

Distinctive School Series:

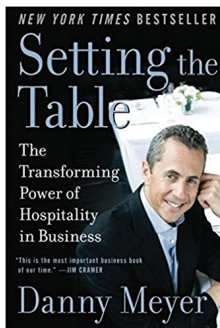
Healthy School Series: Hospitality in your Office

Book and Study Guide for Training your Staff

Schools spend thousands every year trying to recruit new students. This is good. But what's wrong with the ones you have? Keeping families at your school is vital. And, by the time you realize you have a 'retention' problem, it's going to take years to turn it around. Healthy schools put in place practices, policies, and most importantly, people who make the 'aroma' of the school a place where parents want to be.

In this first ACCS Paper in a series on marketing, Bryan Lynch contributes notes from a book that he highly recommends (and we concur) called "Setting the Table." While at a meeting several years ago, Bryan was told that the best type of staff-training was in the hospitality industry. It makes sense: If you want to learn, learn from those who are the best at what you want to learn. When it comes to pleasing people and creating great atmosphere, hotels and restaurants excel at this. So, we can learn from the best by applying these vital principles in our schools.

We strongly recommend that ALL ACCS schools use this resource to train front office staff, and even teachers, in how to be an agent for your customer (yes, parents are customer) rather than a gatekeeper. Now this is a secular work from a non-Christian, so read with that in mind. But, the principles herein are based (whether the author knows it or not) in the Christian practice of hospitality.



Setting the Table: The Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business

Danny Meyer

Notes By: Bryan Lynch, Veritas School in Newburg, Oregon

An Older Way, A Christian Way, A Better Way

Main Points and Quotations

- 1. Hospitality is different from service. Service is the technical delivery of a product, hospitality is how the delivery of the product makes its recipient feel. We want to offer great service, of course, but more than great service--we want to provide great hospitality.**
- 2. We should always be on the look-out to 'write a great last chapter.' When things go wrong, how do we respond? What do we do to make the story end well, to end the way we'd like, with a strengthened customer relationship?**
- 3. We should be striving to be agents not gate-keepers. Agents are on the side of the customer, gatekeepers are setting up barriers.**

“In the end, what’s most meaningful is creating positive, uplifting outcomes for human experiences and human relationships. Business, like life, is all about how you make people feel. It’s that simple, and it’s that hard.” (3)

“Hospitality is the foundation of my business philosophy. Virtually nothing else is as important as how one is made to feel in any business transaction. Hospitality exists when you believe the other person is on your side. The converse is just as true. Hospitality is present when something happens for you. It is absent when something happens to you. Those two simple prepositions— for and to—express it all.” (11)

“Increasingly, their anger was over not getting a reservation at a specific time. I was good at dealing with that, guided by my instinct to let the callers know I was on their side. ‘I’d love to put your name at the top of our wait list for eight o’clock’, I would say. Or, ‘There are literally no tables at eight. Is there any way I could this for you at eight forty-five?’—which I knew sounded a little early than ‘quarter of nine’. Or, ‘Can you give me a range that would work for you, so that I can root for a cancellation?’ The point was to keep the dialogue open while sending the message: I am your agent, not the gatekeeper.” (57)

“Understanding the distinction between service and hospitality has been at the foundation of our success. Service is the technical delivery of a product. Hospitality is how the delivery of that product makes its recipient feel. Service is a monologue—we decide how we want to do things and set our own standards for service. Hospitality, on the other hand, is a dialogue. To be on a guest’s side requires listening to that person with every sense, and following up with thoughtful, gracious, appropriate response. It takes both great service and great hospitality to rise to the top.” (65)

“But hospitality, which most distinguishes our restaurants—and ultimately any business—is the sum of all the thoughtful, caring, gracious things our staff does to make you feel we are on your side when you are dining with us.” (66)

“I had already learned that the trick to delivering superior hospitality was to hire genuine, happy, optimistic people.” (67)

