

Subject: Parks and Recreation Community Relations Plan

Policy No.: 900-0006

Effective Date: 05/14/2012



**City of Woodstock
Parks and Recreation Department**

Table of Contents

Department Mission/Vision Statement.....	1
I. Public Information.....	2
II. Customer Service.....	2
Attitude.....	2
Body Language.....	3
Appearance	3
Verbal Communication	3
Delivery	3
Salutations.....	4
Questions.....	4
Directions.....	4
Phone Use.....	4
Appropriateness.....	5
Guest Service.....	5
Customer Complaints.....	5
III. Citizen Involvement.....	5

Department Mission Statement

"The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department is dedicated to being the leader in providing exceptional leisure opportunities through the usage of Parks, Greenways, Trails, and other Recreational facilities that will enhance our quality of life while promoting a healthy lifestyle for all participants and citizens within our community."

Department Vision Statement

"The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department is a leader in providing quality facilities, programs, and, services to our residents. Excellent customer service is provided through well maintained facilities and highly trained and motivated staff. The programs and services offered by this department reflect the needs and wants of our residents."

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

The City of Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department believes in providing excellent customer service. Our focus on our citizen's needs is reflected in our facilities, programs, services, and special events.

I. Public Information

Woodstock Parks and Recreation is committed to keeping the community informed. Newsletters with information on upcoming programs and events are available on the Department's website, and up to date information is also available on Facebook and Twitter. Division Coordinators are responsible for submitting news releases to local media outlets and any additional advertising for special events. All general departmental news and marketing is handled by the Director (see the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Communication and Marketing Plan for further information).

II. Customer Service

The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department takes pride in keeping our interaction with the community as face-to-face as possible. Division Coordinators maintain close ties with their clientele and community groups. All staff is carefully educated by their superiors in proper interaction with the public.

Employees are held accountable to uphold the following courtesy standards:

Attitude

There is no other factor that has greater influence on your ability to interact with people than your own attitude. Those with whom you come in contact instantly recognize your personal feelings toward yourself and your job, and these feelings have a direct effect on the type of communication that results. It is most important that you enjoy what you are doing and project that enjoyment to others. Be aware of how your attitude is being perceived and present a positive image at all times. Your first responsibility is to create an enjoyable atmosphere for our customers and your genuine desire to create happiness for others is more important than a mechanical smile or canned phrase. The department is striving for enthusiastic staff with a professional attitude.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

Body language

CPM #900-0006

Approved on 5/14/2012

Your posture, gestures, facial expression, manner, and general attitude combine to amplify the positive warm and friendly nonverbal communication required.

- Always sit erect and look attentive. This lets people know that you are interested in helping them and that you are approachable. A customer should never feel that they are intruding if they need assistance. Always appear patient and willing to listen to any problem.
- Always look directly at each customer. Eye-to-eye contact is the fastest and most effective form of communication. It establishes an immediate rapport by indicating a willingness to listen and understand. This contact should be maintained throughout your communication.
- Be attentive at all times; show genuine concern. Never ignore customers by turning your back to them or by talking with fellow employees.
- Project a friendly, concerned, and respectful attitude. Your respect for feelings of others will earn you their respect in return.

Appearance

Your appearance tells others that you care and that you are proud of your job. Your appearance also enhances your nonverbal communication. Always maintain a neat appearance.

Verbal communication

Verbal communication includes not only what you say but also how you say it. Your choice of words, tone of voice, and use of polite phrases all convey a secondary message when you are conversing with customers or with fellow employees. Good verbal communication is an excellent tool for promoting courtesy, but, like any other skill, it must be studied and practiced.

- Choose your words carefully. Often how something is said is more important than what is said.

Delivery

The way in which you deliver your message must result in creating a positive interaction between you and the customer or fellow employee. Patience and empathy are essential in ensuring good verbal communication. All customers will be acknowledged when they enter the facility.

