

## Creating Exceptional Customer Experiences in Home Care

with **Stephen C. Tweed, CSP**  
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&  
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One significant way to gain and sustain competitive advantage in your marketplace is to deliver exceptional customer service to your patients, families, referral sources, and physicians. A key ingredient is having a leadership team that is in alignment with your desire to create a customer service culture. Second, you need to develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills of your staff members to craft exceptional experiences for your customers.

This high-content teleseminar is designed to provide you and your customer service team with what you need to know to create Exceptional Customer Experiences.

**Objectives:** As a result of this teleseminar, you will be able to...

1. Discuss what customers expect from a home care company
2. Describe the Concept of the Enthusiastic Customer
3. Explain the Devoted to Caring Philosophy
4. Discuss the three elements of Devoted to Caring
5. Demonstrate Being Devoted to Caring on the Telephone.

## We're in the Home Care Business

As you walk up and down the streets of your town you see many small businesses, stores, restaurants, dry cleaners, and banks. These people are in the “business” of exchanging products or services for something of equal value – usually money.

In home care we are in “business” too. We’re in the “business” of providing health care services to patients in their homes. In return, we receive money – this money comes from several sources; direct pay from services, third party reimbursement from insurance companies, Medicare, Medicaid, and charitable contributions.

Since we are so focused on caring for people, we sometimes forget that we are in “business”, and that the people who come to us for service are required to pay for that service. That means that they are our “customer.”

The buyer-seller relationship is particularly complex in home care, because you really have four types of customers.

- 1) **The Consumer**                      Who uses your services: the patient or family of the patient.
- 2) **The Physician**                      Who identifies the need for your services and coordinates your work with the consumer.
- 3) **The Referral Source**                      Who recognizes the need for your services and makes arrangements for them.
- 4) **The Payor**                              Who approves payment: insurance companies, government agencies, individuals, and charitable givers.

As you can see, you are dealing with four separate sets of wants, needs, and perceptions. That makes your job extremely difficult. You operate in an environment that most profit making businesses would find impossible.

## **What do our Customers Expect From Us?**

**Consumers**

**Physicians**

**Referral Sources**

**Sponsors**

## The Concept of the Enthusiastic Customer

It is important to recognize that there are three possible emotional states of home care customers.

- 1) **Satisfied**            The Customer who gets EXACTLY what he or she expects... no more and no less.
- 2) **Dissatisfied**        The Customer who gets LESS than he or she expects.
- 3) **Enthusiastic**        The Customer who gets MORE than he or she expects.

By far, the best way to promote your home care business is “Word-of-Mouth Advertising,” having satisfied and enthusiastic customers telling other people about the great job you have done for them.

A study of the hospitality industry showed that a dissatisfied customer coming out of a hotel or restaurant will tell an average of TEN other people about his or her bad experience. On the other hand, an enthusiastic customer coming out of a hotel or restaurant will tell only THREE other people about his or her good experience. As you can see, you need 3.3 enthusiastic customers just to break even.

A study of the public affairs department of a major Midwestern clinic showed that people who come to this clinic from all over the world come there because of its outstanding medical reputation. However, once inside the doors, people decide to stay or to return because of the hospitality – how they are treated by the people there.

To take advantage of the CONCEPT OF THE ENTHUSIASTIC CUSTOMER, and word-of-mouth advertising, you must work very hard to clearly understand the wants, needs and perceptions of all four types of customers, and then go out of your way to give them MORE than they expect.

As health care costs rise, and more alternatives become available, we find that people are becoming more like “customers” when they “go shopping” for health care. If we are going to continue to be successful, we must be more aware of people, and their needs and wants regarding health care. We must work hard to attract people to use our services, instead of going elsewhere for treatment.

## **The Devoted to Caring™ Philosophy**

We believe our goal is to provide quality home care, through a well-trained and competent staff, for patients and their families, who are entitled to the very best we can give.

We will do this by:

- 1) caring for everyone we meet with an attitude of respect, dignity and understanding;
- 2) providing services in a timely, innovative and cost-effective way;
- 3) maintaining a healthful, clean, and attractive environment.

### **The Three Elements of the Devoted to Caring Philosophy:**

1. Attitude
2. Service
3. Environment

## **Being Devoted to Caring™ on the Telephone**

The telephone is a critical tool for your success in home care. It is your first line of communication with patients, families, physicians, referral sources and third party payors. You and your agency make your first impression over the telephone.

### **Establishing your Telephone Identity**

In a face to face meeting, first impressions are formed and solidified during the first three minutes of the conversation. Over the telephone, that first impression is formed during the first 30 seconds.

