



Revenue Generation Training FY 2008 Retail

**Facilitator Guide
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Retail Operations
Employee Development



Revenue Generation Training FY 2008 Retail

Facilitator Guide

United States Postal Service
Retail Operations
Employee Development
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260-4215

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A Commitment to Diversity

The Postal Service is committed to fostering and achieving a work and learning environment that respects and values a diverse workforce. Valuing and managing diversity in the Postal Service means that we will build an inclusive environment that respects the uniqueness of every individual and encourages the contributions, experiences and perspectives of all people.

It is essential that our work and learning environments be free from discrimination and harassment on any basis.

In our classrooms, on the workroom floor, in casual conversation and in formal meetings, employees and faculty are asked to encourage an open learning environment that is supportive of everyone.

Course materials and lectures, classroom debates and casual conversation should always reflect the commitment to safety and freedom from discrimination, sexual harassment and harassment on any prohibited basis. Instructors and class participants are expected to support this commitment.

If you find course material that is presented in the classroom or in self-instructional format that does not follow these guidelines, please let an instructor know immediately.

If classroom discussions do not support these principles, please point that out to the instructor as well.

Diversity is a source of strength for our organization. Diversity promotes innovation, creativity, productivity and growth, and enables a broadening of existing concepts.

The Postal Service's policy is to value the diversity of our employees, customers and suppliers, and to do what is right for our employees and the communities we serve, thereby ensuring a competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

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Course Overview

Course Description

The Revenue Training for Retail is a two-hour course designed for postmasters who work the window and Retail Associate to 1) identify opportunities to generate additional revenue, 2) practice sales strategies, 3) increase product knowledge, and 4) implement sales skills at the local level. Districts have the option of either conducting classroom training, facilitating individual learning, or a combination of both.

Overall Course Objective

The participant should be able to identify and apply retail strategies and tactics to increase revenue.

Target Population

Postmasters who work the window and Retail Associates.

Time Allocated for Course

- 2 hours

Links with Existing Training

- Retail Standardization Training
- Sales and Service Associate Training
- Rate Case Training

Responsibility for Administering the Course

The District Human Resource Manager and Manager of Operations Program Support will jointly ensure that work hours are allocated and the training takes place as designed.

For classroom delivery (see below) the Postal Employee Development Center (PEDC) or other designated manager is responsible for planning, scheduling, arranging facilities, ordering materials, and ensuring proper training record keeping. The Manager of Training in the PEDC will coordinate with the Manager of Operations Program Support to identify qualified trainers and subject matter specialists and coordinate classroom training.

Individualized learning (see below) is the responsibility of Postmasters and managers at the local level.

A roster of participants shall be maintained at each office. When all the target employees have been trained, the manager/supervisor shall submit a report to the PEDC indicating which pay locations have completed the training. The PEDC will enter records into the National Training Database in accordance with area and district recording procedures.

Option 1: Conducting Classroom Training

Learning Strategy

The course is designed to maximize interaction among learners and practical application of the learning materials. Use the Facilitator Guide, PowerPoint slides, and Participant Guides to conduct classroom training.

Facility, Equipment, and Supply Needs

- Training room with enough space for flipchart activities
- Flipcharts
- Television and DVD player (if DVD is being used)
- Overhead projector or LCD with computer

Location

The Facilitator Guide is built with the assumption that the training will take place at a Postal training facility (for classroom delivery).

Delivering the Training

The designated trainers must be experienced customer service employees who are certified in the Facilitative Instructor Workshop (FIW), Course Number 21258 or 21201.

Duties of the Facilitator

1. Prepare to facilitate.
2. Create a positive learning environment.
3. Manage the learning event.
4. Maintain a roster of who participated in the training at each office.

Option 2: Facilitating Individualized Learning

Learning Strategy

Provide the Participant Guide to the learners for self-study and provide an opportunity for follow-up discussion with learners on the job as needed. Depending on the situation, the material could be delivered as a series of the six 20-minute learning sessions with small groups or as six individual self-study sessions.

It is the responsibility of the manager/facilitator to ensure that the material is covered and that a roster is maintained as a record of who completed the 6 lessons.

Location

Individualized learning should take place at the employee's designated office and it must be completed by employees while on the clock.

Facilitating Individualized Learning

- Ensure that all employees receive a printed copy of the Participant Guide.
- Postmasters / managers should be available to answer questions and reinforce the learning as part of their daily interactions with employees.
- Maintain a roster by pay location of who completed the individualized learning and submit record of training to PEDC.

Module 1: Improving the Total Customer Experience

Objective:

Participants will be able to define their role in improving the total customer experience and retail effectiveness.

Time Allocated for Module:

20 minutes

Instructional Methods:

Presentation

Discussion

Summary:

The Customer's Experience

Elements Affecting the Customer Experience

Tools to Measure the Customer Experience

The Importance of the Customer Experience

Participant Material Used:

Participant Guide

Media Required:

Flipchart and Markers

LCD Projector with Computer

For Further Information

Contact your Postmaster or Station/Branch Manager

Facilitator Notes:

Refer learners to RevPak 1 – Improving the Total Customer Experience.

Have one volunteer read the Introduction and another the Objective.

Begin a discussion by asking the learners to share an experience they had as a customer which was either positive or negative. Split the flipchart page into 2 sections with a line down the center – one to list the positive and one to list the negative experiences. Make sure to ask how they felt as a customer while the situation was unfolding. Ask those who had a positive experience if they returned to do additional business there. Ask those who shared a negative experience if they returned to the business or went to the competition. Keep the flipcharts up during the entire session and refer to it at different points during the entire training to remind the learners of what the customer is feeling during specific situations.

Allow approximately 5 - 7 minutes for this exercise. It is very important for setting the stage for the rest of the training.

The Customer's Experience

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Ask the learners, “What do customers see when they enter the lobby at your office?” Refer them to any specific experience that may have come up in the first exercise.

Read the rest of this paragraph to the learners – emphasize the last sentence.

Elements Affecting the Customer Experience

Wait Time in Line

Have a volunteer read this paragraph. Refer back to the initial exercise if any of the experiences were about wait time.

Ask the learners, “By show of hands, how many of you have ever left a store because of wait time in line? By show of hands, how many of you went to the competition after you left?”

HAZMAT and Aviation Security

Have a volunteer read both paragraphs.

Sales Skills

Have a volunteer read both paragraphs.

Ask the learners, “How many of you remember GIST?” Lead a discussion on why these core customer service skills are important to the total customer experience.

Product Knowledge

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Promotion and Merchandising

Have a volunteer read both paragraphs.

Ask the learners, “What does your lobby look like? Do you know? When is the last time entered through the front door?” Lead a short discussion on why it is important to see the lobby as a customer.

Tools to Measure the Customer Experience

Have a volunteer read the first two paragraphs.

Refer the learners to Job Aid 3 – Mystery Shopper Evaluation Form. Give them time to review.

Refer the learners to Job Aid 1 – Customer Experience Improvement Strategies. Give them time to review.

Have a volunteer read the next two paragraphs.

Refer the learners to Job Aid 2 – the Customer Satisfaction Survey Indicators. Emphasize different sections of the Job Aid with class.

The Importance of the Customer Experience

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph and the “Did you know?”

Refer to any examples in the first exercise where the learners left a store because of poor customer service. Remind them that if they do it as customers, why would we think our customers wouldn't?

Read the last paragraph, emphasizing all of it.

To close the session, ask the questions: “Are there any questions about RevPak 1 – the Total Customer Experience? Are you ready to go back to your office and improve your customers' experience?”

RevPak 1

**Guidelines for Revenue Generation in
the United States Postal Service**

Improving the Total Customer Experience

Introduction

Today, the Postal Service operates in a very competitive environment in the communications and package service industry. We need to understand that customers have many choices that compete with all of our products and services. Viewing the retail environment from the customer's perspective is critical to understanding their expectations and resolving their concerns. Improving the customer's total retail experience requires that you, the Retail Associate, understand your role in influencing the customer experience.

