

the QUEST

Increasing student learning through improved engagement!

Quality Enhancement Plan Newsletter
Volume 2, Issue 1

SUMMER 2010

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CRIQUETT LEHMAN
Director of QEP



QEP

Professional Development Opportunities

TRUEBLUE

Attitude

NISOD 2010. Professional development session on using attitude to create a college wide culture of support and student engagement.

CATCH IT!

When reading the information in this article: think about it, evaluate it, then use it!

Think about it...do *you* have a True Blue Attitude? Does *Vernon College* have a True Blue Attitude? What are our VC Core Values? Do we express/exhibit Chaparral Pride?

Evaluate it...as a Vernon College employee, as a Vernon College department, as Vernon College.

Use it...because students are our top priority, we show that we care by exhibiting these behaviors. How we act toward our students and toward each other speaks volumes!

CONNECT WITH STUDENTS FIRST

- ✓ Try to understand what the student's needs are and don't dismiss requests or questions as trivial, dumb, or unwelcome.
- ✓ Keep students informed of decisions that may affect them.
- ✓ Use easy to understand language and avoid using jargon or abbreviations. Take time to explain "college" terminology to students and guests.
- ✓ Verify understanding by asking if people have questions or if they are clear on what we have explained.
- ✓ Involve students and guests in conversations and discussion topics relevant to students and guests. Never talk to other employees as if the student or guest is not present.
- ✓ Start and end every student and visitor contact and communication with direct eye contact and a sincere smile.
- ✓ When you come in contact with students or guests, extend the appropriate greeting. Say "good morning, welcome, may I help you," etc. Speak to students and guests right away even if it is to say, "I'll be with you in a moment."

- ✓ Display appropriate body language. Show we are attentive; sit up or stand up straight, have open body language, and maintain welcome facial expressions.

OWN THE SITUATION

- ✓ Be aware of and help people who appear lost. If unable to escort a person to his or her destination, call someone who can.
- ✓ Apologize for problems and inconvenience and take immediate action to address the situation.
- ✓ Offer assistance to those who have limitations.
- ✓ Take ownership when problems are encountered, discuss problems with the appropriate people and actively support workable solutions.

USE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

- ✓ Introduce yourself; explain who you are and what your role is. When appropriate, ask students and guests their names. Wear college nametag where it is clearly visible.
- ✓ Use a pleasant, calm, and respectful tone of voice. Never yell or use profanities or vulgarities.
- ✓ Greet others, including colleagues, with a warm smile and make eye contact. Say "hi" to people we pass on campus or see in the hallway.
- ✓ Use "please" and "thank you" and other social courtesies. Do not use phrases that might appear condescending such as "honey" or "sweetie."
- ✓ Serve as a positive role model and adhere to departmental guidelines. Choose a positive attitude over negativity.
- ✓ Acknowledge good work by our students and colleagues with heartfelt praise and recognition.

GO THE EXTRA MILE

- ✓ Always ask, "Is there anything else I can do for you?"
- ✓ Follow through on what you have told students or colleagues you will do.
- ✓ Make every attempt to anticipate student needs and meet them before you are asked.
- ✓ Hold the door and allow students and visitors to enter and exit first.
- ✓ Never say, "It's not my job" or "I am too busy." Instead say, "I'll find someone who can help you."
- ✓ Meet student and guest needs as soon as possible. If information is needed, take responsibility for obtaining it or direct the student or guest to the appropriate person.
- ✓ Before sending a student or guest to an office, check to see if someone is available in the office and if the office is the right place to provide help. Verify that where we are sending a student or guest is the right place to help them.

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Vernon College 2010. Library hosted webinar on customer service.

ABC...

Steve Wishnack, founder of Think & Do: Cultivating Customer Relationships challenged us to consider the ABC's of customer (student and guest) relations. **A**ttitude, **B**ehaviors, **C**onnections.

HOW CUSTOMERS EVALUATE SERVICE RATER

- ✓ Reliability—accuracy, consistency, dependability
- ✓ Assurance—knowledge, trust, confidence, competence
- ✓ Tangibles—physical appearance of people, workplace
- ✓ Empathy—caring and attention
- ✓ Responsiveness—willingness to help promptly

CUSTOMER MAGIC

- ✓ Making
- ✓ A
- ✓ Good
- ✓ Impression
- ✓ Counts

The way we connect, the way we contribute, and the way we conclude our interactions with our customers lets them know how much we care.

- ✓ Telephone magic is relayed by our tone of voice and our choice of words. A smile is definitely relayed to the other party during a phone conversation. Customers cannot see our face but they can “see” our attitude through our tone and our words.
- ✓ Email correspondence also “speaks” to the recipient through unspoken clues. Misspelled words, incomplete sentences, abrupt commands starting with “You...” relay the message that you are too busy, their request is unimportant, or you don't care.

