
MONDAY MANNA
SEP 8, 2025**APPRECIATING THE COURTESY OF THEIR BUSINESS****By Robert J. Tamasy**

How do you build a successful business? Countless books have been written about this. So-called 'experts' tout many formulas for how a company can rise above the competitors. But rarely do we hear these authorities mention a particular word that can make tremendous difference for both an enterprise and its clients or customers. That word is: Courtesy.

One definition of 'courtesy' is "the demonstration of politeness in one's attitude and behavior toward others; a respectful or considerate act or expression." Courtesy – or the lack of it – is a quality that I quickly notice whenever I patronize a business, such as a grocery or department store, doctor's office, movie theater, or restaurant.

Sadly, in our world today it seems that courtesy has largely fallen out of style. Even the simple act of holding the door for another person when entering a business seems to offend some people. This gesture is not intended to demean or seem condescending. It is merely a simple act of recognizing the presence of the other person and politely offering them the opportunity to enter before you.

In our community, one grocery store and its staff are known for courtesy. They always greet customers, ask if they can help in any way, acknowledge you when checking out, and even offer to help take the groceries to your car. Another grocery store, also very prominent, rarely displays such forms of kindness. Guess which of the stores I prefer to visit?

Why the difference? I believe in most cases it is the culture of the business – training and expecting all employees to act in a certain, consistent manner. Courtesy does not happen by accident. What is most interesting is that it takes so little effort to be courteous to others, but the benefits are substantial.

Many passages in the Bible talk about courtesy being extended, along with underlying principles for how and why it should be prominent in our interactions with others. Here are just a few of them:

Giving others priority. Showing courtesy toward others communicates that they are valued. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:3-4).

Treating others as you would want to be treated. When someone asked what God expects of His people, Jesus Christ said the answer was not complicated. In addition to the command to, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength," He said, "The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No

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other commandment is greater than these” (Mark 12:29-31). How would you like people to respond courteously to you?

Setting ourselves apart in a highly competitive working environment. In the marketplace, where profits are often paramount and everything else is considered of much lesser importance, demonstrating genuine concern and interest in others can make us – and our companies – stand out. “...to be kind and conciliatory and gentle, showing unqualified consideration and courtesy toward everyone” (Titus 3:2, Amplified).

© 2025. Robert J. Tamasy has written *Marketplace Ambassadors: CBMC's Continuing Legacy of Evangelism and Discipleship*; *Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today's Workplace*; *Pursuing Life With a Shepherd's Heart*, coauthored with Ken Johnson; and *The Heart of Mentoring*, coauthored with David A. Stoddard. Bob's biweekly blog is: www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Think of a recent example of a time when someone in a business setting demonstrated genuine courtesy toward you. How did that make you feel? How did you respond?
2. Why do you think that in many businesses, the importance of showing courtesy is not part of their operational philosophy? Do you believe that makes that much of a difference in building and maintaining a strong organization? Why or why not?
3. In your own company or organization, is the sincere display of courtesy toward others – not just customers and clients, but also employees and suppliers – given a high priority? Explain your answer.
4. How do you think the value of expressing courtesy toward others can be encouraged and cultivated, especially in businesses where it is not prioritized?

Challenge for This Week

If you were to grade yourself on the ‘courtesy scale’ from 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest, what do you think would be your score?

If you believe your rating in terms of courtesy toward others could be higher, consider ways in which you could improve. Ask for the advice and counsel of someone or a small group that you trust. In the process, you might be able to help someone else who also needs to improve in showing courtesy toward others. As Proverbs 27:17 says, “As iron sharpens others, so one man sharpens another.”

NOTE:

For more about what the Bible says, consider the following passages:

Luke 7:36-47; Romans 12:9-13, 17-18; Titus 3:2; James 3:17; 1 Peter 3:15-16

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