“It’s human nature for people to take precisely as much interest in you as they believe you’re taking in them.” (78)

“Shared ownership develops when guests talk about a restaurant as if it’s theirs. They can’t wait to share it with friends, and what they’re really sharing, beyond the culinary experience, is the experience of feeling important and loved. That sense of affiliation builds trust and a sense of being accepted and appreciated, invariably leading to repeat business, a necessity for any company’s long-term survival.” (78)

“I urge our managers to ABCD—always be collecting dots. Dots are information. The more information you collect, the more frequently you can make meaningful connections that can make other people feel good and give you an edge in business. Using whatever information I’ve collected to gather guests together in a spirit of shared experience is what I call connecting the dots. If I don’t turn over the rocks, I won’t see the dots. If I don’t know that someone works, say, for a magazine whose managing editor I happen to know, I’ve lost a chance to make a meaningful connection that could enhance our relationship with the guest and the guest’s relationship with us. The information is there. You just have to choose to look.” (81)

“I want to hear: ‘We love your restaurant, we adore the food, but your people are what we treasure most about being here’.” (90)

“I encourage each manager to take ten minutes a day to make three gestures that exceed expectations and take a special interest in our guests.” (90)

“...everyone goes through life with an invisible sign hanging around his or her neck reading, ‘make me feel important’...The most successful people in any business that depends on human relationships are the one who know about that invisible sign and have the vision to see how brightly it is flashing. And the true champions know best how to embrace the human being wearing the sign.” (93)

“‘What makes us different and special?’ is the question we ask and try to answer every day, and not just with food.” (101)

“I managed by example, and I had yet to learn how critically important it is to lead by teaching, setting priorities, and holding people accountable.” (108)

“Know Thyself: Before you go to market, know what you are selling and to whom. It’s a very rare business that can (or should) be all things to all people. Be the best you can be within a

reasonably tight product focus. That will help you to improve yourself and help your customers to know how and when to buy your product.” (121)

“The only way a company can grow, stay true to its soul, and remain consistently successful is to attract, hire, and keep great people. It’s that simple, and it’s that hard.” (139)

“...it was critical to develop an even larger team of extraordinary leaders. We searched high and low for the rare employees who love teaching, know how to set priorities, work with a sense of urgency, and— most important—are comfortable with holding people accountable to high standards while letting them hold onto their own dignity.” (140)

“Our staff performance reviews weigh both technical job performance (49 percent) and emotional job performance (51 percent)—how staff members perform their duties and how they relate to others on a personal level.” (141)

“Imagine if every business were a lightbulb and that for each lightbulb the primary goal was to attract the most moths possible. Now what if you learned that 49 percent of the reason moths were attracted to a bulb was for the quality of its light (bright being the task of the bulb) and that 51 percent of the attraction was to the warm projected by the bulb (heat being connected with the feeling of the bulb). It’s remarkable to me how many businesses shine brightly when it comes to acing the tasks but emanate all the warmth of a cool fluorescent light. That explains how a flawless four-star restaurant can actually attract far fewer loyal fans than a two- or-three-star place with soul. In business, I want to be overcome with moths. Our staff must be like a scintillating string of one-hundred-watt lightbulbs, whose product is the sum of 51 percent feeling and 49 percent task.” (141)

“To me, a 51 percenter as five core emotional skills. I’ve learned that we need to hire employees with these skills if we’re to be champions at the team sport of hospitality. They are:

1. Optimistic warmth (genuine kindness, thoughtfulness, and a sense that the glass is always at least half full)
2. Intelligence (not just ‘smarts’ but rather an insatiable curiosity to learn for the sake of learning)— Note: And, there’s no substitute for reasonableness. If agents enforce policies that make little sense in a given situation, no amount of kindness is going to make up for ‘stupid’ in the minds of your customers. (Not in book, added by DG)
3. Work ethic (a natural tendency to do something as well as it can possibly be done)
4. Empathy (an awareness of, care for, and connection to how others feel and how your actions make others feel)

