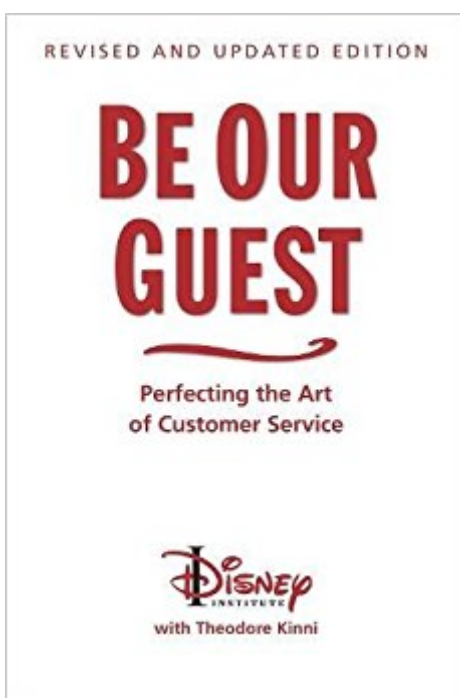


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# Be Our Guest: Perfecting The Art Of Customer Service (Disney Institute Book, A)



## Synopsis

Exceeding expectations rather than simply satisfying them is the cornerstone of the Disney approach to customer service. Now, in honor of the tenth anniversary of the original Be Our Guest, Disney Institute, which specializes in helping professionals see new possibilities through concepts not found in the typical workplace, is revealing even more of the business behind the magic of quality service. During the last twenty-five years, thousands of professionals from more than thirty-five countries and more than forty industries have attended business programs at Disney Institute and learned how to adapt the Disney approach for their own organizations. Be Our Guest highlights the successes many of these companies have achieved, plus the key processes and best practices that have made Disney a trusted and revered brand around the world for more than eighty-five years.

## Book Information

Series: Disney Institute Book, A

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Disney Editions; Rev Upd edition (November 8, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1423145844

ISBN-13: 978-1423145844

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 0.8 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 177 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #7,860 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in [Books > Travel > United States > Florida > Orlando](#) #2 in [Books > Travel > United States > Florida > Disney World](#) #3 in [Books > Travel > Specialty Travel > Theme Parks](#)

## Customer Reviews

Ted Kinni has authored thirteen business books. He has ghostwritten seven books for Booz & Company, Prime Resource Group, The Walt Disney Company, LIF Group, and IMPAQ, Inc. He is also an active business journalist, whose articles and book reviews have appeared in a wide variety of periodicals, including cover stories in Harvard Management Update, Across the Board, Training, Selling Power, Quality Digest, and Corporate University Review.

Disney create a magical experience whilst you are in the resorts and theme parks. But of course it

doesn't happen by magic. They don't have a secret pixie dust mine run by dwarves. They use the combination of cast, setting and process to superb effect. They do have an excellent cast- who are very well trained and drilled- and who have very clear priorities set for their work. This clarity allows them to do their work well- and creates a safe framework within which they can improvise freely and safely- creating magical moments and memories for guests. Disney Cast are simultaneously very disciplined, and yet very free and trusted. This is a good combination to achieve in any industry yet rarely done as well as by Disney and its cast. In particular the need for control and direction felt in many organisations actually leads them down the path to failure. The chains of unjustified assurance (See for example *The Audit Society: Rituals of Verification*) demanded in many companies and government departments are actually reducing their degrees of control, and their degrees of effectiveness. The staff end up unable to give their best and the managers fruitlessly keep wondering how to bring out the best in their staff...without giving up control. Disney uses a simple approach based on overarching priorities and then local adaptations for particular settings. Their overarching priorities are very clear- safety, courtesy, show, efficiency, and in that order. Safety is not easy to assure at Disney- huge numbers of guests, and so eventually an incident will occur, even if the risk is one in a million or less- they have that many visitors so that a one in a million event will happen somewhere. Staff are trained to mitigate this risk. Courtesy is their next step. Everyone is a very individual person- and Disney try to match their staff with the people they are serving. They also study culture across the world- and make their gestures clear but neutral and inoffensive. For example a pointing finger may be polite or impolite depending on context- Disney have worked out a strategy to avoid any appearance of impoliteness. Show is harder to define- but it basically means that the guest is always focused on enjoying the park, and not on observing its workings. The amount of design work done to ensure seamless transitions between the areas of the parks is huge. Also the work that has gone into avoiding incongruous back scenes, and abrupt transitions is noteworthy. The audience's attention is never distracted unnecessarily. Efficiency is process management by Disney team manage the flow of people through their locations. The detail with which Disney tracks this is awesome- they know how many people to expect in each bit of their park, and what they will want and need- and plan ahead to meet it. The cast then make it look easy, but there's a detailed process behind it. This book describes well how Disney achieves its quality of service and if you want a bit of that magic to rub off onto you read this book, and learn. It actually makes me appreciate what Disney do more, and also realise that what they do could be replicated and adapted to many other contexts. It's all just hidden within cast, setting and process.

Best customer service book I've read in 40 years, and I've read a lot of them! Contained herein are some of the best common sense step-by-step methods I've seen for achieving excellence in customer service. Buy a copy for every manager in your organization and use it as a road map - work through the chapters together as a team and translate your insights into action. The book is rich with questions to help get everyone in your organization thinking seriously about how to create amazing customer service.

Believe it or not I've used some of this in a marriage counseling I lead. There is helpful advice that crosses over into many areas of life and work. As a pastor of a church I see transferable concepts in helping the church become more welcoming and service oriented.

After returning from an awesome trip to Disneyworld, I was inspired to read this book and am now even more in awe of the Disney culture and found plenty of things to apply to my real estate business. You too will be inspired to step up your customer service game after this read!

It is well known that Disney is the standard to which all companies should be held when it comes to customer experience and this book does a fantastic job of whittling it down to an understandable formula that can be shared with all types of companies. I got this book after a recent trip to WDW when I saw it in a store and it peaked my interest, leaving me wanting to know more of how we could follow-suit with the amazing experience I had. The book is a quick read (mostly because once you pick it up, you can't put it down), but at the same time it is an in-depth formula. They break it down to basic principles and provide examples of how Disney makes it happen and how other businesses around the world. It truly is a must-read.

This book should be required reading for all entrepreneurs, executives and other managers as motivation for excellence. Your level of expertise and experience doesn't matter; you will find something useful and applicable for your business.

Any company in this niche should take the time to read it. Got a good birds eye of the Disney philosophy.

I worked for a company that followed the Be Our Guest philosophy years ago and enjoyed the focus on perfecting customer service. I felt my current organization is traveling along the same path and

could benefit from a book like this. The book does not give you an a-ha moment but rather tools you can apply to your day to day operations. As a Disney fan, it is very interesting to learn how they get the buy in from their cast members and see it spill over to their guests. This is a great book to purchase if you are looking for that little extra something to give back to your customers and keep them coming back.

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