

PIPELINE

piping systems inc.

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/INSTITUTIONAL MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS

WINTER 2008

Developing Good Communication Skills

Even with all the forms of communication available to us today, when you check the classifieds, business owners still seek an applicant with good communication skills. We sometimes forget that telephone skills fall into this category. It wasn't that long ago that we all had excellent telephone etiquette. However, it seems over the years, with the arrival of e-mail, cell phones, voice mail, text messaging and pagers, we have lost some of our ability to carry on an efficient, effective and pleasant conversation on the telephone.

The person who answers the phone is the first contact someone has with your business. That first impression will stay with them. Always answer promptly, which means before the third ring. Discontinue any and all distractions, which include other conversation, eating, chewing and even typing.

We have to remember that, no matter how busy you are, it is critical to be nice. Never be so rushed or busy that you're rude or curt. Give the customer all your attention. Don't let the person calling know you're busy or having a bad day. Take a deep breath and answer with a smile. Use polite phrases such as "good morning," "please hold," etc. Never use a speakerphone during the initial greeting on incoming or outgoing telephone conversations.

Tact is the key when taking a message. Instead of saying "He is out," say "He is not in the office at this moment. Would you like to leave a voicemail?" If voicemail is not available, ask if you can take a message.

If someone speaks too fast, simply say "Excuse me," and explain you're having a little difficulty understanding



them and would they please speak a little more slowly. This will assure the caller that you're getting their message correct. Make an effort to understand someone with an accent. It's good for business.

Use skill to get a telephone number when someone calls and tells you the person they're calling for has their number. Explain that yes, the person probably has the number, but to expedite the return call would they please give it to you.

When the individual the caller wishes to speak with is not available, always offer your assistance when possible. Never use phrases such as "I don't know," or "Just a second." You should always have positive

responses: "Let me check and find out," or "It may take a couple of minutes to get that information. Are you able to hold?"

If you're going to put the person on hold, first ask if you can help them. Get their name and phone number if you cannot, then place them on hold. Never just dump them into the voicemail system without telling them what you're doing. Never tell someone leaving a message you will get that person to call

continued on page 4



piping systems inc.

32 Mill Street (Rt. 79)

P.O. Box 409

Assonet, MA 02702

TEL: 508/644-2221 • FAX: 508/644-2447

E-MAIL: psi@piping-systems-inc.com

WEBSITE: www.piping-systems-inc.com



Safety Is No Accident

Piping Systems, Inc. is the proud recipient of an award recently presented at the annual meeting of Associated Builders and Contractors Self-Insured Group (ABC SIG). PSI, a member of ABC SIG of Massachusetts, was honored based on a loss ratio under 10% for the 2006 fund year.

PSI has participated in this special group since January 2004, and Pauline L. Lally, president of Piping Systems, Inc., also serves on the SIG board of trustees.

"It has been a very worthwhile experience to be a member of the ABC Massachusetts SIG," says Lally. "It has allowed our firm to focus on loss prevention even more than before, and to benefit from all the safety efforts undertaken by the SIG's fellow members."

"Among the major benefits of belonging to SIG have been the numerous loss control job site visits that have taken place," she adds. "Our team members have risen to the challenge of keeping their job sites safe, which in turn benefits our clients."

PSI has also been recognized with the Gold Level Award for 2007 in ABC's Safety Training and Evaluation Process (STEP). This is second highest level achievable by ABC members and represents an outstanding commitment to job site safety.

Communication Skills...

continued from page 1

them back; always tell them you'll give the message to that person.

Never start your sentence with "I'm sorry." If someone is not in the office, say the party is out of the office; if you know when they will be in, tell the caller and ask if you can help them or take a message. Always sound professional and positive.

Leave a good last impression. Never use phrases such as "Okay," and "Bye." It leaves the caller feeling they weren't important and you weren't interested. Instead, use effective phrases for closing such as "We appreciate your call," and "Good talking with you."

Remember, every business call is a potential client. When clients are not treated properly, they will go where they feel welcomed. Make every caller feel like a welcomed guest.

For more helpful information on telephone etiquette, see *Telephone Skills from A to Z* by Nancy J. Friedman (Crisp Publications) and on the Web, visit www.fullerton.edu/it/services/Telecom/FAQ/etiquetteguide.asp.

Visit us online today at
www.piping-systems-inc.com



piping systems inc.

32 Mill Street (Rt. 79)
P.O. Box 409
Assonet, MA 02702

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

