

Check Off Your 10-Point Mystery Shopping Success List

Mystery shopping programs help your staff connect their behavior to business and personal success. Our experience developing and deploying mystery shopping programs confirms measuring and reflecting staff behavior over time helps ingrain positive customer service habits, which in turn yields greater customer satisfaction, enhanced customer experience and satisfaction translate to increased sales and profits.

Presented by Mystery Shopper Services

We've identified ten key elements for you to check-off to ensure your program is successful.

1. Understand Your Customer

You must first understand who your customers are. Next, determine how your customers wish to be served. Every business model attracts different customers with varying service expectations.

2. Train Your Staff

Once you have identified who your customers are and their service expectations, train your staff to meet those expectations. By discovering what your customer's expectations are and training your staff to meet those expectations, you will begin to grow a sustainable service culture.

3. Provide Service Education

Your staff needs to know what is expected of them and should be given a copy of the shopping forms, so they will know how they will be graded. When it comes to customer service mystery shops, knowing the answers and what is expected of them in advance is the best approach.

4. Help Your Staff See Through Your Customer's Eyes

Make it a requirement that a mystery shop is performed by every new staff member before their first shift as part of training. If they see what's expected through the eyes of a customer, they'll be more likely to treat others as they want to be treated.

5. Begin with a Strong Benchmark

It is always best to start a new shopper program by collecting enough data to validate the average guest experience. This will also create a sense among your staff that any customer could be a mystery shopper. Over time as you see improvement and good habits forming, you can dial the shop frequency back. But in the beginning, more is better for teaching purposes and keeping staff alert.

6. Create Accountability and Rewards

After you have put proper expectations in place and have provided training and education, it is important that you create accountability for delivering on the guest experience. As each shop is conducted, the results need to be shared with the individual staff member to let them know if their shop was successful or not. Coach them on areas that need improvement in private to protect the person's dignity and ability to receive the guidance.

7. Make the Mystery Shops a Positive Tool

It is critical that all positive shop data be reviewed, shared with all staff, and posted in employee-only areas immediately after the data is received. Celebrate the positive. Every opportunity you take to reinforce good behavior adds value to your mystery shop program investment.

8. Create Recognition

Develop a recognition program to encourage top performers in front of peers, in a company newsletter, or other communication opportunities. Pride in work is priceless and is best engendered by a manager.

9. Keep the Program a Mystery

Keep standards high by keeping the number of monthly shops a mystery to staff. Human nature is to slack off when the test is over. Maintaining a sense of the unknown is a healthy part of staff training and management.

10. Keep the Audits Relevant

Use mystery shop criteria to grow your staff and increase customer service by adding new aspects of solid service behavior every few months. Mystery shops are like the test following training. Use shops to initiate a continuous improvement program within your company. As your service culture expands, your shop measurements must follow to ensure you measure for current service expectations.