Objective

Participants will be able to define their role in improving the total customer experience and retail effectiveness.

The Customer's Experience

Today's retail customer expects and deserves professional, courteous, and timely service each and every time they visit a Post Office.

Customers expect to see a clean facility and to experience friendly service – these are the first impressions which impact a customer's perception of our company.

What do your customers experience when they enter the lobby at your office? Remember, we are in a competitive environment and if you don't deliver quality customer service, the competition will.



Elements Affecting the Customer Experience

Wait Time in Line

When a customer enters your lobby, they will assess how long it will take to be served. Many customers have confronted a long line, left the Post Office, and mailed an article with a competitor. Regardless of the price differential, in today's hectic world – time is money!

HAZMAT and Aviation Security

It is everyone's responsibility to practice HAZMAT and Aviation Security compliance. Asking the complete HAZMAT question and providing proper information to customers will guarantee the safety and protection of postal employees and customers. It also helps determine if items are packaged and identified properly such as: glass (fragile), fruit (perishable), or liquid (could spill).

Failure to comply with proper HAZMAT and Aviation Security procedures could result in injury to customers or employees or damage to other mail pieces.

Sales Skills

Customers rely on you to assist them with their mailing needs. Incorporating the GIST concept – Greet, Inquire, Suggest, and Thank – will promote a positive experience, repeat customers, and help generate revenue.

Failure to inquire and suggest appropriate products and services could result in unsatisfied customers. Have you ever had a customer who mailed their mortgage payment using First-Class Mail, were charged a late charge because the item didn't arrive on time, and the Retail Associate failed to offer Express Mail? Remember to always promote Express Mail and Priority Mail—these products add best value for customers.

Product Knowledge

Customers count on you to be knowledgeable about the features and benefits of our products and services. You should share information with customers to assist them in making informed decisions concerning their current purchases and future needs. Have you ever had a customer attempt to confirm that a package had been delivered only to discover they had not purchased Delivery Confirmation?

Promotion and Merchandising

Promotion and Merchandising includes the in-store messaging that helps promote our products and services before the customer even reaches the retail counter. Well stocked packaging products supplies and forms will help reduce wait time and improve customer satisfaction.

Have you ever had a customer wait in line because the only place they could get a Priority Mail Flat Rate Box was behind the counter? How about a customer who held up your line because they had to fill out their form at the counter because they were not available in the lobby?

Tools to Measure the Customer Experience

The Mystery Shopper Program, Retail Data Mart (RDM), and Customer Satisfaction Measurement (CSM) help measure the customers' retail experience.

The **Mystery Shopper Program** uses evaluators to provide independent, standardized assessments of how we are performing at the retail window. As customers, they provide their perspective on the level of service they receive at the retail counter. This information provides valuable feedback on ways we can improve the customer experience. ***It should be noted that every major retailer and service company uses a similar type of independent assessment.***

RDM is a database that stores all POS ONE transactions. It can measure the number of packages sold at your window as Express Mail and how many Priority Mail pieces were sold that included Extra Services. It can even provide staffing guidelines to suggest scheduling for the window.

CSM is a survey tool that is sent to random customers asking them to evaluate all aspects of their Postal experience from the retail lobby to the mailbox. Customers are asked to rate their most recent contact at the Post Office which includes several questions that relate to their experience with a Retail Associate.

The Importance of the Customer Experience

Research has also shown that when companies have employees who provide exceptional customer service, they generate higher customer satisfaction. Higher satisfaction means loyal customers and increased revenue.

As a Retail Associate, you impact the total customer experience with every transaction at the window. By taking into consideration all the elements that affect the customer experience, you can help ensure that the needs and expectations of our customers are exceeded. Even a smile adds to improving the total customer experience!

Job Aids

- Customer Experience Improvement Strategies
- CSM Indicators and Mystery Shopper Survey

Other Sources

- Retail Operations Blue Page, Retail Digest and Let's Talk Retail

Customer Experience Improvement Strategies



Wait Time in Line

- See Module 2

HAZMAT and Aviation Security

- Ask all four components of the HAZMAT Question (Does the article contain anything fragile, liquid, perishable, or potentially hazardous?)
- Inspect packages for addresses, markings, and any abnormalities
- Recognize “Anonymous Mail” (previously called Target Mail) procedures
- Ensure required HAZMAT and Aviation Security Signage is posted

Sales Skills

- Wear complete uniform, including name badge -Service begins with image.
- Use G.I.S.T. (Greet, Inquire, Suggest, & Thank) with every transaction.
- Maintain a positive, courteous, and friendly attitude.
- Offer best value products (Express Mail and Priority Mail).
- Offer Extra (Special) Services (Delivery Confirmation, Insurance, etc...).
- Explain features/benefits of products and services.
- Remember to suggest stamps and/or an additional item
- Provide the customer with a receipt at the end of every transaction.

Product Knowledge

- Make sure you request and read the Retail Digest, Let’s Talk Retail, and articles relevant to retail in the Postal Bulletin (PB).
- Explain features and benefits of mail classes and Extra Services.
- Read all POS ONE New Functionality Guides (NFGs) every time there is an update to the POS ONE system.

Promotion and Merchandising

- Ensure ReadyPost Retail Packaging supplies are prominently displayed.
- Provide easy access to complimentary shipping supplies (Express & Priority).
- Make sure all Extra Service forms are stocked in the lobby.
- Ensure Current Point of Purchase signage is displayed

Customer Satisfaction Measurements (CSM)



Customer Satisfaction Measurement (CSM) Indicators

Listed below is the list of questions on the customer satisfaction survey relating to Retail. We've put an asterisk next to the ones that are part of the Residential part of the Retail CSM NPA Index used in Pay for Performance and two asterisks beside those used in the Retail Small Business portion of the Index. We have also indicated whether the questions are asked on the Residential and/or Small Business (Preferred) survey. Where we just indicate a rating question with no scale we use Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor:

- Convenient location of a post office (rating) (Residential and Small Business)
 - Offering convenient ways to buy stamps /postage (rating) (Residential and Small Business)
 - Where do you buy stamps/postage? Mark all methods used. (Residential and Small Business)
 - Which one do you use most often? Options: Postage meter, Permit/Corporate Account (Small Business only), Post office window, Grocery store or other store, Vending machine, Automated Postal Center, Click-N-Ship online, Stamps online, Stamps by Mail, Stamps by Phone, Automated Teller Machine, From carrier (where available).
 - How do you mail packages with the Postal Service? Mark all methods used. (Residential and Small Business)
 - Which one do you use most often? Options: Post office window, Mail collection box, Automated Postal Center, Request carrier pickup online or by phone, Carrier picks up with outgoing mail, Other, Not applicable
 - How many times did you visit a post office for any purpose in the past 30 days? (Residential and Small Business) Options: Not at all, 1-2 times, 3-5 times, 6-10 times, 11 or more times
- Based on your experiences during the past 30 days, please rate the post office you have visited most often on each of the following (rating):
 - Waiting time in line (Residential and Small Business)
 - Convenience of hours (Residential and Small Business)
 - Availability of parking (Residential and Small Business)
 - Staffing of windows during busy times (Residential and Small Business)
 - Clerks were courteous and pleasant (Residential and Small Business) *
 - Clerks worked efficiently and valued your time (Residential and Small Business) * **
 - Clerks provided the information needed to complete your tasks (Residential and Small Business) * **
 - Clerks acted professionally (Residential and Small Business)
 - Signs for products and services provided information you needed (Residential and Small Business)
 - Lobby was well-maintained (Residential and Small Business)
 - Mailing forms were available (Residential and Small Business)
 - Overall rating of the post office you visited most often (Residential and Small Business)
 - Is this post office in the same ZIP Code as where you live/work? (Residential and Small Business) If no, write in the P.O. ZIP Code:
- During your most recent visit to the post office window, how long did you wait in line for a window clerk? (Residential and Small Business) Options:
 - Did not go to window, Less than 1 minute/No wait/No line, 1-3 minutes, 4-5 minutes, 6-10 minutes, 11-15 minutes, 16 minutes or more, Don't know/Can't recall

