

Mystery Shop Assignment

Hi my name is Angie Lyrette. I am a professor and coordinator at Algonquin College in the School of Business. The assignment I wanted to talk to you today is in the three-year Business Administration Finance major in the Client Relations course which is in the second year. Before coming to Algonquin College as a professor I was an assistant branch manager at TD Canada Trust. One of the things that we focused our energies on always was customer service and the way that we measured that for our employees and for ourselves was through hiring of organizations such as JD Power and Associates to discover what was the voice of the customer. So they would come and they would mystery shop our branches and after our clients had had a visit they would phone our clients and ask for their experience and then they would pit one branch against another. In this example here Royal Bank was the winner of that year's JD Power and Associates customer service survey. I wanted students to experience this for themselves and so I created this assignment. Before doing this assignment students were asked to discuss what made a great customer service experience and they practiced writing customer complaint and customer compliment letters for organizations that they had recently done business with and we called that assignment "The Good The Bad The Ugly". What they did for this assignment is this is a discussion assignment. First they created a customer service checklist which would help them decide whether or not they were having a good customer service experience and then they would book an appointment with a financial institution either their own or with a financial institution they were interested in doing business with so they might book an appointment to open a new savings account or to open a new checking account or just ask questions about how much service charges they were paying. Once they'd had the visit they would then go into the discussion and summarize their visit in the form of a discussion thread. They would attach their customer service checklist and then go in and respond critically to two other students and then in the conversations they would end up comparing one bank to the other so they would actually do their own "which bank is best" so they would be doing the JD Power and Associates job for them. I think what the students learned from this is that there's a lot more in customer service than just the person. There's the state of the parking lot as you're going into the building, whether or not there's a greeter when you arrive, if it's tidy in the branch lobby, and just some of the things that are maybe not noticeable until you start thinking about it like was there music playing, did somebody offer you a coffee or a beverage. So it really gave them good insight. They also visited a financial services institution where I hope they go to work one day which means they got to see a sense of what is the culture of the organization how are people dressed so they could better prepare for an interview in the future.