

CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING NOTES

PANAMA CITY 2007

We held our first ever customer advisory board meeting in Panama City on May 31, 2007. We initially had ten commitments for the meeting, but unfortunately we only had a fraction of those customers attend the meeting. Of course, the meeting was still a great success and the food and atmosphere was unmatched. Check out this picture for proof....



The most discussed topic concerned the quality of our cleanings. As usual, that's what most people care about since it is the only reason people call us in the first place. The good news is that most of our attendees didn't have a lot of complaints. The floors seemed to be the biggest priority. One customer advised us to only use vinegar and water on tile floors. According to him, this technique worked great with a previous cleaning service. We currently use this technique but our primary floor care technique involves Odoban and water.

The best news that we received was that each of our customers recognized that we are not going to be perfect every time. They indicated that we have made mistakes in the past. One of them even needed us to come back out to reclean the home. However, they said that our commitment to customer service was the reason that the small mistakes didn't really bother them. That's great news because we try to educate our customers on the fact that mistakes are bound to happen. When they happen, just tell us and we'll fix them.

Two of the customers had referred our service in the past. One had even referred our service to as many as five people. That's what we're looking for...word of mouth marketing. The reason that each customer referred our service was because of our pay for performance plan and our ability to show up on time each visit.

Of course, it wouldn't be a meeting without hearing these words....

“We'd like to get the same people every time”.

Everyone wanted us to get better at sending the same team each time. We explained our situation again, but the fact is that our customers really want the same people every time. We're doing the best we can to meet these expectations. The problem stems from employee turnover and absenteeism. The reality is that our industry just doesn't breed longevity. The work stinks, the work is hard, and the work is somewhat limited. In other words, most people don't make a career out of housecleaning. We're fighting hard, but please understand our situation. We can't make someone work for us and we can't make someone not get sick. What we can do is guarantee that we'll show up when you need us. The reason we can promise that is because we staff more people than we really need. Of course, that means that you'll occasionally get two people that have never been to your home before. But when that happens, remember one thing. We're not just sending two people to your home. We're sending two people that have been trained to cleaned. They have been informed of your wants and needs. And they are getting paid to make you happy. It's in their best interest to provide a quality cleaning because your feedback directly determines their paycheck.

The rest of the meeting was mostly good times to be honest with you. We had some great seafood and the atmosphere with the water behind us made it hard to concentrate on work. It was a fun night and I hope that our customers had as much fun as Melissa and I. A big thanks goes out to Sandra, Ann, and Thomas for taking the time to help us get better.

We're probably going to have another meeting during the same time period next year. The reason....because the weather was perfect. And I'm selfish, I want to feel that cool breeze again. See ya next year.