Mystery Shopper Sample Survey



- During your most recent visit to the post office window, did you need to mail a letter or package? **(Residential and Small Business)** Options: Yes, No If "Yes," ask (Yes, No, Don't Know):
 - Did the clerk ask you questions to find out what you needed? **(Residential + small Business)**
 - Was the clerk attentive during the entire transaction? **(Residential and Small Business)**
 - Did the clerk specifically mention Express Mail or Priority Mail as an option for you? **(Residential and Small Business)**
 - Did the clerk explain or offer special services, such as Insurance, Delivery Confirmation, Certified Mail, etc? **(Residential and Small Business)**
 - Did the clerk offer any additional items to purchase, such as stamps or packaging supplies? **(Residential and Small Business)**
- During your most recent visit to the post office, were the stamp vending machines in working order? **(Residential and Small Business)**
Options (Yes, No): In working order, Stocked appropriately
- During the past 30 days, have you contacted the Postal Service to get information or to report a problem? (Include contacts in person, written, phone, or online.) **(Residential and Small Business)**
Options: Yes, to get information; Yes to report a problem; No
- Thinking of your most recent contact, how did you contact the Postal Service? **(Residential and Small Business)** Options: Telephoned local post office, Telephoned a toll-free number, Written correspondence, E-mail, U.S. Postal Service Web site, Talked in person with an employee at post office, Spoke with carrier
- Thinking again of your most recent contact at the Postal Service on: (rating) **(Residential and Small Business)**:
 - Ability to reach someone who could help
 - Being dealt with in a courteous, professional manner
 - Speed of response * **
 - Obtaining the information or help you needed * **
 - Accuracy of the information * **
- Compared to other delivery service companies, rate the package services provided by the Postal Service on (rating Much Better, Somewhat Better, About the Same, Somewhat Worse, Much Worse, Don't Know) **(Residential and Small Business)**:
 - Professional employees (Residential and Small Business)
 - Easy to contact a representative (Residential and Small Business)
 - Convenient locations (Residential and Small Business)
 - Wait time in line (Residential and Small Business)
 - Offers free packaging supplies (Small Business)
 - Offers convenient payment options (Small Business)



**US Postal Service Mystery Shopper Program
Service Evaluation**

20636 USPS - Hollywood MD

Date: Wednesday, 10/10/2007
Overall Score: 100/100 100.0%

Wait Time in Line			
1	How long was your wait time in line? (minutes:seconds)	00:04	
2	Select the category that includes your wait time. 0:00 - 5:00 - 30 pts. 5:01 - 6:00 - 15 pts. Greater than 6:00 - 0 pts.	0:00 - 5:00	30/30
2a	How many stations were there (including all areas where a register is available)?	3	
2b	What was the highest number of stations staffed from the time you entered the line until completion of the transaction?	2	
2c	Were there any employees assisting customers in the lobby area or from behind the counter prior to customers reaching the counter?	No	
3	When you entered the line, how many customers were in line ahead of you?	0	
3a	When you entered the line, how many customers appeared to be conducting transactions at the counter?	1	
		Wait Time in Line	30/30 100.0%

HazMat			
4	Did the employee ask whether the parcel (item, article) contained anything fragile, liquid, perishable, or potentially hazardous?	Yes	10/10
4a	If Q4 is "NO", which part(s) of the question did the employee miss?	N/A	
		HazMat	10/10 100.0%

Sales Skills			
5	Did the employee greet you pleasantly, make eye contact at the beginning of the transaction, and end the transaction in a pleasant manner?	Yes	2/2
5a	If Q5 is "NO", which part(s) of the question did they miss?	N/A	
6	Was the employee wearing the complete uniform?	Yes	2/2
6a	If Q6 is "NO", the employee was not wearing:	N/A	
7	Did the employee offer you a mail class?	Yes	
7a	Specify the class(es) of mail offered by the employee. (Express OR Priority must be offered to receive credit)		6/6
Express Priority			
8	Did the employee offer any extra service(s)?	Yes	
8a	Specify the extra service(s) offered by the employee. Signature Confirmation AND Insurance OR Delivery Confirmation AND Insurance - 6 pts. Any extra services other than Signature Confirmation AND Insurance OR Delivery Confirmation AND Insurance together - 1 pt. No extra services - 0 pts.		6/6
Delivery Confirmation Insurance			



**US Postal Service Mystery Shopper Program
Service Evaluation**

20636 USPS - Hollywood MD		Date: Wednesday, 10/10/2007	Overall Score: 100/100	100.0%
8c	When you received the insurance form was it the "\$200 Under" form (black and white form)?	Yes		
9	Did the employee suggest any additional items to purchase?	Yes		
9a	Specify the additional items(s) offered by the employee.		4/4	
	Packaging Products Stamps Stationary/Envelopes			
10	Did the employee provide or offer a receipt without you having to ask for one?	Yes	2/2	
11	Was the employee attentive during the entire transaction?	Yes	2/2	
11a	If Q11 is "NO", these problems were noted:	N/A		
		Sales Skills	24/24	100.0%
Product Knowledge				
12	Did the employee explain any features of the class(es) of mail offered?	Yes	5/5	
13	Did the employee explain or offer to explain any features of the extra service(s) offered?	Yes		
13a	Specify the extra service(s) for which features were explained or offered. Delivery Confirmation AND Insurance - 5 pts. Delivery Confirmation by itself or with a service other than Insurance - 2 pts. Insurance by itself or with a service other than Delivery Confirmation - 2 pts. Any extra services other than Delivery Confirmation or Insurance - 1 pt. No extra services - 0 pts.		5/5	
	Delivery Confirmation Insurance			
13b	Please select the inquiry you asked the employee:	Post Office Box Rental		
13c	When asked, did the employee offer the acceptable packaging options for International Shipping?			
13d	When you inquired regarding the benefits of having a Post Office Box, did the employee offer one of the acceptable responses?	Yes		
13e	When asked, did the employee explain the price increase due to dimensional weight pricing?			
13f	Did the retail associate offer packaging advice for future mailings?			
13g	Does your receipt specify the word "Dimensional" under Billable Weight?			
		Product Knowledge	10/10	100.0%
Promotion and Merchandising				
14	Were you able to locate the extra service form you were instructed to find in the lobby PRIOR to being served?	Yes	2/2	
15a	Were ReadyPost retail packaging/shipping supplies prominently displayed?	Yes	2/2	
15b	Were ReadyPost retail packaging/shipping supplies prominently displayed such that a customer would notice them first, prior to the complimentary Express or Priority Mail shipping supplies?	Yes	2/2	

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**US Postal Service Mystery Shopper Program
Service Evaluation**

20636 USPS - Hollywood MD		Date: Wednesday, 10/10/2007
		Overall Score: 100/100 100.0%
16	Were complimentary shipping supplies displayed (Express Mail, Priority Mail)?	Yes 2/2
17	Were all signs and displays professional in appearance, including posting and lettering?	Yes 2/2
17a	If Q17 is "NO", these problems were noted:	N/A
17b	Please specify what signage or display(s) had problems.	N/A
18	Were ALL Continuity menuboards that were present in the office ONLY displayed side-by-side, above or behind the retail counter?	Yes 2/2
18a	If Q18 is "NO", please specify why:	N/A
18b	Were ALL Promotional menuboards that were present in the office ONLY displayed side-by-side, above or behind the retail counter?	Yes 4/4
18c	If Q18b is "NO", please specify why: N/A	
19	Were the POP promotional messaging menuboards for the current time period the ONLY ones displayed?	Yes 8/8
20	Was the interior neat, clean and well maintained?	Yes 2/2
20a	If Q20 is "NO", please explain why:	N/A
21	Was the exterior neat, clean and well maintained?	Yes
21a	If Q21 is "NO", please explain why:	N/A
		Promotion and Merchandising 26/26 100.0%

Evaluation Information	
22	USPS Scenario ID: J1
23	Day of the week shop performed (e.g., Tuesday): Wednesday
24	Time of shop performed (e.g., Morning): Lunch
25	Amount of sale from receipt: 7.60
26	Revenue loss (based on scenario expectation): \$0.00
27	Post office zip code on receipt: 20636
28	Evaluation Sequence: FY08 Q1 - Shop 1

Module 2: Decreasing Wait Time in Line

Objective:

Participants will be able to identify their role in managing customer waiting time in line to improve the customer experience at retail.