5. Self-awareness and integrity (an understanding of what makes you tick and a natural inclination to be accountable for doing the right thing with honesty and superb judgment)” (143)

“Do they believe the candidate has the capacity to become one of the top three performers on our team in his or her job category?” (150)

“And because you either can’t or don’t fire them, you and they conspire to send a dangerous message to your staff and guests that ‘average’ is acceptable.” (150)

“To the degree that we can do this a ‘virtuous cycle’ of hiring spins on. Sustaining peak performance helps us to attract other highly talented people, who in turn help keep our performance at a peak.” (153)

“The idea is to attain a balance: hiring people who are naturally upbeat and genuine but who are also high —level achievers capable of delivering excellence.” (154)

“Your job is just to move the shaker back each time and let them know exactly what stand for. Let them know what excellence looks like to you.” (188)

“The biggest mistake managers can make is neglecting to set high standards and hold others accountable.” (196)

“The number one reason guests cite for wanting to return to a restaurant is that when they go there, they feel seen and recognized. Imagine if our hosts consistently conveyed, ‘I see you!’. I’m fairly certain that’s precisely what most people want.” (215)

“”The road to success is paved with mistakes well handled.” (220)

“”The definition of business is problems.” (220)

“We call that ‘writing a great last chapter’. Whatever mistake happened, happened. And the person on the receiving end will naturally want to tell anyone who’s interested all about it. That’s to be expected. While we can’t erase what happened, we do have the power to write one last episode so that at least the story ends the way we want. If we write a great one, we will earn a comeback victory with the guest. Also, the guest will have no choice but to focus on how well we responded to the mistake when telling anyone we made it.” (222)

“But when we receive complaints of any type, our mission is twofold: first, to learn from the mistake and to profit from what we’ve learned; and second, to write a great last chapter that

allows us to end up in a better place with the guest than if we had never made the mistake in the first place.” (224-25)

- “1. Respond graciously, and do so at once. You know you’re going to resolve the mistake eventually. It’s always a lot less costly to resolve the matter at the outset.
2. Err on the side of generosity. Apologize and make sure the value of the redemption is worth more than the cost of the original mistake.
3. Always write a great last chapter. People love to share stories of adversity. Use this powerful force to your advantage by writing the closing statement the way you want it told. Use all your imagination and creativity in thinking about your response.
4. Learn from the mistake. Use every new mistake as a teaching tool with your employees. Unless the mistake involved a lack of integrity, the person who made it has actually helped your team by providing you with new opportunities to improve.
5. Make new mistakes every day. Don’t waste time repeating the old ones.” (225)

“By viewing mistakes as opportunities to repair and strengthen relationships, rather than letting them destroy relationships, a business is paving its own road to success and good fortune.” (236)

“Hospitality starts with the genuine enjoyment of doing something well for the purpose of bringing pleasure to other people. Whether that’s an attitude, a behavior, or an innate trait, it should become a primary motivation for coming to work every day. We strive to treat our guests the way we would want to be treated. The golden rule remains as fresh and meaningful as ever...” (244)

“...am I being perceived by this caller as an agent or a gatekeeper? An agent makes things happen for others. A gatekeeper sets up barriers to keep people out. We’re looking for agents.” (244)

“In every business, there are employees who are the first point of contact with the customers (attendants at airport gates, receptionists at doctors’ offices, bank tellers, executive assistants). Those people can come across either as agents or gatekeepers. An agent makes things happen for others. A gatekeeper sets up barriers to keep people out. We’re looking for agents, and our staff members are responsible for monitoring their own performance: In that transaction, did I present myself as an agent or a gatekeeper? In the world of hospitality, there’s rarely anything in between.” (245)

“But anytime I hear or sense ‘trendy’ (as opposed to ‘enduring’) as an important aspect of what’s going on, my antennae go up.” (283)

“I’m convinced that a business cannot be more successful than the sum of the human relationships it has fostered and nurtured.” (318)

