



One of the easier communication problems to solve revolves around our tendency to think that others understand what we mean when we use a term. Let's take "customer service," as an example.

If you have been tasked with improving customer service, what exactly does that mean? How is customer service being defined?



If you're in leadership and have young people on your team, where might they have even experienced good customer service? They may be thinking "the Apple store" with its controlled chaos while you're thinking "Nordstrom's" with its classical piano playing in the background. Not only do different generations differ in their understanding of terms, individuals within each generation do, as well. So when you are delegating or being delegated to, find out whether the definitions of the terms being used match. This saves a lot of wasted effort and frustration.

The Golden Phrase: "As Evidenced By"

Years ago, a nurse manager told me a story that has always stuck with me: *When I work with my employees on performance improvement, I make sure they understand exactly what is required. I cannot simply tell them to increase the quality of patient care; I must say, "Increase the quality of patient care **as evidenced by** an increase in positive patient survey scores and a reduction in the number of formal complaints."* (For example)

Giving people edicts to improve something without telling them what it should look like is unfair and sets up a "no win" situation.

Always answer the unspoken question, "How will we measure success?" and make sure everyone is on the same page by defining terms.

Change Your Focus; Engage Your Team!

To schedule a FREE 20-minute phone consultation about how you can make your work communication more effective, call 480-560-9452 or email Silver@SilverSpeaks.com