Time Allocated for Module:

20 minutes

Instructional Methods:

- Presentation
- Discussion

Summary:

- Ways to Improve Wait Time in Line
- Influencing Customers' Perception of Wait Time
- Educating Customers on Alternate Access
- RA's Role in Managing WTIL

Participant Material Used:

- Participant Guide
- Job Aids: Ways to Improve Wait Time in Line, Alternate Access Channels

Media Required:

- Flipchart
- LCD Projector with Computer
- Markers

For Further Information

- Contact your Postmaster or Station/Branch Manager.

Facilitator Notes:

Refer learners to RevPak 2 – Decreasing Wait Time in Line.

Have a volunteer read the Introduction.

Refer the learners to the first exercise, remind them of any examples where wait time in line was the reason for the negative customer experience.

If there were no examples that you could use, ask the learners, “Can you share a situation where you chose saving time over saving money and went elsewhere for faster service?”

Have a volunteer read the Objective.

Improving Wait Time in Line

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Influencing the Customers’ Perception of Wait Time

Ask the learners, “What can you do as a Retail Associate to positively influence the customers’ perception of wait time in line?”

Have a volunteer list the responses on the Flipchart.

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Refer to the Flipchart to see if bulleted items were listed, have a volunteer read any that were missed.

Demonstrate a Sense of Urgency

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Ask the learners, “What does this mean to you?”

Make Eye Contact with the Customer

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Acknowledge Customer’s Patience

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Follow G.I.S.T

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Maintain a Professional and Attractive Lobby Atmosphere

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Educating Customers About Alternate Access

Read the first paragraph and allow for response from learners.

Have a volunteer list the alternate access options on a Flipchart.

Have a volunteer read the second paragraph.

Recommending Alternate Access to Meet Customers' Needs

Read the first paragraph.

Ask the learners, "Can you give some examples of a specific alternate access channel that would meet a specific customer's needs?"

Have a different volunteer read each of the bulleted items.

RAs Role in Managing WTIL

Have a volunteer read the first and second paragraph.

Ask the learners, "Is there anything else you can do as a Retail Associate to help manage the long lines in your lobby?"

Have a volunteer use the flipchart to record the responses.

Refer to Job Aid entitled, "Ways to Improve Wait Time in Line."

Have a different volunteer read each of the bullets.

Invite discussion or comment on any of the items with the intention of bringing the learners back to THEIR responsibility concerning the item.

Read the last paragraph, emphasizing all of it.

To close the session, ask the questions: "Are there any questions about RevPak 2 – Decreasing Wait Time in Line?"

RevPak 2

Guidelines for Revenue Generation in
the United States Postal Service

Introduction

In today's fast paced world customers are always looking for quick, easy and convenient services. Long waits in lines are frustrating and can result in losing customers to the competition. Many customers will choose saving time over saving money when they can get faster service elsewhere. It is our responsibility to ensure the customer experience at the Post Office is a positive one.

Objective

Participants will be able to identify their role in managing customer waiting time in line to improve the customer experience at retail.

Improving Wait Time in Line

As a Retail Associate you have undoubtedly seen lines in your lobby that make both customers and employees uncomfortable. Stop and think about what is within your control. Is there anything you as a Retail Associate can do to help manage the long lines in your lobby?

Influencing Customers' Perception of Wait Time

When all measures to reduce the wait time have been utilized there are several things that can be done to influence the perception of customers' wait time. Some of these ideas include:

- Demonstrating a sense of urgency
- Making eye contact with the customer
- Acknowledging the customer's patience

Decreasing Wait Time in Line (WTIL)



- Following G.I.S.T.
- Maintaining a professional, pleasant, and customer friendly atmosphere

Demonstrate a Sense of Urgency

Studies have shown that customers are willing to wait in line for a reasonable amount of time if they can see Retail Associates demonstrating a sense of urgency.

Make Eye Contact with the Customer

Make eye contact and give customers your undivided attention while providing them with professional and efficient service. Your desire to provide quality service and to meet their mailing needs is demonstrated by you actively engaging and acknowledging them.

Acknowledge Customer's Patience

It is important to acknowledge the customer's wait time in line and to thank them for their patience. Emphasize with the customer.

Follow G.I.S.T.

By greeting, inquiring, suggesting, and thanking customers, you let them know how much you care and appreciate their business. Providing a pleasant customer experience for customers will keep them satisfied and loyal.

Maintain a Professional and Attractive Lobby Atmosphere

Your lobby is sometimes the only visible image customers have of the Postal Service. The atmosphere in your lobby which includes POP, stocked vending, supplies, cleanliness etc. has the ability to positively influence the customer experience.

Educating Customers about Alternate Access

Did you know that there are other ways for our customers to access postal products and services? What are they; where are they, and how do they reduce WTIL and improve the customer experience?

Alternate Access Channels are a means for customers to obtain products and services when and where it is convenient for them. You have an opportunity to educate your customers on what Alternate Access Channel options would best meet their needs. Whether they are a stay at home parent, a customer with a disability, or a business owner; customers are looking for easier ways to access our products. You can help identify these customers and provide them with information that will not only help them but will also increase revenue for the Postal Service.

Recommending Alternate Access to Meet Customers' Needs

Can you identify which Alternate Access Channels would meet your customers' needs? Remember, you have to match the right Alternate Access Channel with the right customer.

Examples of recommending Alternate Access Channels to meet customer needs are:

- **Stamps by Mail** - for homebound customers or small businesses

- **Automated Postal Centers (APC)** - to assist customers in the lobby
- **USPS.com and Carrier Pickup**– for small and home based business customers and household customers with computers
- **Stamps on Consignment** – all customers who purchase stamps
- **Contact Postal Units (CPU)** – all customers who ship packages

RA's Role in Managing WTIL

In addition to providing a professional and pleasant environment and recommending Alternate Access Channels to customers who will benefit, there are additional things within a Retail Associate's control to help manage the Waiting Time in Line.

Some of these are: organize your work station and have it fully stocked, be prepared before opening your window, and know when to call for additional help. If a customer is not prepared when they reach the window, have the customer step aside to complete forms, wait on the next customer, and immediately wait on them once their forms are complete.

Managing the line before it becomes too long, is the secret to keeping the wait time at 5 minutes or less. Anticipating customer transactions before they reach the retail counter can assist in determining how long a transaction may take. Example: Do they have multiple packages, a passport application in their hand, or a PS 3849? Asking who is in line for a pickup only will also help keep non-revenue transactions off the window.

Let's all make doing business with the Postal Service a great customer experience by offering courteous and professional service, suggesting Alternate Access Channels, and managing the Wait Time in Line . It's good for the customer, and it's good for our business!

Job Aids

- Ways to Improve Wait Time in Line
- Alternate Access Channels

Other Sources

- www.usps.com

Ways to Improve Wait Time in Line



PROFESSIONAL

- Report to work prepared (complete uniform-keys-name badge etc)
- Treat every customer the way *you* want to be treated as a customer
- Make customers your Number #1 priority.

WORK AREA

- Work efficiently- Organize your work station - know where your supplies are and have them at arms length.

OPENING-CLOSING UNIT

- Log into POS first so that it will be ready for the first transaction
- Open- prepare window for the next business day-check stock levels both retail floor and individual-hang sacks- stock lobby-change dates (round dater etc...). Be prepared!

