

# CHIEF LEARNING OFFICER

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## A Successful Service Culture Begins With Education, Not Mere Training

### Executive Briefings

Service training teaches someone how to “do” something: provide quality in a specific situation. Training, by its nature, is tactical, prescriptive and usually differs between functions and departments.

This approach can result in a fragmented understanding of service inside the organization. It can also leave employees unsure about what to do when they encounter a situation or request that they have not been previously trained to handle. This leads to an inability to meet customers’ needs and to frequent escalations that take time and resources to resolve — with no guarantee of a desirable outcome for the customer. Many organizations spend heavily on role-specific service training and then wonder months later why no substantial improvement has been achieved.

By contrast, service education teaches fundamental service principles that everyone can apply to his or her own job — regardless of role, function or level within the organization. With service education, employees learn to think proactively and responsively, and then act in an empowered manner to create value for their customers and colleagues.

### How Effective Is Service Education?

Service education leads to the development of a common service language, a key foundation to building a sustainable service culture. Organizations also need to create an environment that motivates, supports and recognizes employees for consistently taking action to create value for customers and colleagues. This approach is scalable and engenders a shared understanding of fundamental service principles and a common service language.

“A failing business thinks it costs too much to provide superior service. A successful business knows it costs too much not to.”

Ron Kaufman  
Author and Founder  
UP! Your Service



Another component of a successful culture-building effort is service leadership, including the responsibilities and role modeling that are crucial to success. As an example, many organizations accumulate lagging measures and metrics to track sales, productivity and service performance over time. Often these legacy measures incentivize behavior that is short term or relevant only to a specific department or silo, but may be disconnected or misaligned from producing a positive customer experience. This disconnect is exacerbated when the measures are linked to pay and promotion. Elimination of such nonaligned metrics addresses this disconnection.

## Middle Management in a Service Culture

Middle managers can make or break a service culture. They are the essential link between senior leadership and the rest of the organization.

Middle managers must translate and explain service strategy, then clarify service goals and objectives so that everyone understands how their immediate next actions will contribute to the customers' and the organization's success.

Middle managers also have responsibility to listen for service suggestions and ideas from front-line staff and bring these up for support at the highest levels of the organization.

## Service and Strategy

The commoditization of products and services makes competing on price or features hard to sustain. Customers have more choice than ever before, and it is easier than ever to switch suppliers. Organizations must work smarter than ever to create relationships and sustain loyalty.

Globalization, connective technology and maturing markets also mean customers are increasingly sophisticated and expectations of superior service are rising. Organizations must continuously innovate and improve to create more value for customers, colleagues and partners. Organizations that successfully differentiate based on service can stand out sustainably from the competition.

A service culture also creates a better place to work. This engages and motivates employees to improve performance and helps organizations attract and retain superior talent.

Finally, focusing on service means an organization can create more unique experiences that customers value. This leads to opportunities for higher margins and helps create relationships with customers that last longer — and become more profitable over time.

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Solutions for Enterprise Productivity

## A Successful Service Culture Begins With Education, Not Mere Training



**UP! Your Service** provides world class service education that is easily customized and proven effective across diverse industries, languages and cultures.

College courses are quickly deployed for managers and staff at all levels using video-based courseware and in-house Certified Course Leaders.

**UP! Your Service** combines service education with culture building support in twelve essential areas, providing effective tools, techniques and best practice case studies.

This integrated approach engages employees throughout the organization to build a superior service culture for sustainable competitive advantage.

**UP! Your Service** was founded by Ron Kaufman, the world's leading educator and motivator for uplifting customer service and superior service culture. Ron is the author of the bestselling "UP! Your Service" and "Lift Me UP!" book series.

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