

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PERSONNEL SERVICES

## Independent Study Course Number 19

This independent study course is offered to certificate holders and members of the National Association of Personnel Services (NAPS). By completing this course, individuals can earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) that can be applied toward the maintenance requirement that NAPS has instituted for individuals receiving the Certified Personnel Consultant (CPC) and Certified Temporary – Staffing Specialist (CTS) designations after January 1, 1995. All individuals will be required to complete the examination section of this independent study course to receive credit. Those achieving a passing score on the examination will receive the .2 CEUs associated with this particular course. In addition, .2 CEUs can be earned by completing the special assignment outlined on the last page of the course. Refer to the registration instructions on the last page of this study course for additional instructions.

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### VALUE-ADDED SERVICE

*By Robert D. Liken, CPC, CTS*

In today's competitive marketplace, it's not enough to provide "good" service. You must provide a "great" service on a regular basis to survive and grow. The staffing industry has matured over the years and become much more sophisticated. The average client has also become more sophisticated. At the same time, competition has become much more intense, and the need to provide strong client relationships is more necessary than ever before.

Doing well in business today depends in part on how good a job you do at building strong client relationships. You have two clients: your employers and your candidates. "Value-added" servicing applies to both the employer and the candidate.

#### **The objectives of this independent study course are three:**

1. To get you to think about what you do to service your clients. Is it "good," or is it "great"?
2. To get you to think about "developing relationships," not just filling job orders.
3. To get you to see that business has changed and, if you are going to survive and grow, you must surpass your competition

First, let me define "value-added servicing" – it is doing something special, above and beyond supplying the staffing services the client requested. Value-added servicing is what can give you a competitive edge. As you evaluate what you are doing and look at your business, there are two underlying premises:

1. That there are a lot of good services. You can never assume your competition is not good. You must assume they are "great" and you must stretch to get beyond them and do a better job.
2. That there are a lot of sophisticated buyers out there, that know what they want and know your business.

## **The Perception**

You must be perceived by your clients that you do more for them and they get more from you than they get from the competition.

### **Key Thoughts Concerning “Value-Added Servicing”**

1. It entails a total dedication to your company, the service you provide, and the overall personnel services industry. Maintaining this level of dedication takes time and effort, but anything less will be noticed. Ease off and at best, you will drop into the “good” service category. You must have a passion for this business.
2. It requires a constant evaluation of your performance. Evaluate your staff, the service they provide, the customer satisfaction, etc., on a regular basis. Calling your clients for feedback, and constantly critiquing your service and your staff are necessary to guarantee that you are providing clients with “great” service.
3. It entails being very responsive all the time. If it’s not working, fix it. If it is working, do it better. This is the attitude necessary to ultimately come across as providing a “great” service.
4. It requires having a “no problem, we can handle it!” attitude. Take the maxim “the customer is always right” to the extreme – nothing is too much. Train your staff in this attitude and you will make the client feel “great.”
5. It requires giving constant feedback to your clients. Keep them updated routinely on what you are doing. Get them involved in the process. Have monthly and quarterly reviews of service, and request that your clients be included in providing the solution to the problem you are solving. Remember, you are not providing ‘staffing services,’ you are providing “solutions to problems.” Your approach should be to identify the problem, then become a part of the solution using your staff and services.
6. It means creating a list of special things you can do. It means working with each client as if they are your only client. Build a “service plan” for each client. Brilliant execution is more important than the strategy. Remember, “value-added” is your image, the way the marketplace perceives you...And it is up to you to create that perception.

### **HOW DO YOU DEVELOP AND RETAIN CLIENTS?**

Two ways:

1. By providing a “quality service.” By being consistently the best.
2. By getting “closer to the client” with a very specific service plan that goes beyond just filling orders.

The goal here is to develop a relationship so the client will use you as a resource to solve problems and to generate repeat and referral business. Remember...job orders and business will be a “by-product of creating this relationship.

The key to “value-added” servicing is account management via target servicing. The overall objective of “target servicing” is to develop a plan to service the account – to fill current

needs, develop other business opportunities, and grow the account – not just fill job orders. You must develop a service relationship with the client.

You know you have a service relationship with your clients when:

1. You become a source of information to the client, and part of the problem-solving team, not a victim of their decisions.
2. You are in constant contact with the client and not just called when they have business to do.
3. You can pre-recruit and market good candidates.
4. You can develop feedback meetings on a regular monthly or quarterly basis to review the account.
5. You are looked at legitimately as a help to your clients, not just a vendor.