HELPING REDUCE WAIT TIME IN LINE

- Call for assistance when a customer has issues not related to window services, when a you see there are several customers that have 3849's, or could use someone in lobby to assist
- Use buzzer system to call for assistance (if you don't have one request/suggest one from Manager, if needed)
- If possible have a dedicated line when needed for Passports, Stamps Only, etc
- When possible divert non revenue transactions to the Dutch door or to a clerk from the back office (Parcel Pickup, Hold Mail, Accountable, etc...)
- Encourage customers to use alternate access when appropriate
- Don't leave the window and don't go to lunch or break if someone is already on lunch or break, especially during peak times (unless authorized). Follow the schedule!
- Inform customers with multiple packages about Carrier Pickup and usps.com
- Hold mail-suggest that customers use option A to resume normal delivery through their carrier
- Remind customers that they can complete their Hold Mail Request online at usps.com
- Trips to the bank, answering phones, and verifying 1412 should be done by management, an employee from the back office, or other designated employee if possible.
- Lead Sales and Service Associates should be maximized in the retail operation, including working the retail window

RETAIL LOBBY

- Check lobby periodically to ensure forms and displays are well stocked-making sure packaging products and shipping supplies are available.
- Ensure vending/APC machines are stocked and working properly, if not inform manager/supervisor
- Ensure all current Retail Standardization signage and displays are posted and properly placed

MANAGING THE TRANSACTION

- Don't hold up the line by allowing customers to stand at your counter preparing mailings or completing forms - politely ask them to step aside until they are ready
- Ensure you are utilizing POS ONE correctly by entering all non-revenue transactions

Alternate Access Channels



Automated Postal Center (APC)

The Automated Postal Center (APC) provides customers with convenient access to postal services using debit/credit cards. Customers can buy stamps and mail packages, letters, and flats with special services 24 hours a day, seven days a week at most locations.

Carrier Pickup Services

Carrier Pickup service gives the customer the ability to request a pickup using usps.com. This is cost efficient for the customer as well as the Postal Service.

Click-N-Ship Services

With Click-N-Ship, customers can print labels, pay for postage, order shipping supplies, and request free Carrier Pickup from a home or office computer. Delivery Confirmation is free with this service.

Contract Postal Units (CPU)

A CPU is a retail facility that is located inside a retail establishment and operated by the retailer's employees.

Complimentary Shipping Supplies

Usps.com offers the convenience of ordering complimentary shipping supplies which are shipped to the customer's home or business in days.

CardStore Print and Mail Service

CardStore offers a convenient way for you to create and send postcards and letters from a computer. Customers can select from designed cards, newsletters, and postcards---

or personalize their choice with customized pictures. An option is also given to send gift cards from a large selection of retailers.

Other On-line Postage Avenues

E-Bay, Stamps.com, Endicia.com, and Shipstream Manager are USPS approved vendors and are listed on the usps.com web page. These vendors allow customers to print USPS shipping labels with postage from their desktop.

Post Office Express Outlets

A Post Office Express (POE) is a small postal retail facility located within a retail store, typically a large, busy supermarket. This outlet meets the needs of today's multitasking customer.

Stamp by Consignment

Stamps by Consignment allow local retail customers to sell stamps as a customer convenience.

Stamps by Mail

Stamps by Mail are a process for ordering stamps via mail using a convenient return brochure.

Stamps by Phone

Stamps by Phone provide customers with a toll-free number (1-800-STAMP24) through which to order stamps using a credit card.

Approved Shippers

There are over 1,400 private Mailing and Packaging Centers approved to ship USPS products.

Module 3: HAZMAT and Aviation Security

Objective:

Participants will be able to describe their responsibility in protecting the customers and employees of the US Postal Service by adhering to HAZMAT and Aviation Security requirements.

Time Allocated for Module:

20 minutes

Instructional Methods:

- Presentation
- Discussion

Summary:

- Defining HAZMAT and Aviation Security Requirements
- What do we do when the customer responds
- How does HAZMAT and Aviation Security Requirements affect our customers?

Participant Material Used:

- Participant Guide

Media Required:

- Flipchart and Markers
- LCD Projector with Computer

For Further Information

- WWW.USPS.COM
- Contact your local Postmaster or Station Manager.

Facilitator Notes:

Refer learners to RevPak 3 – HAZMAT and Aviation Security.

Have a volunteer read the Introduction.

Reread the last paragraph to emphasize this point.

Have a volunteer read the Objective

Defining HAZMAT and Aviation Security Requirements

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Have a volunteer read each of the bulleted items.

What am I looking for?

Ask the learners, “What are you looking for when you do the initial examination of the package?”

Have a volunteer read each of the bulleted items.

Have a volunteer read the last paragraph.

What do we do when the customer responds?

Tell the learners, “Many times we hear from retail associates that they do not ask the HAZMAT question because we do not know what to do if the customer says yes!”

Then ask, “Does that sound familiar to anyone here?”

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

The customer says, “I don’t know” or refuses to answer.

Ask the learners, “What do you do when the customer says I don’t know or refuses to answer?” Allow for a few responses.

Have a volunteer read the paragraph.

The customer says, “I am not sure if the contents are hazardous or not.”

Ask the learners, “What do you do when the customer says I’m not sure if the contents are hazardous or not?” Allow for a few responses.

Have a volunteer read the paragraph.

The customer says, “No”.

Ask the learners, “What do you do when the customer says no?” Allow for a few responses.

Have a volunteer read the paragraph.

The customer says, “Yes, the parcel contains HAZMAT”.

Ask the learners, “What do you do when the customer says yes, the parcel contains HAZMAT?” Allow for a few responses.

Have a volunteer read the paragraph.

The mailer is not present at the time of collection.

Ask the learners, “What do you do when the customer is not present at the time of mailing?” Allow for a few responses.

Have a different volunteer read each paragraph.

Ask the learners, “Did you know that anonymous mail has been changed from 16 oz to 13 oz?”

How does HAZMAT and Aviation Security impact our customers?

Ask the learners, “How do you think HAZMAT and Aviation Security impacts our customers?” Allow for a few responses.

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Ask learners, “Can you share any specific instance where customers have been negatively impacted because of HAZMAT or Aviation Security?”

Have a different volunteer read the bullets.

Read last paragraph. Review Job Aids and discuss if time permits.

RevPak 3

Guidelines for Revenue Generation in
the United States Postal Service

HAZMAT and Aviation Security

Introduction

The Postal Service mailing standards permit limited types and quantities of hazardous materials (HAZMAT) to be put into the mailstream. However, even limited types and quantities could be potentially hazardous if not identified, accepted, and handled properly. You have an important role in ensuring you enhance the customer experience by accepting this type of mail correctly.

When you put a Postal Validation Indicia (PVI) label on a parcel it is your signature stating you have done everything within your realm of responsibility to assure the safety of your co-workers and our customers nationwide.

Objective

Participants will be able to describe their responsibility in protecting the customers and employees of the United States Postal Service by adhering to HAZMAT and Aviation Security requirements.

Defining HAZMAT and Aviation Security Requirements

The Retail Associate plays an important role in keeping our customers and employees safe when accepting parcels or bulky large envelopes that could contain HAZMAT. There are three easy steps to ensure the safe acceptance of these materials.

- 1) Conduct a thorough examination of the mailpiece. Check the delivery and return address to ensure both are complete and conduct a visual inspection.



- 2) Make sure there are no prohibitive markings or labels on the package.
- 3) Ask, the HAZMAT question “**Does the parcel (item, article) contain anything liquid, fragile, perishable or potentially hazardous?**” This question has to be asked in its entirety for every package and bulky large envelope that could contain hazardous material. It also helps determine if items are packaged and identified properly such as: glass (fragile), fruit (perishable), or liquid (could spill). It only takes one hazardous item to get into the mail stream to harm someone.
Remembering to ask the question could save a life.

What am I looking for?

When you do the initial examination of the package here are some items to watch for:

- Look at the destination and return address. Watch for addressing to or from laboratories, hospitals, medical facilities, universities and chemical companies which could all suggest hazardous material.

