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“The subtle difference in our attitude can make a major difference in our future. It can be as simple as the language we use.” -Jim Rohn

Over the past few weeks many of the customer service quotes have talked about attitude, because of the major impact it has on how our team serves customers. One of the most important ways you can improve the way our Family and MWR customers view you is through your language. During Operation Excellence customer service training we talk a bit about how we can change what our customers might perceive as negative language. For example, have you ever said to a customer “You filled out the paperwork incorrectly.” Now at first glance this may seem like a benign statement, but when you deconstruct this phrase what you’re really telling them is “Gee didn’t you read?” Not exactly the most positive thing to say to our valued customers! Keep in mind here that our number one job is to HELP our customers, so if they have not filled out the paperwork correctly, why not help them do it instead of telling them they did it wrong? A better response would be something along the lines of “Let’s take a look at your paperwork to make sure everything is ready to go so that it will process more quickly.” With this you are being helpful, giving assistance, and still doing YOUR job, which is to make sure the customer has filled out the paperwork correctly.

Some other language that can come across as negative might include some commonly heard phrases such as “I don’t know” or “That’s not really my job” or “We don’t do that in our department”. As team members, we necessarily know everything, and what the customer is asking may not be our job. How about replacing those with something like “That’s a great question” or “Let me find out for you.” But the bottom line goes back to this: It IS our job to help the customer, and it IS our job to find out! This leads to service excellence!

Just a little tip to keep the customers first in our thoughts! Thank you for choosing excellence in serving our Soldiers and Family Members!

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