out in a printed form, let everybody know that you don't expect this information to be shared unless they make the choice to do so.

Jim's Notes On Chapter Six....

Congratulations! You've come a long way on the path to service management excellence. The information on hiring people, helping them grow in their professional development, leading them when necessary, counseling when you have to, and being their coach and mentor, along with providing ongoing, in-house training opportunities for them is all part of the package of being an excellent service manager.

And there's been a lot of information to digest, but if you've come this far, you're on your way to achieving that level of excellence that the majority of people don't reach.

When it comes to the two topics of this last segment, charging enough money for what you do and being dedicated to doing it as well as anybody can, there are few thoughts I want to leave you with about flat-rate pricing and mission statements.

First, on the issue of pricing the services you provide. I think many service managers and service company owners get confused (and scared) when they decide to set their pricing. Often, they look around at what everyone else is charging, and then, for all intents and purposes, hope that the price they decide to set will allow them to stay in business.

I would encourage you to avoid that trap, and simply determine what your cost of doing business is and set your pricing accordingly. Do I think that you'll get every call that comes along with your pricing set at a point that will likely be higher than most others?

No, I'm sure you won't, and it doesn't matter that you don't. One of the most difficult things we have to learn as service organizations is that we can't "close" every person who calls to inquire about the price you charge for your services.

There are two kinds of people who call a service organization and ask, "How much is a service call?":

1. Customers.
2. Shoppers.

A customer shops for value and a shopper shops for price. And the way I see it, our job as a business that provides a service is that the kind of service we provide is "customer service" not

Appendix A

APPENDIX A

To determine where a person stands relative to NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) and whether they are dominantly visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, have them answer the following fifteen questions.

Representational System Survey

The most efficient way for professionals to learn about the different ways in which others process information is to discover their own representational system. Please take the time to answer the following questions, relying on your first reaction when doing so. This survey won't be of much value to you if you endeavor to "make the test come out" the way you think it should. This isn't a test. It's just a survey, and there are no "right" or "wrong" answers.

1. When I encounter someone I don't like, I know it;
   A. the minute I see them.
   B. as soon as they begin to talk.
   C. through what I sense about them.

2. Wind chimes sometimes bother me.
   A. True
   B. False

3. If I have to spell something, I double-check myself by;
   A. sounding it out.
   B. getting a feeling for whether or not it's right.
   C. seeing it in my mind's eye.

4. When someone assigns a task to me, I understand it well if;
   A. it's clearly explained.
   B. it's written down or diagrammed.
   C. I'm sure about the purpose behind the project.

Test Point Totals

OVER 60 POINTS:

Others see you as someone they should "handle with care." You're seen as vain, self-centered, and extremely dominant. Others may admire you, wishing they could be more like you, but don't always trust you, hesitating to become too involved with you.

51 TO 60 POINTS:

Others see you as a highly volatile, rather impulsive personality; a natural leader who's quick to make decisions, though not always the right ones. They see you as bold and adventuresome, someone who will try anything once; someone who takes chances and enjoys adventure. They enjoy being in your company because of the excitement you radiate.

41 TO 50 POINTS:

Others see you as fresh, lively, charming, amusing, practical, and always interesting; someone who is constantly at the center of attention, but sufficiently well-balanced not to let it go their head. They also see you as kind, considerate, and understanding; someone who will always cheer them up and help them out.

31 TO 40 POINTS:

Others see you as sensible, cautious, careful, and practical. They see you as clever, gifted, or talented, but modest. Not a person who makes friends too quickly or easily, but someone who is extremely loyal to friends you do make and who expects the same loyalty in return. Those who really get to know you realize that it takes a lot to shake your trust in friends, but equally that it takes you a long time to get over it if that trust is ever broken.

21 TO 30 POINTS:

Your friends see you as painstaking and fussy. They see you as very cautious, extremely careful, a slow and steady plodder. It would really surprise them if you ever did something impulsively or in the spur of the moment, expecting you to examine everything carefully from every angle and then, usually decide against it. They think this reaction is caused by your careful nature.

UNDER 21 POINTS:

People think you are shy, nervous, and indecisive; someone who needs looking after, who always wants someone else to make the decisions, and who doesn't want to get involved with anyone or anything. They see you as a worrier who always sees problems that don't exist. Some people think you are boring. Only those who really know you know that you aren't.

True/False Personality Test #2

Answer the following eight questions:

1.   I prefer working alone.

_____T   _____F

2.   I am a social person.

_____T   _____F

3.   I don't like to rely on others to help me with my job.

_____T   _____F

4.   I usually spend my free time with friends.

_____T   _____F

5.   I enjoy working on teams.

_____T   _____F

6.   I like to work without distractions.

_____T   _____F

7.   Meeting with others is often a waste of time.

_____T   _____F

8.   I do not like to draw attention to myself.

_____T   _____F

True/False Personality Test #2

it's a good bet that you will find yourself interacting with someone who fits that profile. and you may not realize that's the case.