Study Guide for *Setting the Table* by Danny Meyer Bryan Lynch, Veritas Newburg OR

Contents Summary

Chapter	Title	Content
Intro.	Introduction	Brief summary of key ideas
1	The First Course	Personal Background
2	In Business	More Personal Background
3	The Restaurant Takes Root	Service vs. Hospitality
4	Turning Over Rocks	Pay attention to detail; more on hospitality
5	Who Ever Wrote the Rule...?	Leading intentionally, explicitly
6	No Turning Back	Fostering community
7	The 51 Percent Solution	Hiring and personnel qualities
8	Broadcasting the Message, Tuning in the Feedback	Welcome scrutiny and persevere
9	Constant, Gentle Pressure	Leadership
10	The Road to Success Is Paved with Mistakes Well Handled	Business is problem solving
11	The Virtuous Cycle of Enlightened Hospitality	Profit is not primary, but there is no mission without margin
12	Context, Context, Context	Strategy
13	The Art of Hospitality	Wrap up/current plans

Chapter Review Questions:

Please read the following sections and answer the questions. We'll discuss these, in addition to any other questions or insights you have, when we meet.

I. Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2 (1-54)

“In the end, what’s most meaningful is creating positive, uplifting outcomes for human experiences and human relationships. Business, like life, is all about how you make people feel. It’s that simple, and it’s that hard.” (3)

What do you think about this statement? Is it true?

How does this idea relate to the operation of our school?

When Meyer says it’s simple and hard, what does he mean?

“Hospitality is the foundation of my business philosophy. Virtually nothing else is as important as how one is made to feel in any business transaction. Hospitality exists when you believe the other person is on your side. The converse is just as true. Hospitality is present when something happens for you. It is absent when something happens to you. Those two simple prepositions—for and to—express it all.” (11)

What are some ways we can concretely demonstrate to others in our context that we are *for* them? How do we avoid doing things to them?

What ideas from this section seem particularly important to you?

II. Chapter 3: In Business (55-76)

“Increasingly, their anger was over not getting a reservation at a specific time. I was good at dealing with that, guided by my instinct to let the callers know I was on their side. ‘I’d love to put your name at the top of our wait list for eight o’clock’, I would say. Or, ‘There are literally no tables at eight. Is there any way I could do this for you at eight forty-five?’—which I knew sounded a little early than ‘quarter of nine’. Or, ‘Can you give me a range that would work for you, so that I can root for a cancellation?’ The point was to keep the dialogue open while sending the message: I am your agent, not the gatekeeper.” (57)

Why is this concept of agent vs. gatekeeper so important?

What are some examples of inappropriate ‘gatekeeping’ that we might see at Veritas?

How, specifically, can we better ensure that all our staff act as agents and not gatekeepers?

“Understanding the distinction between service and hospitality has been at the foundation of our success. Service is the technical delivery of a product. Hospitality is how the delivery of that product makes its recipient feel. Service is a monologue—we decide how we want to do things and set our own standards for service. Hospitality, on the other hand, is a dialogue. To be on a guest’s side requires listening to that person with every sense, and following up with thoughtful, gracious, appropriate response. It takes both great service and great hospitality to rise to the top.” (65)

Why is the distinction between service and hospitality so important?

How, specifically, can we make sure that we—and all our staff—deliver both excellent service and great hospitality?

“But hospitality, which most distinguishes our restaurants—and ultimately any business—is the sum of all the thoughtful, caring, gracious things our staff does to make you feel we are on your side when you dining with us.” (66)

What are some specific examples of our staff showing that they are ‘on the side’ of our parents/students/ community?

“I had already learned that the trick to delivering superior hospitality was to hire genuine, happy, optimistic people.” (67)

Why is hiring so critical to delivering superior hospitality?

What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

III. Chapter 4: Turning Over Rocks (77-96)

“It’s human nature for people to take precisely as much interest in you as they believe you’re taking in them.” (78)

If this is true, how might this impact how we deal with people?

