

LINDSEY & WALDO

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

"You see the numbers, we look for the opportunities."



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Resolution for success
- Helping area animals
- Outstanding customer service
- Call-in times, referrals, and more...

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

IRA and 401(k) Contribution Limits Increased 1

The Keys for Success in 700 Words or Less 1

Save a Dog, Save Us 2

Call-in Times 2

New Employer Credit Available for Paid Family and Medical Leave 3

Why Do Great Customer Service? 3

We Believe in Referrals 4

Taxing Times

Dedicated to helping our clients keep the money that belongs to them through a focus on tax.

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IRA and 401(k) Contribution Limits Increased

The maximum contribution limits for pension plans and other retirement related plans have increased for 2019.

The contribution limit for employees who participate in 401(k), 403(b), most 457 plans, and the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan is increased from \$18,500 to \$19,000.

The limit on annual contributions to an IRA, which was last increased in 2013, is increased from \$5,500 to \$6,000. The additional catch-up contribution limit for individuals aged 50 and over is not subject to an annual cost-of-living adjustment and remains \$1,000.

The catch-up contribution limit for employees aged 50 and over who participate in 401(k), 403(b), most 457 plans, and the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan remains unchanged at \$6,000.

The income ranges for determining eligibility to make deductible contributions to traditional Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), to contribute to Roth IRAs, and to claim the Saver's Credit all increased for 2019. *

The Keys for Success in 700 Words or Less

The New Year is here. It's time to think about goals, right? We all know that most New Year's resolutions are broken within a few weeks, if not days. So, what's the difference between a New Year's resolution and goal setting? And why is goal setting important?

I've studied a lot about goal setting. I've read *The New Psycho-Cybernetics* by Maxwell Maltz. I've read Tony Robbins, Brian Tracy, Ivan Misner, and many others. Volumes have been written about goal setting, but precious little actually implemented.

According to one study, only 3% of adults actually write down their goals. If it's not written down, however, it is not a goal, it's just a wish. The evidence is out there for all to see. Numerous studies have reported that successful people make written goals. Those who don't, however, can't fathom how that could possibly be THE factor that makes a difference in being successful or not.

I'm not in a position to explain why it works, why it makes such a difference, but I accept that it does.

Study successful people and one of the first things you discover is that, without exception, they have a passion for what they are successful at. Without passion, without a love for the activity, whether that be sports, politics, religion, or business, you will not be able to sustain the drive necessary to carry you through the inevitable adversity to success.

Napoleon Hill used the term "magnificent obsession." Earl Nightingale referred to it as a "burning desire." Whatever you want to call it, it is so important, that, without it, nothing else matters. But, it is insufficient alone.

Entire books have been written about success by people much smarter than I. But, in an attempt to boil it down for you, the next criteria for success is belief. You have to believe in yourself. You have to be able to see yourself accomplishing your goal. We often don't know, when we start the journey towards success, exactly how we are going to achieve it. Earl Nightingale used the example about a ship captain sailing from one port to another.

Continued on page 2 ➔

The Keys for Success in 700 Words or Less—*continued from page 1*

For fully 99% of his journey the captain can't see his next port of call. But, he knows what actions he must take; what systems he must use; what feedback he needs to receive in order to make course corrections so that he will indeed arrive safely at his next port of call.

We have to visualize ourselves as being there now. We have to be clear about what the goal is. We have to be focused on its achievement. If the captain wasn't clear about his next port of call he would likely sail around in circles, or end up crashing on a reef somewhere.

One of the best ways to get this clarity is to write your goal as if you've already accomplished it. For instance, if your goal is to earn \$250,000 per year, you might write your goal like this:

It is 2019, and I am earning \$4,800 per week by providing such and such product or this and that service to my customers/clients/patients.

Your goal must be written in the affirmative and must be written as if you've already accomplished it at a given point in time. It needs to be specific and written in such a manner that you can gauge your progress toward that goal. You need to be as specific as possible about your behavior, about the actions you need to take to be successful. It's a lot easier for us to monitor and adjust our behavior than it is to monitor and adjust the results.

We can't actually control the results, but we do control our own actions. So, we have to take responsibility for what we do control.

So, why do so few people achieve the pinnacle of success? Are they more passionate? Are they born with better self-esteem? Are they better at visualizing? Are they better goal setters? Are they just the winners?

Yes and no. The biggest enemy of success, the biggest enemy of your success, is not failure...