- Watch for stains or leaks on the package.
- Look for heavily taped or shrink wrapped packages.
- Always look for markings on the package that may suggest what is inside is non-mailable such as alcohol or bleach. Some boxes may not contain what is described; the customer may have picked up a box from a grocery store to ship their item. But if the box has these markings the package can not be accepted. If the customer states that this is the case then the customer has to remove or obliterate the markings before you can accept the package. Postal employees are prohibited from removing or marking out any of these labels or markings from customers packages.

International packages must have the customs declarations forms filled out properly. The description of contents portion has to be specific. It can not simply state gifts or other random terms. Watch here for descriptions such as camping gear, cleaning supplies or cosmetics. Items in these categories might be hazardous or non-mailable.

What do we do when the customer responds?

Once you ask the complete HAZMAT question, the customer's response determines your next move.

The customer says, "I don't know" or refuses to answer.

Without this information, the mailpiece cannot be accepted. Hand the customer Notice 107, *Let's Keep the Mail Safe* and politely explain that this information is necessary to determine mailability. Politely explain to the customer that if an incident occurs due to a hazardous material included in their package, they could be held responsible.

The customer says, "I am not sure if the contents are hazardous or not".

The customer must state the contents and you must consult section 600 of the DMM, Publication 52 or Poster 138 to determine the mailability of the parcel and the required

packaging, labeling, documentation, and restrictions. If mailable, and it is packaged and labeled correctly, accept the mail piece and place it in a separate container with the HAZMAT placard to keep it excluded from the regular mail stream. If the parcel is determined to contain non-mailable items, the parcel must not be accepted under any circumstances.

The customer says, "No."

Accept the item for mailing and continue with the retail transaction by offering to mail the parcel by Express Mail or Priority Mail.

The customer says, "Yes, the parcel contains HAZMAT."

Customer must then state the contents. Again, refer to section 600 of the DMM, Publication 52 or Poster 138 to determine the mailability of the material and the required packaging, labeling, documentation, and restrictions. If the customer fails to show that the matter is mailable as packaged, the Retail Associate must refuse to accept the article and must explain the reasons to the customer. If the parcel is determined to contain non-mailable items, the parcel must not be accepted under any circumstances.

The customer is not present (lobby drop or left by customer)

You must still perform visual inspection to ensure that it does not exhibit any HAZMAT characteristics and to verify that all other requirements for mailing are met.

If all requirements for mailing are met and the package does not qualify as "Anonymous Mail", accept the item for mailing. If the parcel shows signs of hazardous material but it cannot be verified that it contains mailable HAZMAT, it must not be accepted. Leave a copy of Notice 128 with the local Postmaster's contact information with the mail piece.

In regards to Aviation Security if a package bearing stamps only that weighs 13 oz or more is collected from a lobby drop box or is left by a customer at the retail counter without handing it to a Retail Associate this mail would also be

returned to the sender. It is “Anonymous Mail” and is treated as hazardous material for the same reasons as the other packages. We can not verify who sent it or what is inside the package. The item is returned to protect U S Postal employees and customers from physical harm or worse.

How does HAZMAT and Aviation Security impact our customers?

Improperly accepted or undeclared HAZMAT materials could have a very negative impact on our customers.

- If an improperly packaged parcel containing a liquid were to break open during processing, other important packages could be ruined.
- If a mailpiece containing a glass item is not properly packaged and the item breaks, the customer could be injured when they open the package.
- If an office is closed for any time period because of a suspicious powder spill, our customers’ mail will be delayed.
- If a package is accepted with markings that indicate hazardous material it would be returned to the customer non-mailable whether or not the package contained the hazardous material. This is also a delay of the customer’s mail. It is an inconvenience to the customer and very costly to the U S Postal Service.

The most important reason to follow these guidelines is you and I. We must work together to keep these harmful and deadly substances out of the mail stream to protect each other as well as our customers.

Job Aids

- Hazardous Materials Warning Labels
- Customer’s Responsibilities from Notice 107
- “OLD” Markings and Labels
- Hazard Classes and Mailability Summary
- New Aviation Security Requirements

Other Sources

- Publications: ASM 223; DMM 600; Pub 52
 - Policy Documents
 - Videos
 - On-the-job training
 - Reference documents
 - Your District Homeland Security Coordinator
- http://blue.usps.gov/site/wcm/connect/network_operations/logistics_and_processing/ams

Hazardous Materials Warning Labels

(From Notice 107)



Hazardous Materials Warning Labels

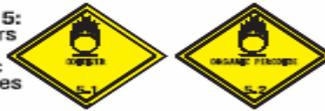
Material or packaging bearing, or required to bear, any of the following U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) warning labels is prohibited or potentially prohibited.

Prohibited

CLASS 1:
Explosives



CLASS 5:
Oxidizers
and
Organic
Peroxides



CLASS 2:
Gases



CLASS 6:
Poisonous
and
Etiologic
Materials



CLASS 3:
Flammable
Liquids



CLASS 7:
Radioactive
Materials



CLASS 4:
Flammable Solids,
Spontaneously
Combustible
Materials, and
Materials
That Are
Dangerous
When Wet



CLASS 8:
Corrosives



CLASS 9:
Miscellaneous
Hazardous
Materials



Potentially Prohibited



Customers Responsibilities

(From Notice 107)



Ask Before You Mail

- Please check with local Postal Service officials before attempting to mail any of the items noted in this publication. Remember, it is your responsibility to ensure that articles you present for mailing comply with all Postal Service regulations.
- Improper mailing of hazardous material may subject you to civil and/or criminal liability.
- Pricing and Classification
- Service Center
- Additional information can be obtained from your local Post Office and the Pricing and Classification Service Center (PCSC) noted below:

NEW YORK PCSC
90 CHURCH ST STE 3100
NEW YORK NY 10007-2951
212-330-5300

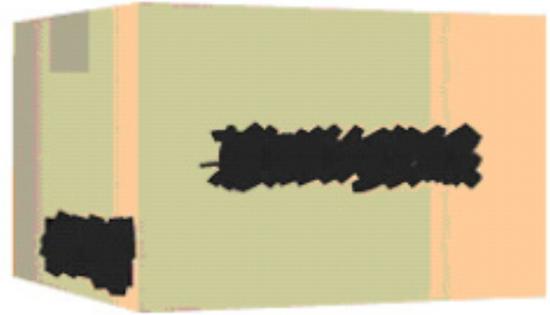
“OLD” Markings and Labels



Reused packaging, boxes, and containers that bear inapplicable labels or markings associated with hazardous, prohibited, or restricted materials are prohibited in the mailstream, unless the labels or markings have been removed or completely obliterated. If the labels or markings can still be read or identified, they are not sufficiently obliterated.



Incorrect Procedure



Correct Procedure

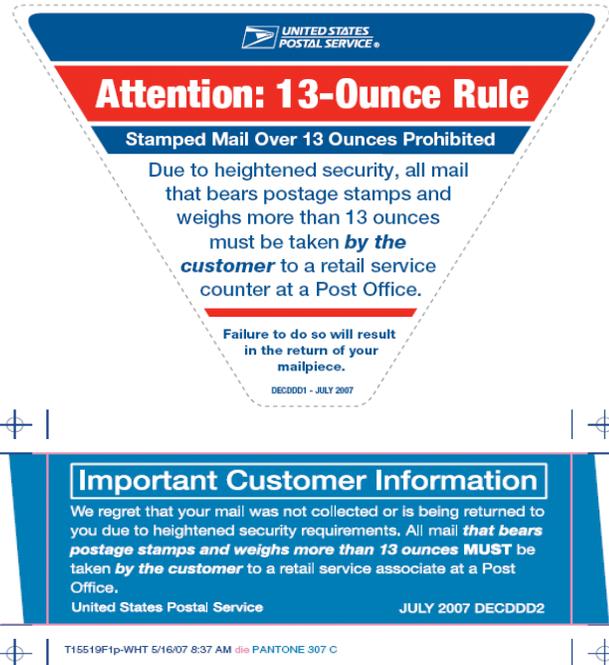
It is prohibited for any United States Postal Service employee to alter these markings and labels on a customer's package. The customer must do these themselves before the package can be accepted for mailing.

