

FOR MEASURE

Opinion

If we are really serious about becoming a marketing-oriented company, there is some appeal in drawing company organization charts with the customer on top to recognize that customer orders come before anything else. In a real sense, a customer is the most important person in our corporate life.

If we agree with that concept, and I certainly do, then the second-most important person in our lives is probably our HP field salesperson who spends his/her days in getting orders with direct face-to-face selling to customers.

So how do we learn how we can help these two most important people in our lives? I have a simple suggestion.

If you are putting together the meeting agenda for an annual meeting of some functional group, why not put in a one-hour presentation by a field engineer or a field district manager? They could tell you and your people how things are going out in the trenches on our sales front lines.

This means the R&D Managers at their annual meeting might learn some do's and don't's of what customers want. How about Accounting Managers, QA Managers, Personnel Managers, Manufacturing Managers, Purchasing Managers? How about the Board of Directors? Believe me, it is a refreshing experience to hear directly from a sales person. They'll tell you directly and frankly what we're doing right and what we're doing wrong. They'll tell you what customers like about us and where we need improvement.

If you're having an annual meeting of a production section or fab shop team or a PC department, a field sales person will tell you about his/her war stories of marginal quality in hardware or in the equally-important areas of service, parts, delivery promises, etc. You come away from those reports with pride on one hand, but often a bit humbled when you hear about life in front of customers every day.

Even though it seems remote that accounting departments and librarians and even custodians could benefit from a field talk, I believe it is true. For example, you'd be surprised how many good customers I've shown on plant tours who comment on how attractive our shiny floors are. Or in the shops, how clean the areas and machines are. I know our custodial people take great pride in shiny floors and I for one appreciate it. Customers who see clean ship-shape facilities translate that impression into confidence in HP quality.

I wish every person at HP, all 82,000, could learn from a field sales person once a year. If you managers agree, and want to get a name of a possible speaker, just get in touch with your marketing department who will find you a speaker. You'll find the field people enthusiastic and hard-working and you'll get a good boost.

John Minck  
2-21-85



STANFORD PARK DIVISION • P. O. Box 10151, Palo Alto, California 94303-0866

FROM John Minck

DATE February 20, 1985

TO Dick Alberding - 20BX

SUBJECT Cheerleading

We had Doug Schenck of Neely speak to our SPD marketing department retreat recently to recalibrate our field orientation. It was very effective, even to our marketing people who I feel are already pretty customer-sensitive.

But I was reminded that some years ago I suggested to Bob Boniface that we strongly recommend to division and corporate functional meetings that field input be encouraged for all.

I'm submitting this letter to Measure Magazine to encourage all of our employees and managers that field and customer input is crucial. I hope you agree. I hope Brad runs it.

Incidentally Dick, congratulations on your great progress to ExVP. I hope you are keeping your good sense of humor in these times of turmoil.

Best personal regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'John'.

JM:sm  
Attach.