It is complacency. *

Save a Dog, Save Us

If not us, then who? If not now, then when? ~ John E Lewis

Even after an exhaustive evaluation of the Mobile County Animal Shelter (MCAS), some things still haven't changed. The shelter still doesn't have the desperately needed funds for an isolation facility to curb the spread of disease, a sanitizable play or walk area, and sewage improvements.

The assessment was completed by Maddie's Shelter Medicine program at the University of Florida and funded by a Maddie's Fund grant awarded to the County in 2012.

"No one else stepped up, so I did," Cindie Carter, owner of Walks and Wags in Mobile told *Taxing Times*. According to Carter, the shelter needs \$549,000 in capital improvements to ensure that the dogs aren't overcrowded.

Facility upgrades will allow the staff to focus on disease control, safe adoptions, education and community outreach concerning preventing cruelty to animals, medical procedures, eliminating euthanasia of adoptable animals, and maintaining best practices for the animals' wellbeing.

With a group of friends, including County Commissioner Connie Hudson, Carter formed Mobile County P.A.L.S. The mission of P.A.L.S. (Protecting Animals' Lives Society) is to raise funds to support the Mobile County Animal Shelter's capital improvement needs so they can expand both facility accommodations and services.

Carter would like to see the MCAS be a community resource for learning about pet training and care, "a place to make your dog's and your life better." According to Carter, the largest group of dogs to enter the

shelter come from those that have been abandoned and owner education before adoption could go a long way toward reducing those numbers.

Mobile County P.A.L.S. would, of course, love your cash donations, but as an all-volunteer organization, would also appreciate your time. Time spent loving or walking the dogs, time spent helping to write grant proposals, or time spent improving their website.

The primary responsibility of the Mobile County Animal Control is to impound animals roaming at large without a current rabies tag. Most of the dogs and cats picked up are abandoned animals left to their own resources to survive on the streets. These animals live in harsh environmental conditions, scavenging for food, and subjected to serious illness and injury. The shelter is required to pick up these animals and place them on a seven-day hold that would allow an owner, if there is one, to reunite with them.

If you would like more information about Mobile County P.A.L.S., to donate, or to volunteer, go to their website at www.mobilecountypals.com. *

This month's special Member-Only call-in times for Lindsey's Insider's Circle will be 1/21/19 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. To schedule your appointment, contact Kristen at (251) 633-4070. Not a member yet? Find out how to become one TODAY!

New Employer Credit Available for Paid Family and Medical Leave

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) introduced a new credit for family and medical leave which is available for wages paid to qualifying employees on family and medical leave. The credit is temporary and won't be available beyond 2019, unless Congress extends it.

The credit is available on amounts paid to employees on leave if the amount paid is at least 50% of their normal wages and the leave payments are made in employer tax years beginning in 2018 and 2019.

For leave payments of 50% of normal wages, the credit amount is 12.5% of wages paid on leave. If the leave payment is more than 50% of normal wages, then the credit is increased by .25% for each 1% by which the rate is more than 50% of normal wages. So, if the leave payment is 100% of the normal rate, i.e. is equal to the normal rate, then the credit is raised to 25% of the leave payment rate. The maximum leave allowed for any employee for any tax year is 12 weeks.

Eligible employers are those with a written policy in place allowing (1) qualifying full-time employees at least two weeks of paid family and medical leave a year, and (2) less than full-time employees a pro-rated amount of leave. On that note, qualifying employees are those who have (1) been employed by the employer for one year or more, and (2) who, in the preceding year, had compensation not above 60% of the compensation threshold for highly compensated employees. Paid leave provided as vacation leave, personal leave, or other medical or sick leave is not considered family and medical leave. *

"No," I said, "I'd like a parfait and a frappe'."

"So, you want a parfait and a parfait?"

Feeling that some of these quick service restaurants invest in speakers and microphones obtained from Radio Shack, close-out sales, I repeated myself again. "No, I want a parfait and a frappe', f-r-a-p-p-e."

"Well, thank you for finally speaking correct English."

OMG! She really said that? A little shocked and aghast, I responded, "You shouldn't talk to customers like that."

"You shouldn't talk to me like that."

Think this is one of those times, when a hormone-raging teenager who was working on three hours of sleep after attending a concert the night before went off script and stuck her foot in her mouth? Nope, this was the manager.