Hazard Classes and Mailability Summary



CLASS	HAZARD CLASS NAME AND DIVISION	TRANSPORTATION METHOD		
		Domestic Mail Air Transportation	Domestic Mail Surface Transportation	International Mail
1	Explosives Division - 1.1 Mass Explosive Hazard 1.2 Projection Hazard 1.3 Fire Hazard and/or Minor Blast/Minor Projection Hazard 1.4 Minor Blast Hazard 1.5 Very Insensitive With Mass Explosion Hazard 1.6 Extremely Insensitive With No Mass Explosion Hazard	Prohibited	Prohibited except with written permission as allowed in 10.11.2	Prohibited
2	Gases Division - 2.1 Flammable Gases 2.2 Nonflammable, Nontoxic Gases 2.3 Toxic Gases	<i>Division 2.1 and 2.3:</i> Prohibited. <i>Division 2.2:</i> Only ORM-D material per 10.12.2	<i>Divisions 2.1 and 2.2:</i> Only ORM-D material per 10.12.2 . <i>Division 2.3:</i> Prohibited	Prohibited
3	Flammable and Combustible Liquids	<i>Flammable liquids:</i> Prohibited. <i>Combustibles:</i> Only ORM-D material per 10.13.3	<i>Flammable liquids:</i> Only ORM-D material per 10.13.2 . <i>Combustibles:</i> Only ORM-D material per 10.13.3	Prohibited
4	Flammable Solids Division - 4.1 Flammable Solids 4.2 Spontaneously Combustible 4.3 Dangerous When Wet	Prohibited	Only ORM-D material per 10.14.2	Prohibited
5	Oxidizing Substances, Organic Peroxides Division - 5.1 Oxidizing Substances 5.2 Organic Peroxides	Only ORM-D material per 10.15.2	Only ORM-D material per 10.15.2	Prohibited
6	Toxic Substances and Infectious Substances Division - 6.1 Toxic Substances 6.2 Infectious Substances	<i>Division 6.1:</i> Only ORM-D material per 10.16.2 . <i>Division 6.2:</i> Only per 10.17	<i>Division 6.1:</i> Only ORM-D material per 10.16.2 . <i>Division 6.2:</i> Only per 10.17	<i>Division 6.1:</i> Prohibited. <i>Division 6.2:</i> Only mailable per IMM 135
7	Radioactive Materials	Prohibited	Only in limits per 9.0 and Publication 52	Only mailable in limits per IMM 135
8	Corrosives	Only ORM-D material per 10.19.2	Only ORM-D material per 10.19.2	Prohibited
9	Miscellaneous Hazardous Materials	Only ORM-D material per 10.20	Only ORM-D material per 10.20	Prohibited, except magnetized materials per IMM 136

New Aviation Security Requirements



- Any mail bearing only postage stamps as postage and weighing over 13 ounces must be presented to the employee at a postal retail service counter by the customer.
- Any mail bearing only postage stamps as postage and weighing over 13 ounces deposited in a collection box or lobby drop will be returned to the customer with label DDD2 (July 2007 edition) applied.
- Any mail bearing only postage stamps as postage and weighing over 13 ounces that has been left in a customer's mailbox or at a business's point of pickup will not be picked up. Instead, decal DDD2 (July 2007 edition) will be applied and the piece will be returned to the customer's mailbox. Note: The DDD2 label should be placed over the destination address, city, state, and ZIP, leaving the addressee's name visible.
- Any mail bearing only postage stamps as postage and weighing over 13 ounces presented to the carrier by the customer will be refused. The carrier will advise the customer that these pieces must be presented to an employee at a retail service counter and the customer may use electronic postage if residential pick up is desired and or provide a label DDD2 (July 2007 edition).
- Customer service and mail processing facilities will need to stock AVSEC Units with new label DDD2 (see file above) prior to program change.
- All collection boxes, lobby drops and APCs will need old decal DDD1 removed and new decal DDD1 13 Ounce Rule applied.
- IMM and DMM relevant notations will be updated.
- AVSEC Clearance Stamps are being issued to small offices currently without means of applying proof of proper postal acceptance (PVI or meter strip).
- There will be no Known Customer mail flow.
- Note: Rural carriers will continue to be allowed to accept packages without postage along with money for postage as is done today. However, the rural carrier must take the piece to the retail window for finalization of the retail transaction and application of a PVI, meter strip or AVSEC Clearance Stamp to make the mail piece "identifiable".

Module 4: Improving Sales Skills

Objective:

The participant will be able to enhance their Sales Skills by practicing the GIST principles and utilizing the “Perfect Transaction”.

Time Allocated for Module:

20 minutes

Instructional Methods:

- Presentation
- Discussion

Summary:

- Greeting
- Inquiring
- Suggesting
- Thanking
- Providing a Receipt
- The Perfect Transaction

Participant Material Used:

- Participant Guide
- Job Aid: Perfect Transaction, Best Value, Sales Skills

Media Required:

- Flipchart and Markers
- LCD Projector with Computer

For Further Information

- Contact your Postmaster or Station/Branch Manager.

Facilitator Notes:

Refer learners to RevPak 4 – Improving Sales Skills.

Have two volunteers read the Introduction and the Objective.

Greeting

Have a volunteer read this paragraph. Ask the learners, “How do you personalize your greeting?”

Promote discussion based on the responses to the initial exercise – “How does it feel when the person waiting on you isn’t being attentive? – Does it make for a positive customer experience?”

Inquiring

Have a volunteer read this paragraph. Ask the learners, “Are you one of the folks that think you know what your customer needs?”

Promote discussion by asking the following question: “Can anyone give an example of a repeat customer that required a different service than what they routinely used?” Give time for participants to respond.

Suggesting

Have a volunteer read this paragraph. Remind the learners that our customers rely on Retail Associates to offer the appropriate products and services to meet their mailing needs.

Offering Premier Products

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Ask the learners, “Did you know that the Postal Service was first to introduce guaranteed overnight service (Express Mail)? How does it make you feel that customers don’t use the correct name of our Express Mail service but refer to it as FedEx it?”

Have a volunteer read the second paragraph.

Offering Extra Services

Have a volunteer read the first three sentences.

Ask the learners, “Have you ever had a customer who assumed insurance was included in their package price?” Provide specific examples of how the customer was impacted by not purchasing insurance.

Have another volunteer read the rest of the paragraph.

Emphasize the importance of always offering Delivery Confirmation and insurance-Extra Services that offer best value to the customer.

Offering Additional Products

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Ask the learners, “What additional products do you normally offer? Is there a specific time that you offer a specific product?”

Example: I always offer a new ReadyPost product when someone mails one. I always offer Disney OLRP to anyone who comes in with children.

Have a volunteer read the next two paragraphs.

Thanking

Have a volunteer read the first two sentences.

Invite discussion. Refer to first exercise on the learner’s experience as customers if anyone used this as an example of a negative experience. Read and emphasize the rest of the paragraph.

Providing the Customer a Receipt

Have a learner read the paragraph.

The Perfect Transaction

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph. Refer the learner to Job Aid, The Perfect Transaction.

Emphasize the text box at the bottom. While every transaction may be different and Retail Associates have the flexibility based on individual style and transaction, the Perfect Transaction serves as a guide to ensure customers are offered the maximum value during a package transaction. Review and discuss Job Aids. To close the Module, ask the learners: “Are there any questions on Improving Sales Skills?”

RevPak 4

**Guidelines for Revenue Generation in
the United States Postal Service**

Improving Sales Skills

Introduction

You can improve the customer's experience at retail by practicing the principles of GIST; Greet, Inquire, Suggest and Thank. By following these principles you can create the "Perfect Transaction" with each customer every time, every day.

