

Why can people be so unhelpful?



Pete Ford
Opinion Editor

Great customer service is something that everyone can appreciate. Lately, though, I have found that many people are only in a rush to get rid of you or pass you on to someone else.

This has been my experience recently in the Community Center. During the first two weeks of registration, the lines students wait in just to register are long and time-consuming.

Waiting, waiting and more waiting; after waiting just a little bit longer one day, I found myself at the counter with someone who was unable to give me the answers I needed. I was told to hold on for just one moment while she went to try and figure things out for me.

While "on hold," I noticed someone else to my left, another student, who was also being hassled while all she wanted to do was register. I heard her say that she was told to pay off her previous balance in order to register and that was all that was needed. She was presenting her receipt that proved the account was at zero so she could

finally register for the classes she'd already been attending, but still nothing.

These people behind the help desks, who I think of as customer service representatives (CSRs) then told the student that there was someone else she needed to talk to make sure everything was okay and that she could not register then. Standing completely baffled, the forty-something year-old student did not know what to say. She was told that the person she was required to see was not even going to be back to the college for two days.

The woman who was helping me came back after seeking answers from higher authority and said, "Can you come back later? There will be someone else here that can help you out with this. I'm not authorized to take care of this for you!"

To stonewall students with an excuse as to why you cannot help them and then brush them away like they don't matter seems absurd to me.

This kind of attitude offends me far worse than any word or gesture ever could. It is a negative behavior that is often camouflaged by fake kindness; they're nice to students because they have to be for their job. I don't believe their kindness is always sincere.

And does it ever seem like the supervisor, manager or person who can resolve complicated problems sits in a small, secluded back room and waits to come out until completely necessary? That is, if they decide to come out at all.

Not everyone fits into this mean category and this is directed at no particular individual. Those who give 100 percent shine 100 percent.

I have a solution to this problem. Mike Caudle, advising/recruitment

specialist is the most helpful individual on campus, in my opinion. He is an advisor who knows how to solve problems. His job is to be the person that you go to with questions about your academics and what classes you need to graduate. He can also tell you what you need to do to receive financial aid or just be there to help you when a question needs to be answered.

We need a Mike-like student advocate to work with registration and the cashiers' office. . . someone who can

help those individuals who have issues with registering and problems that would prevent them from enrolling in classes for whatever reason. A person you can deal with one-on-one, who can help you with issues that only selective departments can solve. A position like this would help out many frustrated students out with their problems, just as Mike does.

I believe that when someone's job is to provide others with kind behavior and the knowledge of their surroundings, generally that is what is expected of them. The customers I work with at Starbucks deserve "Five Star Legendary Service" from me and I do my best to give them nothing less than that. . . even if I don't care for that particular individual. I do it because it is my job.

This is my challenge to everyone who works with people: take it upon yourselves to help people get the answers they need or find the person who can give them those answers.

Not all circumstances can be resolved immediately, I understand, but it is frustrating to us all to feel abandoned and come up empty-handed.

Use the powers within your job to do whatever you can to resolve a conflict and just be helpful to the best of your ability. It is the right thing to do.



EARL ENGLAND CLACKAMAS PRINT

Impatient students wait in line to pay for fall term classes at the cashier's office in the Community Center.

Patriot Act borders on abuse of of the government's power

Pete Ford
Opinion Editor

While originally created with positive anti-terrorism intentions, the USA Patriot Act is now being used to manipulate the law to its own advantage.

Nearly 75 percent of the "anti-terrorism" convictions have not actually been related to terrorism, according to The Oregonian. The speeches of Attorney General John Ashcroft, for example, focus almost entirely on the terrorism aspect of the law with very little mention of the other criminals it brings down. Many of these cases are falsely labeled and could be considered more ordinary crimes.

This begs the question: why has there been a sudden spike in criminal investigations since Sept. 11, 2001 due to non-terrorism activity using the Patriot Act? And why the secrecy? It makes one wonder if something is being covered up. It's very interesting that a government who claims to seek justice needs to be scandalous in an effort to receive it.

Anthony Romero, executive director for the American Civil Liberties

Union, states, "Once the American public understands that many of the powers granted to the federal government apply to so much more than just terrorism, I think the opposition will gain momentum."

The USA Patriot Act enables the law, with the secretive help of powerful individuals, to take the easy way out.

Envision officers believing someone to be criminal without any proof. They take the matter into their own hands using the "anti-terrorism" laws, and bring that someone in on other charges. What gives them the privilege to invade a person's rights just because they hold the power in their hands?

Their main conservative argument in support of the Patriot Act is to do everything in their power to protect the lives and liberties of Americans. They are simply taking the wrong approach in doing something they believe to be positive.

So the question remains, why would law enforcement officials need to be granted new powers for non-terrorism investigations?

The government is bending our constitutional rights and cheating the system for their own benefit.

Chief's Weekly Column

Can eager students winter next term?



Cyndee Mady
Co-Editor in Chief

The excitement of fall term, enhanced with fresh young faces eager to absorb the knowledge that lies within classroom doors, has yet again visited our campus. The question is: Will the school spirit survive the winter?

As I begin my third year here, I've noticed that each winter term seems to bring more available parking spaces, less time spent in cafeteria lines and fewer students in the classrooms. Where does all the enthusiasm from fall term go?

Some students may be overly eager, taking too many credits and getting overwhelmed. Other students may think they need a break from education after having spent the last 13 years in school. The snugness of a warm down com-

forter on a cold rainy morning may be enough to keep many students in bed rather than in school. Whatever the reason, attendance just seems to drop off in the winter.

I went to college straight out of high school, and dropped out by winter term. That was 20 years ago.

My absence of education left me with no marketable skills. I bounced from one restaurant to the next--serving food, tending bar and holding down two jobs to make ends meet.

Not only did I struggle financially at times, I struggled to make intelligent conversation with educated people, many times attempting to disguise my ignorance when the majority seemed to be in the know.

At the age of 37, feeling as though my life was stagnant with lack of purpose, I decided to give college another try and discovered what I'd been missing all those years--intellectual stimulation.

I regret not having done it sooner while still living at home with no more than auto expenses to worry about and my parents offering to pay the tuition--but better late than never.

So I am here to pass along my wisdom in hopes that you will learn from my mistakes.

Take a reasonable amount of courses so as not to get overwhelmed and throw in the towel. Do the best you can in all your classes, even those you hate, because all knowledge is good knowledge and take advantage of your parents' hospitality as long as humanly possible.

A future full of opportunities can be afforded through education, so whether you take 16 credits or six credits stay in school, it's worth the effort.

I look forward to seeing you winter term!



Have you had any problems with the school so far this year?



Kim Fifiell

"It was a pain for registration, but financial aid was good. The book store prices are ridiculous!"



Joe Carson

"Everyone was cool to me, but the financial aid process has been really slow. I'm still waiting for a check."



Jeremy Ingalls

"I haven't had any hassles at all. Everyone has seemed really nice and helpful."



Jessica Naylor

"Everything has been smooth so far; it's only the third week. Cafeteria lines are really long and the chicken soup really sucked."



Elise Megale

"I just need to get my financial aid! Everything is fine; you just need to be motivated."

THE CLACKAMAS PRINT
19600 S Molalla Ave.
Oregon City, OR 97045
(503) 657-6958

Co Editors-in-Chief: Cyndee Mady and Cory Price
Copy Editor: Katie Funk
News Editor: Jared Eschweiler
Opinion Editor: Pete Ford
Feature Editor: Karen Hill
A&E Editor: Isaiah Creel
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Advertising Manager: Mark Falling, ext. 2578
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