How we train our staff to deal with them?

“Shared ownership develops when guests talk about a restaurant as if it’s theirs. They can’t wait to share it with friends, and what they’re really sharing, beyond the culinary experience, is the experience of feeling important and loved. That sense of affiliation builds trust and a sense of being accepted and appreciated, invariably leading to repeat business, a necessity for any company’s long-term survival.” (78)

How does this relate to our emphasis on word of mouth marketing?
How do we build this in our community and in our staff?

“Dots are information. The more information you collect, the more frequently you can make meaningful connections that can make other people feel good and give you an edge in business. Using whatever information I’ve collected to gather guests together in a spirit of shared experience is what I call connecting the dots. If I don’t turn over the rocks, I won’t see the dots. If I don’t know that someone works, say, for a magazine whose managing editor I happen to know, I’ve lost a chance to make a meaningful connection that could enhance our relationship with the guest and the guest’s relationship with us. The information is there. You just have to choose to look.” (81)

How can you, as a leader, be more intentional to ‘turn over rocks’?
What, specifically, can you begin to do today?

“I want to hear: ‘We love your restaurant, we adore the food, but your people are what we treasure most about being here’.” (90)

If we want this to be true of our families at Veritas—and we should—what do we need to do as leaders to ensure that it happens?

“...everyone goes through life with an invisible sign hanging around his or her neck reading, ‘make me feel important’...The most successful people in any business that depends on human relationships are the one who know about that invisible sign and have the vision to see how brightly it is flashing. And the true champions know best how to embrace the human being wearing the sign.” (93)

How do we help the people we lead understand about the ‘invisible sign’?
What can we do, specifically, to ‘embrace the human being wearing the sign’?
What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

IV. Chapter 5: Who Ever Write the Rule...? (97-110)

“What makes us different and special?” is the question we ask and try to answer every day, and not just with food.” (101)

What makes Veritas different and special? How can you, as a leader, help our staff to reflect on this question every day?

“I managed by example, and I had yet to learn how critically important it is to lead by teaching, setting priorities, and holding people accountable.” (108)

What can you begin doing today as a leader to lead by teaching?

What can you begin doing today as a leader to lead by setting priorities?

What can you begin doing today as a leader to lead by holding people accountable?

“...I had learned to trust my own instincts, and to make them explicit for others. What had once been intuition—ripples I’d leave in my wake—could now be transformed into intentional waves.” (110)

How can you, as a leader, be more explicit and intentional today with those you lead about your priorities and standards for excellence?

What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

V. Chapter 6: No Turning Back (111-138)

“Know Thyself: Before you go to market, know what you are selling and to whom. It’s a very rare business that can (or should) be all things to all people. Be the best you can be within a reasonably tight product focus. That will help you to improve yourself and help your customers to know how and when to buy your product.” (121)

To what degree do we at Veritas face pressure to ‘be all things to all people’?

How can we ensure that we are focusing on being the best we can be within our ‘reasonably tight product focus’?

“A business that doesn’t understand its *raison d’être* is fostering community will inevitably underperform.”

Is this statement true? Is our reason for being really about community?

Assuming this is true, how can you communicate to those you lead the importance of this understanding? How would you word it to them?

What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

VI. Chapter 7: The 51 Percent Solution (139-160) [two sessions]

Session One

“The only way a company can grow, stay true to its soul, and remain consistently successful is to attract, hire, and keep great people. It’s that simple, and it’s that hard.” (139)

Do you think this is true? If so, why is it so hard to do?

What are some ways you, as a leader, can make sure that you do?

“...it was critical to develop an even larger team of extraordinary leaders. We searched high and low for the rare employees who love teaching, know how to set priorities, work with a sense of urgency, and—most important—are comfortable with holding people accountable to high standards while letting them hold onto their own dignity.” (140)

Do you, as a leader: Love teaching? Know how to set priorities? Work with a sense of urgency?