One key to making a positive first impression with incoming callers is your telephone identity. That is what you say when you answer the phone. Based on our research, here's the suggested way to develop your telephone identity:

1. A Pleasant greeting: "Good Morning" or "Good Afternoon."
2. Company or Department name: "Leading Home Care"
3. Your Name: "This is Stephen Tweed"
4. Offer to help: "How may I help you?"

The complete telephone identity:

***"Good Morning, Leading Home Care. This is Stephen Tweed. How may I help you?"***



Why such a long telephone identity? Most people don't listen. When a person places a phone call, they are usually not listening intently to the person who answers the phone. The caller is thinking about what he or she is going to say. By using a clear, distinct telephone identity you give the caller time to connect mentally and hear exactly who it is they are talking with.

## The Caller knows when you are “Devoted to Caring”

Your voice and how you use it on the telephone projects who you are and your level of devotion to the needs and wants of the caller. The caller knows that you are “Devoted to Caring” through your:

- Energy & enthusiasm
- Rate of speech
- Volume
- Pitch
- Smile

*Yes... the caller can hear the smile in your voice!*

The caller knows that you are “Devoted to Caring” by the way you:

- Answer the phone
- Transfer a call
- Place a caller on hold
- Handle telephone messages
- Use voice mail
- Return calls promptly

## Keepers

Make a list of the most important things you heard or experienced in this learning program.

1.

2.

3.

What actions are you going to take as a result of what you learned in this program?

1.

2.

3.

## Other Upcoming Teleseminars from Leading Home Care

### The Leadership Academy Teleseminar Series

This teleseminar series is based on the live two-day Leading Home Care Leadership Academy. This series runs for eight months starting in November, focusing on the core competencies that make a highly effective home care leader. Based on five years of research in this industry, your presenters, Stephen Tweed and Elizabeth Jeffries, will lead you through 12 hours of unmatched industry specific leadership development for your middle managers and first line supervisors

#### Schedule and Topics:

(All times 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Eastern)

- November 20, 2003 - Seeing the Bigger Picture (Audio CD Available)
- December 18, 2003 - Forces & Trends Shaping the Future of Home Care
- January 22, 2004 - Strategic and Operational Planning
- February 19, 2004 - Setting Priorities & Managing Time
- March 18, 2004 - Problem Solving & Decision Making
- April 15, 2004 - Finding and Keeping Great People
- May 20, 2004 - Inspiring Others to Follow YOU
- June 17, 2004 - Managing Team Performance

### The Relationship Selling and Persuasion Skills Series

Nothing happens until someone sells something. That's just as true in home care as any other business. Yet many home care professionals are uncomfortable with the idea of "selling." The word conjures up images of a used car lot and a guy in a plaid sport jacket.

But every home care executive is a sales person. Whether you are selling home care services, or selling your ideas to your team members, selling and persuasion skills are critical for your success. In this highly interactive learning system, you will experience a proven process for persuading others to take action. Whether it's persuading a discharge planner to refer patients to your agency, persuading a physician to return signed orders on time, or persuading a bank trust officer to send you Private Duty customers, you'll find these skills invaluable to your success.

#### Schedule and Topics:

(All times 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Eastern)

- January 8, 2004 - The Seven Step Relationship Selling Process
- February 5, 2004 - Special Skills for Communicating with Physicians - featuring Dr. Tray Dunaway
- March 4, 2004 - Develop Client Rapport and Building Customer Relationships
- April 1, 2004 (No Fooling!) - Mastering Persuasion and Closing the Sale

## About your Leading Home Care Teleseminar Team

### Stephen C. Tweed, CSP



For the past 20 years, Stephen Tweed has worked with home care companies around the country that want to grow their businesses, and with home care leaders who want to multiply performance. He is currently Chairman and CEO of ***Leading Home Care . . . a Tweed Jeffries company***, the center for home care strategy and leadership.

Stephen has served on the Boards of Directors of three different home care companies, and as the Interim President and CEO of a \$25 million home care company with 400 employees. He has presented over 500 keynote presentations and learning seminars for home care association conferences and corporate meetings. He has written three books and dozens of articles on strategy and leadership, and he is the father of a 32 year old son who lives in a wheelchair and uses the services of home care on a daily basis. Stephen also is serving as the Immediate Past-President of the 3800 member National Speakers Association.

### Daniel J. Cassin



Dan Cassin brings us more than 20 years of experience in sales and customer service in financial services, residential construction, and home care. Dan works with ***Leading Home Care . . . a Tweed Jeffries company***, and our sister company ***Lighthouse Learning Systems . . . a Tweed Jeffries company***, as a learning program facilitator. Dan presents educational programs on sales and customer service for home care companies, and is the director for a major project to create a customer service culture in the hospitality industry in Greater Louisville.