

"The fears we don't face become our limits."

»Robin Shauna

Not So Fine Print



We recently needed 75 color programs printed for an Eagle Scout ceremony, and to do it on our home printer would have cost me more in ink cartridges than I paid for the printer.

Instead, I visited a cavernous office supply store on a weekday morning. I counted five employees and two customers in the place.

As I approached the printing area, I fell in behind one of the only two other customers in the store.

I walked to the "Wait here" sign a short distance from the counter and...well...waited.

The young lady behind the open, circular counter never looked my way.

She mumbled a few things to the customer standing at the counter...but never once glanced over or made eye contact with me.

Video Killed the Referee Star



I will confess that for as many basketball games as I have refereed in my days, I should probably be a bit more understanding than I am about the officiating when watching sporting events.

That said, a friend recently stated that he believes the officiating in all sports is worse than ever.

When I began to agree with him, something dawned on me.

That just can't be possible. Surely, the refs today aren't the worst ever.

Yet... we find ourselves constantly, continuously criticizing the inept, incompetent, crooked, (insert your own insult here) referees.

Thinking about it a bit, I told him that I believe it's the ubiquitous camera angles and increased use of "video reviews" that are creating ever more toxic environments for officials, players, and fans.

For a full five minutes, she slowly shuffled from copy machine to counter...again, never once acknowledging me.

She did smile twice... not at the customer she was "serving"... but at her phone.

As I began becoming just a bit annoyed by her inattention, two other employees walked past to get something behind the counter.

I'm pretty sure they had to see me to avoid walking into me...yet they maneuvered around me like I was floor display.

So...the special level of disinterest in customers was not isolated to the printing services department.

When my turn finally came, the young lady listened to what I wanted and then quoted me the per copy price...plus this...plus that, etc.

She apparently thought I would do the math in my head.

When I asked if she could quote me the total price, she returned to her phone to do the math. (Well, at least she got to return to her happy place.)

In the end, sure, I got what I wanted at a reasonable price.

Yet, I walked out motivated to find somewhere else for future printing orders.

It wasn't the waiting that bothered me.

Waits happen.

When my friend asked why would "getting the call right" ever be a negative, I offered my on-the-fly theory.

If you slow any game down and look at it in a slow-motion, high-definition review, you are going to find both infractions that were missed as well as things that were penalized that shouldn't have been.

In an imperfect world with imperfect people there are going to be imperfections.

Mistakes happen.

I pointed out that as they were reviewing an out-of-bounds call near the end of the recent NCCA basketball championship, I spotted a missed foul call leading up to what they were reviewing.

That review should never have happened because play should have stopped before that moment.

Mistakes happen.

In recent years, the ability to look back and analyze every single action and inaction of players and referees has turned us into angrier, less-happy fans.

We used to simply grumble about a blown call and move on. Today...we look at every mistake and misjudgment as if it were the Zapruder Film.

The conversation got me reflecting on how many folks are going through their lives and careers reliving their past mistakes and/or the times they felt they were treated unfairly.

Feeling first ignored and then indifferently “processed”, however, left an impression.

Technically, services were provided...well... competently. I was in and out of that store in about 20 minutes.

Yet, I walked away not thinking about competence or price but feeling rather irrelevant to the staff of that store.

Customers you see today may or may not note your competence.

They will most definitely note your engagement, manners, and attitude.

They will note if you care.

What will they note about you today?

It's a destructive cycle.

Now, I'm not making light of anyone's past disappointments.

Moreover, we should all attempt to learn from past mistakes and situations we would hope to avoid... or handle differently in the future.

But how often are we allowing ourselves to become so stuck on things that we cannot change that we miss new opportunities in front of us now?

Mistakes happen. Our games continue.

Play on.

**"You can control two things:
your work ethic and your attitude about anything."**

»Ali Krieger



Dave Martin, author of The In-Store Advantage, has become one of the most prolific writers in the banking industry. His keynote presentations, seminars, and podcasts have an authenticity and humor that brings teams of all sizes and seniority levels together.

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