



It's Always "That Little Extra"

It is often said that the difference between "ordinary" and "extraordinary" is that "little extra". Small gestures from Front Line employees seem to have the biggest impact.

Think about all those stories you hear about (whether good or bad) and they are almost always about what a Front Line employee did...or didn't do.

Take for example a recent experience I had: I was recently on a business trip to Europe, flying from Prague to Amsterdam, when a customer in line ahead of me attempted to board the plane. Her interaction with the KLM Airlines agent went like this:

Passenger hands agent her boarding ticket.

Agent: "Your ticket is for Frankfurt. Can't you read? This flight is to Amsterdam."

Agent thrusts ticket back to customer.

Agent yells out to the waiting gate full of passengers "Read the signs people! You're slowing down the process! This flight is for Amsterdam!"

Agent says to colleague, loudly enough for someone (me) about 15 feet away to hear "Unbelievable! Agent's colleagues laughs, shakes head and says "Idioten" (Obviously, the Dutch word for "idiots" - even for those who don't speak Dutch.)

This entire experience took just 10 seconds. How long do you think the impact will last for all those who witnessed it?

Companies thrive only when their Front Line employees understand the impact that every little gesture has on their customers - and act on that awareness for the betterment of each customer experience.

It won't happen by accident. In these difficult times, none of us can afford to have our customers experience anything less than the positive kinds of surprises that transform them into loyal advocates for our brand. What are you doing to ensure this is consistently happening on purpose?