Are you ‘comfortable with hold people accountable to high standards while letting them hold onto their own dignity’?

Which of these do you need to grow in? How, specifically, will you begin doing that today?

“Our staff performance reviews weigh both technical job performance (49 percent) and emotional job performance (51 percent)—how staff members perform their duties and how they relate to others on a personal level.” (141)

In what ways do you do this as a leader/supervisor, and in what ways can you improve?

What ideas from this section seem particularly important to you?

VII. Chapter 7: The 51 Percent Solution (139-160) [two sessions]

Session Two

“Do they believe the candidate has the capacity to become one of the top three performers on our team in his or her job category?” (150)

How might your recent hiring decisions have been different if you had kept this principle in mind?

Is ‘available’ an acceptable qualification for hiring?

“And because you either can’t or don’t fire them, you and they conspire to send a dangerous message to your staff and guests that ‘average’ is acceptable.” (150)

Is average acceptable to you, personally and professionally?

Do you accept average performance from those you lead? If so, what are the consequences to the school? And to them?

“In restaurants, as in any other business, you stand a much better chance of ending up with the most customers when first you have the best employees.” (152)

Why is this true? How might this impact your leading and hiring decisions?

“To the degree that we can do this a ‘virtuous cycle’ of hiring spins on. Sustaining peak performance helps us to attract other highly talented people, who in turn help keep our performance at a peak.” (153)

Are you confident that your recent hires contribute to this virtuous cycle?

Are you confident the members of your team contribute to this?

If not, what are you going to do about it?

What ideas from this section seem particularly important to you?

VIII. Chapter 8: Broadcasting the Message, Tuning in the Feedback (161-186)

“But a mark of a champion is to welcome scrutiny, persevere, perform beyond expectations, and provide an exceptional product...” (182)

What is your response to this quotation?

In what ways can you, and we, welcome scrutiny? In what ways can you, and we, respond well to criticism?

What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

IX. Chapter 9: Constant, Gentle Pressure (187-218)

“Three hallmarks of effective leadership are to provide a clear vision for your business so that your employees know where you’re taking them; to hold people accountable for consistent standards of excellence; and to communicate a well-defined set of cultural priorities and nonnegotiable values. Perhaps most important, true leaders hold themselves accountable for conducting business in the same manner in which they’ve asked their team to perform.” (187)

In what specific ways can you do these more effectively today?

“Your job is just to move the shaker back each time and let them know exactly what stand for. Let them know what excellence looks like to you.” (188)

In spite of the vulgar language, Meyer makes an important point here. How can you ‘move the shaker back’?

How, specifically, will you let the people you lead know what excellence looks like?

“The biggest mistake managers can make is neglecting to set high standards and hold others accountable.” (196)

How, specifically, will you avoid this mistake today and in the future?

“A balanced combination of uncompromising standards and confidence-building reassurance sends a very clear and consistent message to your team: ‘I believe in you and I want you to win as much as I want to win.’ You cannot have a dynamic organization unless you are constantly encouraging people to improve, and believing that they can do it.” (196-97)

How do you send this message of uncompromising standards and reassurance to the people you lead?

“A great leader must repeatedly ask himself or herself this tough question: ‘Why would anyone want to be led by me?’ And there had better be a good number of compelling reasons.” (217)

Have you asked yourself this question?

Are you willing to do so repeatedly, and work to make sure there are compelling reasons?

What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

X. Chapter 10: The Road to Success Is Paved with Mistakes Well Handled (219-236)

“The road to success is paved with mistakes well handled.” (220)

“The definition of business is problems.” (220)

What is your reaction to these statements?

Did they make you think differently about mistakes?

“Indeed, business is problem solving. As human beings, we are all fallible. You’ve got to welcome the inevitability of mistakes if you want to succeed in the restaurant business—or in any business. It’s critical for us to accept and embrace our ongoing mistakes as opportunities to learn, grow, and profit.” (220)

How will you, today, accept and embrace your mistakes as an opportunity to learn and grow?