There you are, doing everything right relative to managing, leading, coaching, and training, and while it works for some of your people, it doesn't work for others. It's natural for you to wonder what you're not getting right when things don't work, and the answer could be relative to how people view their environment and how they function within it.

This, of course could be labeled as "attitude" and considered to be either good or bad, and labeled as positive or negative and leave it at that. However, there's a simple question to considering people and how they make sense of their world.

Are they seeing their environment and the events they encounter through a "P" or an "I" prism?

Here are the "P" terms to consider:
• Personal
• Permanent
• Pervasive

Here are the "I" terms:
• Impersonal
• Impermanent
• Isolated

When considering these six terms, and how they relate to a person's response to an event, be it good or bad, they are either approaching things from an optimistic or pessimistic aspect. And, no, we're not advocating trying to look at everything that happens in someone's life through rose-colored glasses and denying reality, just understanding the truth about events and how they are viewed.

When a person is looking through the prism of optimism, they make sense of *good events* that occur in their life by applying the following "P" terms:

$\Rightarrow$ Permanent: When something good happens, it's just that, good. It's what's supposed to happen, and it's going to last.

⇒ Personal: While someone pursuing optimistic thinking isn't breaking their arm trying to pat themselves on the back, they are OK with the fact they are responsible for the good events that occur in their life.

⇒ Pervasive: From the simplest perspective, the definition of this term is "spreading through the whole of something" and is considered to be positive rather than negative through the prism of optimism. Of course, something good happened. That's the way things usually are.

And, when a person is looking through the prism of optimism, they make sense of _bad events_ that occur in their life by applying the following "I" terms:

⇒ Impermanent: OK, a bad event occurred, but there's no reason to dwell on it as though it's going to last forever.

⇒ Impersonal: Yes, it happened, but that doesn't mean that someone is a total failure, even if mistakes were made.

⇒ Isolated: Through the prism of optimism, when something bad happens, it's considered to be a bit of a surprise, because that's not the way things usually happen.

And, no surprise, when a person is looking through the prism of pessimism, they make sense of _good events_ that occur in their life by applying the following "I" terms:

⇒ Impermanent: "This is a good thing, but it's too good to last."

⇒ Impersonal: "How did that happen? Certainly not because of something I did."

⇒ Isolated: "Hmmm, this isn't how things usually turn out for me."

Of course, you know by now that the "P" terms apply when a _bad event_ occurs in the life of someone who is pursuing pessimistic thinking.

⇒ Permanent: "Well, there it is again."

⇒ Personal: "I'm such a screw-up."

⇒ Pervasive: "My bad luck follows me wherever I go."

Many people who are in management positions don't realize that their normal way of functioning is to apply permanent, personal and pervasive thought processes to <u>*good events*</u> and impermanent, impersonal, and isolated ideas to *bad events* because that's just their outlook on life, their normal way of thinking. If they didn't look at things from that perspective, they likely wouldn't have wound up in a position of responsibility in the first place.

And, until some labels are applied to bring things to the forefront, a supervisor often senses that something isn't right when dealing with people who have the polar opposite thought processes, but can't effectively deal with it….think walking away shaking your head because it "just doesn't make sense."

### Additional Scotoma Resources

In Chapter One, the concept of how a person's Reticular Activating System works to "see" what is important was discussed, along with process of recognizing that a scotoma (blind spot) exists when we don't "see" something.
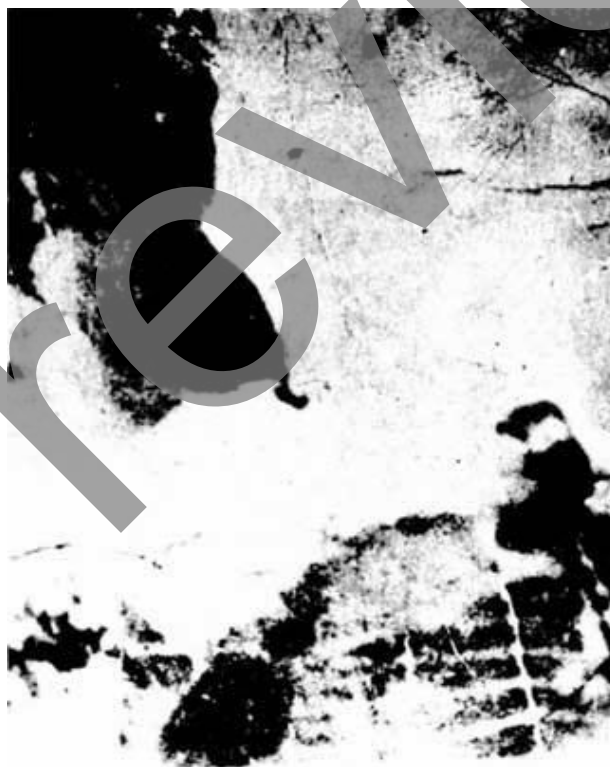