The Account Management Process Should Follow These Steps:

1. Develop a “service plan” for each account: - Define how the account will be managed, whom it will be assigned to, how often you will meet, etc.
2. Review the “service plan” with the client: - Sit down with them, go over the plan, and get them involved. Make them part of the solution and the decision-making process.
3. Review the “menu of services” you can offer your clients: - Custom design what is needed and wanted. Then put it in writing and follow through.
4. Write job descriptions for all jobs you’ll be recruiting for: - Get the client involved in writing these job descriptions and get their approval that you are on the right track.
5. Do a recruiting plan with the client and get their input as to where you’ll find candidates: - Seek the client’s help in writing the ads to recruit, etc.
6. Develop a customized orientation plan: - Develop work rules for each client to better prepare all recruits for their company.
7. Set up a feedback system: - Set up the times you’ll meet and discuss progress with the client, not just for the needs you may be working on now, but for future needs as well.
8. Follow-up quarterly/annually with clients to make sure you are doing what’s important and are maintaining a good business relationship.

### **Maintaining Ongoing Customer Relations:**

You must make the effort to continually build rapport with your clients and maintain a schedule of activities that will keep you in front of them. Using your staff and the resources available to you (mail, the telephone, and the face-to-face visit), you must develop a mini-marketing plan in order to be progressive in your client relationships. It is up to you to

manage the relationship ... not them. If you wait for clients to call you, you are not managing the relationship.

**In Summary:**

Your efforts need to be targeted and more focused than ever before. Remember that you must be perceived as doing more and providing more than your competition. You must go the “extra mile” to develop the relationship. You must be a problem solver and you must teach your staff to do the same. The goal is to do a thorough need determination and understand the problem, then become a part of the solution. The more adept you are at providing solutions, the more your clients will need you. You then must set up the account, develop a “service plan” that involves the client, and customize the service. Finally, set up feedback meetings to review progress and stay in touch.

Remember, your goal is to provide a “great service, not just a ‘good” service. How would your clients rate you and your business?

## CONTINUING EDUCATION UNIT (CEU) REGISTRATION

Complete the registration information below and forward this page, containing the independent study examination and your answers, plus payment to: NAPS, 3133 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22305. The processing fee for the continuing education units for each NAPS independent study course is \$10 for members and \$20 for non-members. Feel free to reproduce the registration and examination page to allow additional individuals to apply for CEUs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Current NAPS member \$10  Non-member \$20

### EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

Multiple-choice questions. Circle the response you believe to be correct. Be certain to answer all the questions.

1. According to Likien, value-added servicing is:
  - a. providing a "good" service
  - b. providing a "great" service
  - c. communicating with clients only when they have job orders to fill
  - d. responding to client needs
  
2. Your clients are:
  - a. employers
  - b. candidates
  - c. both of the above
  - d. none of the above
  
3. You should never assume:
  - a. your competition is not doing a good job in the marketplace
  - b. your staff consistently out-performs the competition
  - c. you are perceived as the quality company
  - d. all of the above
  
4. You should assume;
  - a. Your clients are sophisticated buyers of staffing services
  - b. Your clients don't understand your business very well
  - c. Your clients will call you when they have a need
  - d. Your clients will be loyal
  
5. Ideally, your clients' perceptions should be;
  - a. that your competitors don't do a good job
  - b. that you are able to fill their job orders

- c. that you are not only part of the hiring process, you are part of the solution to their personnel problems
  - d. all of the above
6. Value-added servicing is:
- a. a total dedication to the business and the client
  - b. a constant evaluation of your performance
  - c. always being very responsive
  - d. all of the above
7. Retaining clients is done by:
- a. taking good job orders
  - b. sending out company literature on a regular basis
  - c. getting closer to the client by building a good business relationship
  - d. assigning your best staff member to problem clients
8. Once you begin to do business with a client you should:
- a. set up the account
  - b. develop a service plan
  - c. review a menu of services and allow the client to participate
  - d. all of the above
9. Regular communication means:
- a. meeting a client on a regular basis
  - b. mailing to them on a regular basis
  - c. calling them on a regular basis
  - d. all of the above
10. Your overall goal in maintaining an ongoing business relationship is:
- a. to fill job orders
  - b. to recruit good candidates
  - c. to develop a good relationship based on problem solving
  - d. to stay one step ahead of your competition

**Extra Credit Assignment (worth .2 CEUs)**

Develop a “service plan” for a specific account and a “menu of services” for the various accounts that you serve. Do not exceed three typewritten pages. Submit along with the examination.