“We call that ‘writing a great last chapter’. Whatever mistake happened, happened. And the person on the receiving end will naturally want to tell anyone who’s interested all about it. That’s to be expected. While we can’t erase what happened, we do have the power to write one last episode so that at least the story ends the way we want. If we write a great one, we will earn a comeback victory with the guest. Also, the guest will have no choice but to focus on how well we responded to the mistake when telling anyone we made it.” (222)

Think of an example you recently witnessed or experienced of someone ‘writing a great last chapter’. What can we learn from that event? How can we more effectively apply the ‘Five A’s’ For Effectively Addressing Mistakes (223)?

“1. Respond graciously, and do so at once. You know you’re going to resolve the mistake eventually. It’s always a lot less costly to resolve the matter at the outset. 2. Err on the side of generosity. Apologize and make sure the value of the redemption is worth more than the cost of the original mistake. 3. Always write a great last chapter. People love to share stories of adversity. Use this powerful force to your advantage by writing the closing statement the way you want it told. Use all your imagination and creativity in thinking about your response. 4. Learn from the mistake. Use every new mistake as a teaching tool with your employees. Unless the mistake involved a lack of integrity, the person who made it has actually helped your team by providing you with new opportunities to improve. 5. Make new mistakes every day. Don’t waste time repeating the old ones.” (225)

How can we apply these principles more consistently at Veritas?

How can we communicate these more clearly to our staff?

What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

XI. Chapter 11: The Virtuous Cycle of Enlightened Hospitality (237-270)

“Hospitality starts with the genuine enjoyment of doing something well for the purpose of bringing pleasure to other people. Whether that’s an attitude, a behavior, or an innate trait, it should become a primary motivation for coming to work every day. We strive to treat our guests the way we would want to be treated. The golden rule remains as fresh and meaningful as ever...” (244)

In what ways can we assure that this ‘genuine enjoyment’ is alive and well in our school?

“...am I being perceived by this caller as an agent or a gatekeeper? An agent makes things happen for others. A gatekeeper sets up barriers to keep people out. We’re looking for agents.” (244)

Are the people you lead perceived as agents or gatekeepers?

Do they make things happen for others?

“In every business, there are employees who are the first point of contact with the customers (attendants at airport gates, receptionists at doctors’ offices, bank tellers, executive assistants). Those people can come across either as agents or gatekeepers.

An agent makes things happen for others. A gatekeeper sets up barriers to keep people out. We're looking for agents, and our staff members are responsible for monitoring their own performance: In that transaction, did I present myself as an agent or a gatekeeper? In the world of hospitality, there's rarely anything in between." (245)

In what ways can we emphasize among our staff this need to present themselves as agents?

How can our staff be better at being agents?

What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

XII. Chapter 12: Context, Context, Context (271-289)

"I have always believed that you can tell as much about a company by the deals it does not make as by those it does. Much of the success we have had has resulted from saying 'no, thank you' to opportunities that, while initially compelling, would not have been wise to pursue." (271-72)

How can we know when to say 'yes' and when to say 'no' to new opportunities as a school?

Look again at the 'yes' criteria on page 273. Which seem most important to you?

"But anytime I hear or sense 'trendy' (as opposed to 'enduring') as an important aspect of what's going on, my antennae go up." (283)

How do we ensure that any new ventures we get involved with are enduring and not trendy?

What ideas from this chapter seem particularly important to you?

XIII. Chapter 13: The Art of Hospitality, Acknowledgements (291-320)

"I'm convinced that a business cannot be more successful than the sum of the human relationships it has fostered and nurtured." (318)

Do you agree? Why or why not?

What ideas from this section seem particularly important to you?

Summary

How has your thinking been reinforced, challenged, and/or changed as a result of reading this book? How will you lead differently, specifically, after reading this book? List at least three specific goals or changes you plan to implement right away.