What do you see? Think outside the box. Just because the caption is set "below" the picture doesn't mean you should look at it that way. (Turn the page over to the right to see the picture of the cow.)
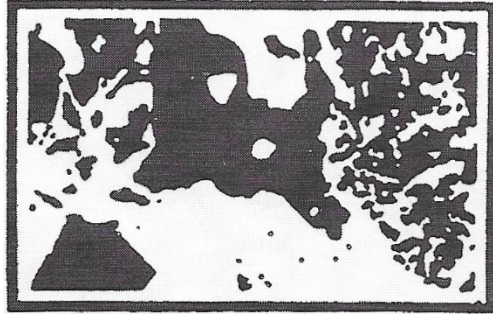
What do you see? It may take a moment for you to realize that there is a man with a beard.
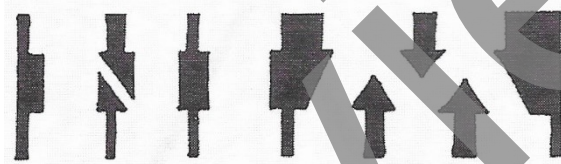
Can you read the word shown here? If you can't see it at first, turn the page upside down and shift your gaze to focus on the white spaces.
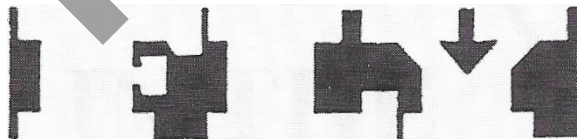
Now that you've had some practice with the word "Win", finding the word in this illustration should be easy.

Glance at this quickly, then say it out loud. Are you sure you got it right?

Developing a Mission Statement

Appendix B

APPENDIX B

Writing Well

"Dave is a good writer."

And there we have it. With a two-word title and a sentence of five words we have proven that you can communicate effectively in writing.

How can we say that? Simply because we are sure that if you have read and understood the information presented previously in the chapters of this book, you know the proper use of the terms "well" and "good" when they are used in a sentence.

If we said, "Dave is a well writer" you would immediately recognize that as an incorrect sentence, an improper use of the word "well". You would also obviously know that if we presented our title as "Writing Good" that it would be an incorrect use of the term "good".

It's common to hear from technicians that they don't consider themselves to be good at writing. And, as we said at the beginning of this book, service managers often move into a supervisory position because they started out as technicians. What follows, then, is that it's also common to hear from service managers that they don't consider themselves to be good at writing.

It's time to set that opinion aside. We said in chapter one of this book that one element of achieving excellence in service management is the ability to communicate effectively in writing. Sending an email, a text, or going the old school route of handing out or posting a paper memo is fundamental to making your department run well. When things are "down on paper" (emails and texts are, in fact, an adequate 'paper trail') there is no confusion about what has been communicated, what direction has been set down, and what instructions have been provided.

As little as a decade ago, accomplishing written communication took much more effort than it does today. The most obvious example of this is that using Microsoft Word to compose a document means that you don't have to be able to spell every word you use correctly or be an expert in grammar and punctuation.

Service Management

EXCELLENCE

Jim Johnson has been a full-time technician, as well as a full-time trade school and community college instructor and administrator, working in and around the refrigeration, HVACR, appliance, and facility maintenance fields since 1973. He has facilitated hundreds of training seminars, workshops and classes in the HVACR electrical and refrigeration areas alone, as well as many other workshops in other technical and non-technical areas.

His background includes a satellite training network for HVACR and appliance technicians, and the development and presentation of more than 75 video training programs. He has authored five textbooks and 10 technician handbooks.

He has been a columnist for trade magazines for more than 20 years, including Indoor Comfort News, RSES Journal, ACHR News, ACHR News Extra Edition, HVACR Today, and Marcone World Magazine, providing monthly troubleshooting features and more than 500 feature articles.

He is a member of RSES, Certified as a Residential and Light Commercial Air Balancing and Diagnostic Technician, and is certified in heat pumps. He also holds multiple certifications in combustion analysis and carbon monoxide safety. He is a registered proctor for NATE exams, and his workshops, HVAC training videos, and e-book CD's not only provide a simplified approach to learning about troubleshooting and servicing heating and air conditioning equipment, they also serve as an effective preparation for NATE certification exams.