Customer Relations – an essential part of creating a no kill community

> Betsy Saul, Petfinder.com Robin Robertson Starr, CEO, Richmond SPCA

Good Customer Relations is important in more than just adoptions.

- 1. Admissions requires a new attitude.
- 2. Pet Retention Programs require a non-judgmental approach.
- 3. You must view your community as your partner not your nemesis.



You never know who many become a donor or a volunteer or in some other way may support you.



Richmond SPCA's Project Safety Net

- Provides as array of services to help keep pets in the homes they have: behavior support, pet friendly housing, short term boarding, pet pantry, foster to relinquish.
- Is founded on a belief that most people will do the right thing by animals if we give them the tools to do so.
- Has been a major factor in our achieving a city wide save rate of 80%.





Adoption attitude is key.

- > Adoptions are essential to saving lives.
- We must create more good homes rather than reject them.
- If they adopt from you, they will have the benefit of your ongoing support.
- Don't patronize they likely know themselves better than you do.

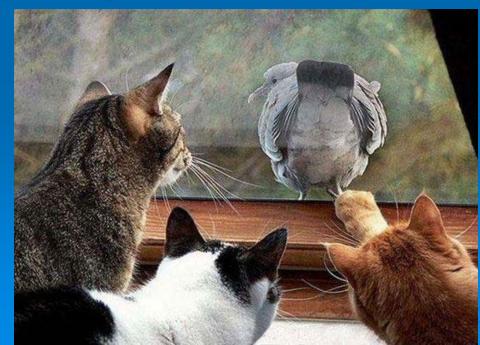






Tools to achieve excellent customer

- relations skills among staff and volunteers:
- 1. Regular customer service training for all.
 - Role playing is key
 - Have other local businesses known for great customer service come teach your staff
- 2. Secret shoppers can reveal a lot about how people are really being treated.





Insist on a culture of excellence and accountability with clear benchmarks for success.



Involve your community with approaches that are witty and fun.









In Summary:

- You must view your community as your ally in the effort to make your community no kill. Every person could become not just an adopter of an animal but also a donor, a supporter and an ambassador for you.
- The shared organizational goal should be to make customers of ALL types feel welcomed and comfortable about utilizing your resources and to provide excellent customer service.

The development of broad-based community support takes much time and patience. The result is an educated community and an expanded base of good pet owners and advocates for animal welfare.

Audrey, Charley and Niblett say thanks!







