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Attunement Can Help Your Business Stand Out From the Competition

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In his latest best-seller, *To Sell is Human*, Dan Pink describes the new ABC's of selling. He defines "A" as Attunement -- being incredibly aware of the needs and perceptions of others. A recent experience highlights this principle.

I had the great honor of sharing the stage with Steve Denning and Steve Dorfman at the Net Promoter conference in Miami this past week. It was a gathering of the top minds in customer satisfaction and loyalty convened to share and discover the latest trends in customer loyalty.

Road Trip

We had been told that there was a nearby facility that exemplified impeccable customer service. The two Steve's and I embarked on a journey to experience the pinnacle of the customer experience. We rented a car (no -- that isn't the pinnacle to which I am referring), and drove about an hour north to have dinner at Addison Reserve Country Club. Addison is nationally recognized in the top five gated community country clubs. We wanted to see how they compared to the "best practices," "customer cultures," and other buzzwords shared at the conference.

Initial Impressions

Upon arrival, the facility was impressive. However, it was how each team member, regardless of their job title, greeted each of us by name that stood out. We had contemplated switching jackets to see if we could throw them off. After having a beverage, we moved from the lounge to the dining room. Paulina, someone new, greeted us -- individually by name: "Mr. Altman, Mr. Dorfman, Mr. Denning, right this way."

They shared their secret

Finally, as Paulina seated us in the dining room, we asked, "How do you do that? What's your secret?" At first she playfully said, "I'm not telling you our secrets." After some pressing (more like begging) she leaned in and said "OK. I'll tell you..." and after a perfectly timed pause, she said softly with a smile, "I'm very good at my job."

After an exceptional dining experience, we were honored with a tour of the facility. On our way out, hours after our initial encounter, we ran into Paulina in the hallway and asked "OK, this is the real test." She smiled and said to each of us "Mr. Altman, Mr. Denning, Mr. Dorfman, it was a pleasure serving you this evening. We look forward to the opportunity to serve you again."

What can you learn from this?

We expected to be impressed with the food, decor and service. What stood out above everything else is that Addison made every guest feel like a member, and every member feel like a guest. They found the perfect intersection between personable and professional. Three things stood out:

1. **Culture:** It is clear that this is not stick and carrot motivation. Team members are not simply going through the motions. Each person on the team knows that anything short of excellence lets the rest of the team down. They operate like a family, and there is great trust among them. They enjoy delivering wow moments. Is your team competing against each other, or is their goal to deliver a remarkable experience for your clients?
2. **Little things are big things:** The big things (good food, amenities, service) are taken for granted. Addison's leadership realizes differentiation comes in the details. The same goes for your business. Every viable competitor gets the big stuff right. You stand out when it comes to the little things. Are you overlooking the small [details that can make a difference](#)?
3. **Attunement does matter:** Addison delivered an exceptional experience. However, it was their attention to detail and **attunement** that impressed us the most. In this case they not only listened, but they [did research in advance](#) -- which I guess would be A++ in Dan Pink's ABC's. What can you do in your business to hone your attunement to create memorable moments?

We consider ourselves fortunate to have had the experience. We went there as three alleged experts ready to offer advice. We departed having experienced something remarkable with lessons to take back to others. I have the pleasure of sharing the stage with Dan Pink later this month, and hope to hone my attunement skills sharply.

How do you create wow opportunities to impress your clients?

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