ACT PROMPTLY AND PROFESSIONALLY

- ✓ Answer the phone within three rings or less. Return phone calls and emails within 24 hours.
- ✓ Promptly report items that are not working and take them out of service.
- ✓ Discuss student issues only within hearing of those who “need to know.”
- ✓ Use the phone or walk over to the desk to discuss student issues. Never yell across areas to other staff.
- ✓ In high traffic areas, ask the student to write down information rather than asking them to speak personal information that should be kept private.
- ✓ Keep behaviors such as personal conversations, eating, expressing criticism, etc. out of sight and ear shot of students and guests.
- ✓ Keep work areas and public areas clean and orderly. Pick up litter and report spills and other facility problems.
- ✓ Keep your appointments. Arrive on time to meetings and appointments and be prepared to participate. Notify people well in advance if you cannot attend a meeting and do not commit to meetings you know you cannot attend.

REMEMBER TO WORK AS A TEAM

- ✓ Take ownership when problems are encountered, discuss problems with the appropriate people and actively support workable solutions.
- ✓ Work collaboratively to get the job done; keep other team members informed; follow-through on responsibilities, and offer assistance without being asked.
- ✓ Return all equipment to its proper place and in the condition you found it. If you lose or break equipment, inform the appropriate people and take responsibility.
- ✓ Support changes and adjust when necessary or expected.
- ✓ Value all members of the team. Encourage, teach, mentor, and listen to others. Resolve conflict in a healthy way.
- ✓ Respect colleagues and follow policies, procedures, and guidelines of other departments. Extend professional courtesy to your colleagues giving them the benefit of the doubt and helping them whenever you can.
- ✓ Inspire confidence by talking positively about the College, all departments, and all members of the College team. Vent privately, never back-stab, and always discourage gossip.
- ✓ Introduce yourself to new employees and make them feel at home.

Reference: BlueBook, Illinois Central College; “Looking Back to Move Forward” presentation, NISOD; May 2010.

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Vernon Campus:
Faculty Innovation Center
Library RM 208

Century City Center:
Faculty Innovation Center
RM 505

Skills Training Center:
Faculty Innovation Center
RM 135

Webinar Continued

THE IMPACT OF WORDS

Words to Use

- ✓ Yes, I can
- ✓ I'd be happy to
- ✓ Certainly
- ✓ My pleasure
- ✓ I understand
- ✓ Let me explain
- ✓ Here's the reason

Words to Lose

- ✗ No, I'm busy
- ✗ You'll have to...
- ✗ You need to...
- ✗ Come back later
- ✗ You don't understand
- ✗ That's the rule
- ✗ It's our policy

Other Valuable Words

Thank you... for asking, for waiting, for telling me, for cooperating, for your help, for letting me know, for your support, for reminding me, for the suggestion.

Reference: Think & Do: Cultivating Customer Relations, Steve Wishnack; Vernon College Library Hosted Webinar; May 2010.

THANK YOU!

Approximately 20% of Vernon College employees were able to participate in NISOD and/or the Library hosted webinar. What a great start to catching the "True Blue Attitude" and exhibiting "Chaparral Pride"!



RUN towards the next opportunity!

Fall Semester Kickoff
Guest Speaker: Paul Vitale

*Inspired Teamwork
and Leadership*

Transforming Curriculum and Instruction & Creating a Technology Rich Environment

Roxie's Connection

FALL VC CAFÉ KICKOFF!

*Mark your calendar...
for the VC Café Fall 2010 Kickoff during
Faculty/Staff Development Week*

Breakout sessions will be offered Monday, August 16th during the All Staff Fall Semester Kickoff beginning at 1:45 PM. Sessions include College Effectiveness, Website, Microsoft Outlook, and the Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory.

Additional sessions will be offered on both campuses Tuesday, August 17—Thursday, August 19 as part of Faculty Development Week. Sessions include Microsoft Powerpoint (You Tube), Softchalk, Teaching Strategies, Assessments, Blackboard Beginning and Intermediate (includes Wimba). Both faculty and staff are invited to attend these training sessions. For more information please contact [Roxie](#) or [Criquett](#).

SKILLS TRAINING CENTER UPDATE

The STC, at the request of several faculty members, received a "faculty innovation center" station located in room 135. The set-

up includes a computer equipped with audio/video conversion software, Camtasia video editing software, and a VHS to DVD video converter.

Immediate projects include updating video resources to be more effective in the classroom, lecture capture for use in online courses, and tutorials demonstrating processes, practices and procedures in courses.

Many thanks to those who helped make this possible!

BLACKBOARDLEARN RELEASE 9.1

The newest version of Blackboard called "Blackboardlearn release 9.1" is scheduled to be implemented at Vernon College by the **Fall 2011 semester**.

Currently, a group of VC faculty and staff members are testing the new version. Training sessions are in the planning and developing stage and will be made available to you as soon as possible. Stay tuned for more updates this Fall and Spring semester.

