

## **RUDENESS IN MODERN SOCIETY**

A definition of rudeness is where one individual imposes their wishes and needs on another individual without consideration. It has become a symptom of our society today that everyone is busy and everyone has no time. The end result is that there is an epidemic of rudeness in our society. Recently, in an article by Robert Cenek in the Cenek Report wrote, "Rude work places are all the rage". In this article Mr. Cenek states that he's not optimistic for much change in the future. It's a malaise that's symptomatic of a similar trend in our society. I would say that I experience on an average of five to ten acts of random rudeness with other members of our great land on a weekly basis. We are raising an entire generation to function without simple "Thank You's" and "Excuse Me's".

This would not only translate to a work setting but certainly in our social functioning in retail. Do you remember the old days when the customer was always right? And that the emphasis by the retailer was always to keep the customers as number one and to provide the best service for them. This is certainly the good old days because corporate America today rather functions on the bottom line or the corporate profit. In fact, I am aware of

one corporate philosophy which is "It doesn't matter how we treat our employee. There are plenty of others to take their place if they don't like it." This type of mentality is the epitome of rudeness and, of course, what else would a customer expect other than rudeness from this type of a work environment.

There is an old fashioned concept at one time that we may all remember. That was "Three's a crowd". When this occurred immediate action would be taken to assist the customer. Today's concept is "let them wait they're getting a good deal and if they don't like it they can go some place else." This mentality translates further to where if you ask for help they point you in a direction. "Over there and help yourself, I don't have time to assist you."

Certainly, this kind of behavior translates to people being frustrated and acting rudely. It would seem that we as consumers and individuals on this planet are being told to accept it as is and this is done in a non-caring environment. As such, it is quite easy to see why others who are exposed to such mentality become rude.

No one should tolerate rudeness and disrespect at work. If tolerated, the enterprise will face a high cost in lower moral and productivity among the staff. Christine Porath, a professor of management at the Marshall School of Business (USC), does research on the impact of rude behavior in the work place. Over 90% of the nearly three thousand employees that Porath has surveyed claim experiencing incivility on the job. Of these, 50% lost work time worrying about the incident, 50% contemplated changing jobs to avoid a reoccurrence, and 25% cut back on their efforts on the job. If rude behavior is allowed to flourish at an enterprise, talented people who have self-respect will start heading for the door. Professor Porath found that one in eight workers who were rudely treated by a co-worker left their job shortly thereafter. The only workers who stay in a rude work place are people who rage.

Rudeness can easily be transformed into something that has been labeled "Road Rage". This is an inherent rudeness while operating a motor vehicle. Again because of pressures in our society people tend to be busy, rushed and "have no time". It's perfectly acceptable to cut off another motorist or to "speed" or to deny others' rights such as those of right of ways because of need for time. Many motor vehicle laws are broken consistently and daily as

a result of rudeness. I am not sure if we are going to be able to return to a kinder gentler society, but certainly that is going to be necessary if the quality of our lives is ever going to improve.

# # #