- Sincerity – Your tone should let your listener know that you are interested and that you care.
- Warm friendly tone – The way you speak should put the other person at ease.
- Suitable volume – Your voice should be well modulated, never strident or loud.
- Positive conclusion – Always end your conversations on a positive note (i.e. “Thank you for coming” or “See you next time.”)

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

- Polite phrases – Use appropriate polite phrases to complement your conversation (i.e. “Please,” “Thank you,” “May I help you,” “How are you today”)
- Approach – Use an active rather than passive approach in most situations. Be on the lookout

- Individualized attention – Be sure to give the customer your complete attention whenever possible and finish all business with the customer before moving on.
- Personalized service – Welcome the customer and use their name when possible.
- Careful attention to special customer needs will be shown at all times.

Salutations

A friendly greeting will set a positive mood for any experience. Your greeting will make them feel welcome and increase their anticipation of a pleasant experience. Appropriate greetings must also be extended to fellow employees throughout the day. Whether you are conversing with a customer or fellow employee, be sure to give that person individual attention. Never intentionally ignore anyone.

Questions

Regardless of where you work, you will be asked a variety of questions each day, some of them more than once and some of them that have nothing to do with your particular facility. Courtesy and patience are vital in answering all questions. Acknowledge a question as soon as possible; never make a customer wait for your attention. Establish eye contact immediately and project a friendly, concerned attitude. When answering, be positive in manner, tone, and volume. Some basics to follow in answering questions are:

- Be able to answer questions or find answers and get back to guest. Staff will follow up on customer requests to ensure that needs and expectations are met.
- Always give the correct information; don't be misleading. If you don't know the answer, make an effort to find out or refer the requestor to an appropriate source or location.
- Keep on top of information regarding special events, programs, etc. and ask questions to stay informed.

Directions

Always offer direction in a positive manner, tone, and volume. Never be sarcastic or show exasperation. Our customers (especially the young and the elderly) do not always know correct names, locations, or terminology. Show empathy for them and a willingness to listen. Always offer explanations and/or alternatives when possible.

Phone use

Phone courtesy is essential to our courtesy goal. When answering the phone, always answer with "Hello, (Insert Facility Name)," and give your name if you are comfortable doing so or if asked by the customer. When transferring calls, let the callers know that they are being transferred. Polite, courteous language must be used during all telephone

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

conversations. Personal phone calls, unless very important, are to occur only during break time.

Appropriateness

When working in recreation, you are frequently in public view. Always be aware of how your words and actions are perceived by others. Personal matters are never to be discussed in public. Likewise, work related or operating problems are to be discussed in

CPM #900-0006

Approved on 5/14/2012

non-public areas. Be aware of what you say.

Guest service

Service to our customers is our first priority. Don't hesitate to actively approach a customer who seems to have a question or problem. Whenever possible, stop your work activity or conversation if a customer is in need of attention. Occasionally, a customer will take up more of your time than you can reasonably afford. When this occurs, tactfully remove yourself from the situation by promising to get back to the person, passing him/her along to another worker/supervisor, or suggesting another activity.

Customer complaints

On the rare occasion when we fail to meet the customer's needs, patience and empathy are important. Handle all complaints with care. Take corrective action if possible, summon a supervisor, or forward the information on to another source. Be sympathetic towards the customer but do not make promises that cannot be met and do not agree to the point where you are criticizing a coworker, program, or facility. Never engage a verbally abusive customer, call a supervisor for assistance. Always inform your supervisor about the situation, so he/she will be aware of what is going on if anything else comes of the situation.

III. Citizen Involvement

Woodstock Parks and Recreation is making an effort to include more citizen involvement by conducting community surveys, implementing a volunteer program at the Senior Center, and participating in the City-wide volunteer program. Volunteers are a vital part of conducting our programs and services. Each division coordinator is responsible for the recruitment of and training of volunteers. Volunteers dealing with the public are trained in courtesy standards required of employees.