

**"If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you."**

**»Fred DeVito**

## Half-Gassed Problem Resolution



Research findings have shown that customer loyalty can actually increase depending on the manner in which problems are addressed.

When handled competently, quickly, and respectfully, customers tend to feel higher levels of loyalty than even those who never experienced a problem do.

Conversely, otherwise small issues become problematic if a customer gets the sense that he or she is not a priority to a service provider.

I was reminded of these facts last week when picking up a rental car at a local location of a well-known chain. There was not another customer around as I walked up.

A young man was behind the counter and another guy was at a desk in the office behind him. The counter person handed me my keys and told me the car I was to

## It Only Looks Easy



I frequently kid about the fact that we have hundreds of TV channels in our home, but I only watch about five of them.

One of the few shows I will stop to watch is "Feherty" on the Golf Channel. David Feherty can interview a tree stump and make it entertaining.

Beyond that, he has a way of getting otherwise privacy-protecting athletes and celebrities to let their guard down and share funny, personal stories.

On one of the latest episodes, he interviewed Phil Mickelson. Mickelson is still able to compete with today's best, but is also only a few years away from the Seniors Tour.

It's good to be Phil.

One of the things Mickelson gets criticized about is his propensity to play

look for.

Mind you, he didn't have the parking space number written down. He simply told me the make and model of the car. I guessed they had stopped offering the curb service they had always offered before.

Walking through the hot parking lot wasn't much fun...but, no biggie. I then got in the sweltering car to find the gas tank ½ filled.

Annoyed, I drove back to the office and told them of the problem. Someone jumping up and apologizing for the inconvenience to a longtime customer could have actually made an impression.

Instead, the young man wondered aloud if the ½ tank was marked on my receipt. It was not. He hadn't alerted me to that fact even if it had been.

They were charging me erroneously for a half-tank of gas right from the jump. Without looking up, the manager mumbled to the young man to put me in another car out there that "probably had a full tank".

There was no acknowledgment of a mistake or apology offered. Not wanting to wait for a new contract, I told him to simply note the fuel level on my existing one.

When he handed it back, I said, "Uh...thanks?" He chirped, "No problem."

I chuckled and said, "Well, no. That's actually... exactly... what this was. It was a problem. That's why I'm back standing here."

He said, "Oh, yeah. I see what you mean." I walked out feeling pretty sure that he didn't.

the game with a little more reckless abandon than most.

He's seen as a "swashbuckler" out there.

Responding to a playful question about that, Mickelson pointed out something that struck me as so obvious that most of us miss it.

He suggested that he sees shots and angles that others don't because... well... he can do things most people can't.

Furthermore, he developed those abilities by putting in thousands of hours of practice most folks would not.

During the interview, Feherty brought up a famous shot Mickelson hit in the final round on the way to winning his third Masters tournament.

He hit the shot off pine straw, between two trees, over a creek, and stopped it a few feet from the hole. To the regular Joe, that shot looked insanely risky.

I shared Feherty's amazement as Mickelson explained why, in fact, the shot between the trees was the least risky of the options he had. With impressive detail, he explained the lie, the green he was shooting toward, the way balls come off certain clubs, the "shot dispersion" he could expect, etc.

His answer was practically a physics lesson on golf. It also reminded me that it often takes an incredible amount of preparation and effort to make things look spontaneous and effortless.

Mistakes and misunderstandings happen, no matter how diligently we try to avoid them.

But, the bigger mistake is not being prepared to step up and turn those (hopefully few) instances into relationship strengthening experiences.

How ready is your team?

Whether it is athletics or business, it is the hardest workers who tend to be the ones "making it look easy."

In part, they deal with surprises and challenges more effectively because they've prepared mentally, physically and emotionally for obstacles that invariably pop up on the way to reaching their goals.

Experience teaches us to avoid obstacles when possible.

However, it is practice and hard work that prepare us for the ones we cannot avoid.

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**"Be so good they can't ignore you."**

**»Steve Martin**

*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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