

### **What is customer feedback?**

Customer feedback can come in many forms. It can be a small remark or a full blown complaint or formal letter of thanks. Each team member who deals with external customers will need to be ready to receive and document customer feedback. To make this easier we have developed this guide to assist you.

### **The Gift Formula**

We must become so comfortable with the idea that a complaint is a gift so that there is no hesitation in our responses. If our attitude is deeply ingrained, as in the case of saying “thank you” when we receive a gift, then when someone complains to us we will truly welcome it as something of value. We will not have to think our way through this; our natural response will be as if we have received a gift.

How can we do this? First, the company must talk the language of complaint giving as gifts. The idea needs to be reinforced to all team members, on wall posters and in all conversations and training sessions about customer service. Second, the company’s policies, compensation systems, mission, vision, values and managerial behaviour must be aligned to support the gift-friendly philosophy. Finally, we must learn some fundamental techniques for handling complaints. This can be done by using the following Gift Formula.

### **Eight Step Gift Formula**

The gift formula is a step-by-step process, which in its optimal form, is delivered in a set order. Having said this, there will be occasions when it will be more appropriate to vary the sequence. The steps are as follows:

1. Say “Thank you”
2. Explain why you appreciate the complaint
3. Apologise for the mistake
4. Promise to do something about the problem immediately
5. Ask for necessary information
6. Correct the mistake – promptly
7. Check customer satisfaction
8. Prevent future mistakes

### **Recording Customer Feedback**

After you have used the Gift Formula to remedy the customers complaint/issue or if you have received some positive feedback it is important to record the details.

### **Customer Feedback – Advantages**

Recording customer feedback has many advantages, see below for some examples;

- Encourages ongoing improvements of customer service
- Allows free and open communication from customers
- Ensures customers know we care and endeavour to satisfy all of their needs
- Allows management to keep track of excellence in customer service
- Recognises staff training needs
- Analyses the need for improvement of existing systems
- Ensures you are providing supreme customer service and gives your car wash the competitive edge!