PURPOSE

Camp Fire USA Alaska Council expects all employees to exhibit the highest level of customer service in each and every communication. This applies equally to internal and external customers, and as much to face to face interactions as it does to something more removed like voice mail, e-mail or the agency web site.

As interactions with customers become increasingly “on-line” our face-to-face interactions with customers has and will continue to decrease. As a result of this unavoidable change, those face-to-face interactions are less about the mundane and routine and more typically revolve around a crisis or a problem to be solved. The unintended consequence of this is we may have long-term customers who have had minimal interaction with our staff face to face that are reaching out for help in a moment of difficulty.

It is safe to say we are more efficient, but less relational. This creates two issues which increasingly frame every customer interaction: a.) We need to treat EVERY customer interaction as though we were making a first impression, because in some ways, we are and b.) Those employees who do interact regularly with customers need to always have their customer service skills set to “High”. You may be the only “person” that a customer deals with for weeks or months. This SOP is not only to be used to give hard and fast rules, but also to act as a guide for dealing with situations that may not be spelled out exactly in this SOP.

EXPECTATIONS

Below are expectations and specific guidelines about how staff should interact with customers and how we will use technology to enhance our customer service.

IN PERSON: When dealing with customers in person you are communicating on several levels at the same time. You can hear their issue, how they’re saying it and read their body language (Remember: The opposite is also true.) You are in the best position to create a positive interaction. Whether at site or in the office be certain to:

- Smile
- Initiate communications in a pleasant tone
- Welcome/Acknowledge them
- Make eye contact with them
- Ask how you may help them?
- If possible, call them by name.
• “Connect” with them (i.e., refer to their child or past issues they were helped with)
• Ask if there is anything else you can do for them?
• THANK them for their business – always.
• Send off...”Have a good night” or “Have a nice weekend” (or other as appropriate)
• “Manage up” when referring customers to others. When you send someone to another office or even an external agency, let the person know to whom you are sending them and say something encouraging about that person’s ability to help. Such as:
  o “I see your issue, but I’m sorry I don’t have the ability to help with that, but I know who can. Let me connect you with Bob. Bob’s a specialist in that area and if he can’t help, he’ll know who can.” Or;
  o “I’m sorry, our programs only serve kids under 13. There is an ABC Youth Services Club in that area. They have great programs for older kids. Their number is......”

**TELEPHONE ANSWERING:** While more limited than dealing face-to-face, the telephone offers another powerful tool to set a positive tone. You’re able to convey as much or more in how you say something as you do in what you say. Being cheerful and pleasant helps customers feel welcome. Every staff person or site that has a phone number will use a standard greeting.

• That greeting will include:
  1. Greeting/Welcome (Hello, Good Morning, Good Afternoon, etc.)
  2. Organization & department (or function)
     o “This is Camp Fire USA Alaska Council Finance Department” or
     o “This is Inlet View Camp Fire”
  3. Name “My name is Steve.....”
  4. Inquire about their need “How can I help you?”

• After helping with their request(s) ask if there is anything else you can help them with
• Close by THANKING them– always.
• Transfer: manage up..... like above, let them know you are transferring them to someone that can help.

**VOICE MAIL:** Voice mail is a great tool to help you communicate with others and manage their expectation as when you’ll be in touch with them when you cannot answer the phone immediately. Our phones have the ability to change your greeting as often as you need to. If you are out of the office for more than 1 business day you need to change your greeting to let others know you’ll be out and who they can call in your absence.

Some other guidance for voicemail is:

• Use an appropriate Greeting/Welcome
• State your name/position
• State our organization & department (or function)
• Ask them to leave a detailed message and how you can contact them
• THANK them for calling

If you’ll be out of the office for an extended period:

• Let them know if you will or won’t be checking voice mail when you’re gone.
• Message as appropriate – When is best to catch you in the office. “Please leave a message”, “I’m unavailable until...”, “Please contact ____________ for help in my absence.” Etc.

If you need help with your Voice Mail, please see the Administrative Manager.

Personal Cell Phone Voice Mail & Texting: If you choose to use your personal cell phone for agency business, please keep voice mail greetings professional sounding. The message does not need to sound like an agency phone, but you have chosen to use it for agency business and it needs to reflect the appropriate decorum. Likewise text messages you send for agency business need to be appropriate, professional and unambiguous.

E-MAIL: E-mail is an amazingly versatile tool for timely individual and group communications. This SOP is only addressing the template of the e-mail, not good e-mail form or prose. Etiquette concerning e-mail composition has evolved substantially in the last 15 years and there is a great body of information about that topic. Generally speaking a pleasant written tone and treating your e-mail as though you’re writing it on letterhead are some good guidelines. The agency has more comprehensive information for e-mails attached to this SOP called “101 Email Etiquette Tips” that you need to be familiar with.

Like voice mail, your “out of office assistant” needs to be set with an appropriate message if you are planning to not check e-mails regularly due to vacation or some other absence.

It is preferred that the agency e-mail will be used for official business. Everyone will use the approved agency template for e-mail. These guidelines apply not only to the agency’s MS Exchange mail, but also any other account you may be using (such as G-mail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.) in the course of agency business.

Unless noted as optional, the template includes:

• Your full name
• Your full title
• Direct phone number
• Agency main line (optional)
• Cell number (optional)
• Agency facsimile number
• Agency Street Address
No other templates, graphics, personal mottos, favorite quotes or bits of wisdom are allowed. Such things are better suited for your personal e-mail. If you need assistance with setting your e-mail template please see the Director of Operations or the Administrative Manager.

SUMMARY:

One of our agency's Value Statements reads “Camp Fire USA Builds Caring Relationships.” It can be said that “Relationship” begins with communication. We hope this SOP provides some guidelines and direction for everyone. The agency is committed to the highest level of customer service and our communications are an integral part of how others perceive the agency. If you need assistance in interpreting this document, please ask your supervisor.