Perhaps the "do unto others" thing should carry a little more weight with her and her company. It certainly does with the folks at Disney. They still seem to have an edge on this service thing.

Disney teaches this service thing from day one. Each Cast Member (what Disney calls their employees) starts off day one with Disney Traditions. Some of the Traditions seem like common sense, others like the Golden Rule. Here are some of my favorites:



Our aim is to always exceed our Guest's expectations. This phrase is often attributed in various forms to Walt Disney himself. The key point here isn't exceeding expectations, it's always exceeding expectations. If you go into a store to buy a can of white paint and the clerk guides you to a better-quality paint or to a special offer, they may well be on the way to exceeding your expectations. Happy customer! So, the next time you need paint, you'll go back to the same store, right? But, what happens if the store misses out on the 'always' part and your next visit is less than spectacular? Your expectations have been raised and the store's fall from grace will be all the more catastrophic.



The front-line is the bottom line. The team members in front of the customer are the ones they see - look after them, teach them well, support them. Every face to face interaction is a moment of truth. If a customer interacts with 50 Cast Members, there are 50 moments of truth. If there are 49 great moments and one bad, which do

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Why Do Great Customer Service?

I'm scratching my head over a couple of recent experiences with a particular quick service (formerly known as fast food) restaurant. The brand of quick service restaurant is not one of my favorites, so I don't visit very often. But, my last visit was my last.

I try to keep in mind the old adage, quality, service, price: pick any two because you can't have all three. But, I think whatever combination the business decides on, service should almost always be in the mix.

One day, a couple of weeks ago, I dropped in at that particular restaurant, close to my office, on a weekday lunch and the drive-thru appeared to have a dozen or so cars lined up. Hoping to lessen my wait, I made the choice to park and go inside to the counter. There was only one person in front of me when I walked in. However, in the time it took to place my order and wait for its delivery over the counter, all twelve cars had been served.

Okay. They've made the decision to concentrate quick service only on the drive-thru customers. That's their choice, I suppose.

So last Sunday morning, I give them another try. Knowing better now, I go through the drive-thru. I pull up to the order station and request a parfait and a frappe'. I didn't specify the size or flavor for either, because only one choice was listed on the menu board.

"You want two parfaits?" the speaker asked.



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Why Do Great Customer Service? *continued from page 3*

you think the customer will remember? We need all moments of truth to be great ones. They are how your company will be judged. Support your team members so their focus is on the customer.

Find out what a customer’s “WOW” moment was. When you find out, share it and celebrate it with all team members, especially the one most responsible. Then, they’ll be only too happy to make more magic!

When you have to say no, turn it into a “WOW” moment. At Disney, if a child waits in line for a ride only to find out he is not tall enough, he is presented with a certificate that allows him and his family to go immediately to the front of the line where he is tall enough. A potentially bad moment turned into a “WOW” moment.

Hold staff accountable. Make sure everyone is aware of what is expected prior to hiring and during orientation. Repeat it often. This is the way we do things here. If you won’t do things that way, maybe you shouldn’t be here.

Two ears, two eyes, and one mouth. Use them in that ratio. Listen to your customer. They are trying to tell you something. It is only when they have told you what they want, that you can give them the help they need. Open your heart and your imagination. Your customer may not know how to articulate what they want, but your knowledge of the company should enable you to connect the dots.

If you provide your customer, client, patient with a quality experience, the rest will follow. *

We Believe in Referrals

We really believe in the process of referrals, so part of the service we provide is to be sure to refer our clients and associates to other qualified businesspeople in the community.

Below, you’ll find a list of areas in which we know very credible, ethical, and outstanding professionals. If you’re looking for a professional in a specific area we’ve listed, please feel free to contact us. We will be glad to put you in touch with the people we know who provide these services.

- ◇ Banker
- ◇ Self-Storage Warehouse
- ◇ Home Insulation
- ◇ Executive Leadership Coach
- ◇ Attorney
- ◇ Business Transition Coach
- ◇ Cell Phone and Tablet Repair
- ◇ Realtor
- ◇ Financial Advisor
- ◇ Mortgage Broker
- ◇ Cultured Marble
- ◇ Home Repairs
- ◇ Printer
- ◇ Travel Agent
- ◇ Life Insurance
- ◇ Auto and Home Insurance
- ◇ Custom Embroidered Wedding Gifts
- ◇ Identity Theft Protection and Restoration



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