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845SCENE

Mind your manners!

Skywriting: A little smile goes a long way

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By Skywalker
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Confucius said: "Find a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life."

I consider myself to be both blessed and lucky that I love my job and enjoy everything it entails day in and day out. Being an on-air radio personality involves human interaction on many levels. I chose a job that involves people because I am a "people" person. But recently the customer service exchanges I have had caused me to question and examine both our level of pure human contact and plain old-fashioned manners.

My doctor's office called to confirm an appointment for 10:15 a.m. Tuesday.

"Thank you, but I did not make an appointment," I said.

"What is your birth date?" the woman asked. "Yes you have an OB/GYN appointment in our Hopewell Junction office."

"Ahhh, no I have a few issues but that is not one of them." I joked. (Clearly my voice was not an indication of my gender, causing me to rethink my lifelong career.)

"Well you must have made the appointment; how else would it have been made?" she asked in an accusatory tone.

"I have no idea, but I assure you I did not make that type of appointment or any appointment in general."

"Ohhhh-k, if you insist. I guess I will cancel the appointment if you insist?" she asked begrudgingly.

"I insist. Thank You".

click

I stared at my phone in disbelief. I thought I had just experienced a funny misunderstanding but the robotic nature of this woman was very disconcerting. Healthcare isn't known for its warm and fuzzy nature, but this was a bit too clinical for me.

I often wonder if manners and general politeness are regional characteristics. I was on vacation in Florida and saw a "Chick-fil-A" sign. I've always wanted to try it, so I wandered inside. The teenager at the counter greeted me with a smile and a welcome, and when I asked her about the different dipping sauces available to me she proceeded to give me a two-minute-long dissertation of my options. I was hooked! Her smiling face and overall enthusiasm for her job was infectious and would cause me to frequent that establishment numerous times.

I must give credit where it is due here at home, as well. Thank you to the drive-thru worker at my favorite coffee shop. When I requested my large light-and-sweet caffeine fix she promptly replied "That will be two-million dollars ... please drive around." The fact that she was having some harmless fun and a smile with her job was a big plus in this consumer's eye. I felt compelled to give her a tip in the tip cup.

About Skywriting

Every Wednesday at 845Scene, join Skywalker from K104 (104.7 FM in Fishkill) as he discusses pop culture in "Skywriting."

E-mail Timothy Malcolm at tmalcolm@th-record.com with comments.

Check out more Skywalker - who is on air from 2-7 p.m. Monday-Friday, by visiting K104's website, k104online.com.

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If you find yourself in the service industry or have a job where you interact with another human being, realize that a little kindness goes a long way. It benefits the business on a monetary level but a "please," "thank you" and "Have a great day" benefit the soul.

I sincerely hope that I give you a little bit of a smile everyday when you listen to the radio. If you see me out and about in the Hudson Valley, don't hesitate to say hello. If you see me in Florida, however, I will be firmly seated at the Chick-fil-A.

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