

5/1/2018

Leave Your Title at the Door

Ellen C. Wells



Ellen C. Wells

I'm teaching a new yoga class at a corporation's fitness center. The gym gives folks working the 9-to-5 office life the chance to step away from their desks, bang on a few weight machines, run a few miles while watching Bravo, and, in the case of the yoga class, time to reacquaint themselves with the secondary curves in their spinal columns. Folks in offices, they sit a lot. Squirring around on the yoga room floor is something they look forward to.

Not that people are banging down the yoga room door. I often get just one or two students in class. And so I get to know them—the Programmer, the Marketing Strategist, the Customer Success Representative.

Wait, the what? The Customer Success Representative, that's what she said she does. Hmmm ...

My yoga friend Lauren helps customers find success. She works for a market research company, so it's her job to ensure that clients are receiving research findings that they can use to, well, succeed. Just like Lauren's title suggests. One could argue that everyone's title should be Customer Success Representative. After all, the point of pretty much every job—especially in the retail sector—is to make customers successful.

So, let's try an experiment. Take your current title and set it aside for a day. Then keep a log of all the things you do that day. Take a look at the list. What did you do? Did you enjoy what you did? What title would you give yourself based on that list?

- Head Hose Handler?
- Question Answerer?
- Display Designer?
- Truck Unloader?
- Number Cruncher?
- Assistant Assistant?

Go back to work and, again, leave your title at the door. This time go about your business not as general manager or cashier or driver but as "Customer Success Representative," with absolutely every person you encounter being your

customer (yes, even that lunch-stealing co-worker). Write down what you did and whether you enjoyed it.

Any difference? I bet there is. I suspect there will be a change in both what you do that day and how you feel about it. You'll likely spend your time on important tasks and clear the inane clutter out of your schedule. When we take on an assignment that helps someone be successful, we put a different energy and effort into the task than we would if doing it for ourselves. It just feels good. It has purpose. How many times have I heard athletes or competitors say they are doing what they do for their families! A waterer waters the flats from one end of the bench to the other, no big deal. But a Customer Success Rep who waters is helping to provide the healthiest plants to the folks who come in to buy them. A cashier scans and takes payments between clocking in and clocking out. But a Customer Success Rep at the register is helping someone complete a gardening project. See the difference?

Take my yoga teaching, for instance. When I was teaching just to please myself, I wasn't really teaching all that well. I got bogged down with how many people came to class, gauging their reactions to my sequencing and my music. It was all about me! Somewhere along the line I switched my approach. Yoga class is about the students, after all—not about me. I'm teaching so they can find success ... whatever that is for them. Maybe it's successfully doing an arm balance or just successfully feeling good in their own skin. And now that I'm teaching for their success, I've become a pretty darn good yoga teacher, thank you very much.

Scratch that. I've become a darn good Customer Success Rep in yoga pants. **GP**