

"Successful people will always tell you you can do something. It's the people who have never accomplished anything who will always discourage you from trying to achieve excellent things."

» Lou Holtz

Service Driven



In a world that often has folks putting in the minimum required effort, people that endeavor to exceed expectations make me smile.

This happened a couple of times recently during an impromptu mini-vacation with my family to Denver.

The downtown hotels I normally stay in were booked, so we found a place a couple of miles away.

The view was great.

The walk to get downtown was not.

Sooo...we used Uber...a lot.

Over the course of 20+ rides in strangers' cars, (I know that sounds bad), our "customer experiences" ran the gamut.

One ride was in a new luxury car nicer than any we personally drive.

Just One More Shot



I recently watched a long Wimbledon match with my oldest son.

After an incredible 45-shot rally, I said, "That was amazing. But it's only worth one point...same as an ace...same as a double fault...same as a three shot rally. I love that."

He gave me a puzzled look (nothing new) and said, "Why?"

I answered, "Because the guy who just lost that marathon point...lost one point. That's it. He lost a long rally...but only one point. You have to put it out of your mind and play the next point. The last one is over. You play the next one."

He pretended to agree with what I was saying so he could continue watching the match without further life lessons (nothing new).

I smiled realizing I was channeling one of my all-time favorite coaches.

One ride left me with dog hair on the seat of my pants.

Some drivers shared their life stories. Some didn't speak a word.

Over the week, two stood out. Unlike some of the surprisingly nice cars we climbed into that week, both of these vehicles were not exactly luxury rides.

The first was a smallish Subaru SUV driven by Rebecca.

She was chatty and seemed to love driving people around "her town."

Each cup holder in her older vehicle had a chilled water bottle. She also had a basket with mints and gum with a "Help Yourself" note on it.

My sons mentioned that \$11 Uber ride several times later that day.

They were a bit crowded in that smallish car, but they loved "the VIP perks".

Our ride back to the airport later in the week was with Laith.

He drove a dinged-up minivan with about a million miles on it.

(Okay...just an estimate.)

In addition to having water bottles and gum, Laith had rigged his van to offer charging for just about any device you could imagine in every seat of the van.

My 18-year-old with the iPhone perpetually in his hand thought that was the coolest thing ever.

I grew up in a town that was not much on tennis. My high school didn't even have courts. The local public courts were basic concrete slabs with faded lines.

A few of us kept brooms in the trunks of our cars to sweep away the broken beer bottles that frequently decorated those courts.

(Ah...good times.)

Suffice it to say we didn't exactly have a tennis academy or many coaching resources available.

However, we did have a PBS TV station that aired episodes of Vic Braden's "Tennis for the Future."

To this day, Braden is one of the best tennis coaches – and philosophers – I've ever seen.

With a PhD in Psychology and a scientist's passion for analyzing data, Braden was equally adept at discussing both the physiology and psychology of tennis.

And while he worked with some of the top players in the world, he seemed most passionate helping average players become better than they ever believed they could become.

He was fond of pointing out that the key to success was enjoying yourself and trying to be just a little better than the person on the other side of the net that day.

And if you weren't, it wasn't the end of the world.

Enjoy yourself. Get better. Keep playing.

Sure, folks like Rebecca and Laith tend to earn extra tips for going the extra mile (pardon the pun).

However, I would suggest that what is equally beneficial is that they get to spend their days working in happier environments.

They have happier environments because their personal gestures create happier customers.

Whether you work in a state-of-the-art facility, or a place with quite a few miles on it, your visible attitude and gestures tend to make the strongest, most lasting impressions with customers.

What impressions will your actions make today?

After sharing the most cutting edge research and data on technique and strategy, Braden would smile and remind you that...at the end of the day... the goal is simply to hit the ball over the net one more time than the other guy does.

It's that simple.

Play hard. Have fun. Laugh often.

Give the best effort you can and – win or lose – use what you learn today to be better tomorrow.

That is solid advice for the games of tennis, business, and life.

"Losers have tons of variety. Champions just take pride in learning to hit the same old boring winning shots."

»Vic Braden

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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