Objective

The participant will be able to enhance their Sales Skills by practicing the GIST principles and utilizing the "Perfect Transaction".

Greeting

How you greet your customer sets the tone for the entire transaction. A pleasant greeting and eye contact encourages open communication with your customer. Being attentive throughout the entire transaction tells your customer you value their business. A Retail Associate in complete uniform communicates trust in your ability to provide reliable service in a professional manner.

Inquiring

How often have you ever heard or thought, "I know what my customer needs"? However, customers' needs change every day. We cannot afford to assume that what they needed yesterday will be the same today. It is important to communicate with each customer and carefully listen to what they say.

Suggesting

It is your responsibility to offer options that would best meet your customers' mailing needs. Promoting our premier products and services is one of the best ways to ensure customer satisfaction while offering excellent value.



Offering Premier Products

Did you know the Postal Service introduced Express Mail as a new class of mail in 1977? The service became so popular competitors emerged and began selling overnight service. They recognized the value of the product and became successful companies because of it. Do we recognize the value of our premier products and offer them to our customers? Express Mail's features and benefits combined with exceptional performance have sold our customers on this excellent service.

Express and Priority products generate a much higher contribution per piece than any other domestic package services. Premier products equal better service which equates to satisfied customers who will return and conduct future mailings. *Remember, the lowest cost is not always the best value for our customers!*

Offering Extra Services

After offering our premier products by name you should offer extra services such as Insurance with Delivery Confirmation or Signature Confirmation. Delivery Confirmation is an inexpensive user friendly convenience that allows a customer to verify delivery.

Insurance provides the customer protection against loss or damage. Have you ever had a customer who assumed Insurance was included in the postage? There is nothing worse than a customer blaming you for not offering Insurance and Delivery Confirmation on a parcel that has been lost or damaged.

Our customers count on us to protect their mail. So, don't forget to offer the customer Extra Services. If you offer every customer who mails a package Insurance and Delivery Confirmation you will be offering them special services that provide peace of mind.

Offering Additional Products

Always take the opportunity to offer your customers stamps and other additional products before they leave. Have you ever had a customer thank you for reminding them to purchase stamps while they were in your office? In today's world customers are often in a hurry and may not be thinking about other products or services they might need. It is our responsibility to offer customers additional products to ensure they get everything they need during their visit.

Packaging products are available in most retail lobbies. Let's make sure when the customer thinks about packaging products they think about the Postal Service!

Have you ever thought of suggesting on-line services available through www.usps.com as an additional product? Customers understand the tremendous value of on-line services and they need you to inform them of their availability.

Thanking

Have you ever been in a retail establishment where they didn't thank you for your business? How would you feel about going back?

It is important our customers know how much we appreciate their business. Remember, repeat customers are directly related to them being satisfied customers. Satisfied customers become loyal customers who will conduct future mailings with the Postal Service which increases revenue.

Providing the Customer a Receipt

One of best ways to improve the customer experience is to provide them with a receipt. A receipt is important to customers because it is a record of their transactions. The receipt may also be important to customers if needed to process a claim or receive reimbursement from their employer. Providing a receipt is good for business. Receipts build confidence and trust, provide information about USPS products and services, and help generate revenue.

The Perfect Transaction

You have the opportunity to create a relationship with each customer. While your retail transaction and your individual style may vary from other Retail Associates, you should interact with customers based on the transaction occurring at the time. The customer in front of you is the most important one. Always remember, you never get a second chance to make a first impression.

A job aid titled *The Perfect Transaction* uses the GIST concept to ensure customers are offered maximum value during package transactions.

Job Aids

- Sales Skills
- The Perfect Transaction

Other Sources

- Pub 209 Handbook for Retail Operations
- www.usps.com
- Blue page at Marketing-Retail

Sales Skills



Things to Remember:

- Greet Your Customers Pleasantly.
- Make eye contact throughout the transaction.
- Remain attentive during the entire transaction.
- Be professional; wear complete uniform to include name tag.
- Inquire: How can I assist you today?
- Offer Express and Priority by name and explain service standards.
- Offer Extra Services by name and explain the features and benefits of each service.
- Offer Delivery Confirmation and Insurance with every package transaction.
- Suggest additional items for purchase.
- ALWAYS Provide a receipt.

“The Perfect Transaction”



1. GREET customer pleasantly and make EYE CONTACT

Be attentive to the customer throughout the entire transaction. Give the customer your undivided attention.

2. Always ask the customer the four components HAZMAT question for packages, bulky flats, or suspicious mail pieces.

“Does this package contain anything fragile, liquid, perishable or potentially hazardous?”

3. Offer Express Mail by name stating the service standards

“We guarantee delivery tomorrow (or second day) nationwide with Express Mail for (current rate) or your money back and this includes (current rate) worth of insurance. You’ll also be able to track your article using usps.com or our 1-800 number”. (Pause and wait for the customer to respond).

“We have Priority Mail that should arrive in 2-3 days for (current rate).

(EXPRESS AND PRIORITY MAIL ARE THE PREFERRED SERVICES THAT USUALLY OFFER THE CUSTOMER THE BEST VALUE.)

When you offer Parcel Post or another Package Service option, explain the product’s features. “We do have Parcel Post, which can take up to 7-10 days for delivery and return postage is not included. Packages that can’t be delivered for any reason will be returned postage due.”

4. Offer both Insurance and Delivery Confirmation by name explaining the features of each.

“How much insurance would you like to purchase to protect your package against loss or damage?”

“Will you be purchasing Delivery Confirmation to confirm delivery of your package? Delivery Confirmation allows you to go online or call a 1-800 number to find out when your package has been delivered.” (Point out web site and 1-800 number on receipt)

5. Offer a specific additional product for purchase.

“Do you need STAMPS or (select one or more of the following: Envelopes, Packaging Products, Official Licensed Retail Products, or use product pairing, etc.) today?”

6. Always provide the customer with a receipt.

End the transaction in a pleasant manner by saying “Thank you” or “Thanks.”

Each retail transaction and individual retail associate’s style may vary and retail associates should interact with customers based on the transaction occurring at the time. The Perfect Transaction is provided to serve as a guide to help ensure customers are offered maximum value during package transactions. The POS display should not be shown to customers as a means to select their service options.

Module 5: Communicating Product Knowledge

Objective:

Participants will be able to communicate the features and benefits of our products and services.

Time Allocated for Module:

- 20 minutes

Instructional Methods:

- Presentation
- Discussion
- Self-study

Summary:

- Identifying the Impacts of the 2007 Rate Case
- Explaining Features and Benefits of our Products and Services
- Benefits of Online Services

Participant Material Used:

- Participant Guide
- Job Aid: Features and Benefits Chart, Extra Services by Mail Class

Media Required:

- Flipchart and Markers
- LCD Projector with Computer

For Further Information:

- Contact your Postmaster or Station Manager

Facilitator Notes:

Refer learners to RevPak 5 – Communicating Product Knowledge.

Have a volunteer read the Introduction.

Have a volunteer read the Objective.

Identifying the Impacts of the 2007 Rate Case

Ask, “How have the 2007 Rate Case changes affected the way we interact with our customers?” Allow learners to respond.

Pricing by Shape

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Review “Pricing by Shape” Job Aid and use as a reference.

Ask learners for specific examples of suggestions they have made to help customers understand and apply Pricing by Shape.

Dimensional Weight Pricing

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Ask the learners, “What do you tell the customer if they ask why rates changed?”

Balloon Rate Pricing

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

International Products

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Refer to the International Features and Benefits Job Aid.

Ask the learners if they have any questions.

Domestic Insurance

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Post Office Box and Caller Service

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Importance of Explaining Features and Benefits

Ask, “Are you listening for your customers’ needs?”

Ask, “Are you helping customers select the right products?”

Ask, “When customers leave your lobby, do they have a clear understanding of what services they purchased?”

Ask, “Will customers purchase the same services again?”

Ask, “Did you improve their overall customer experience?”

Do not immediately discuss – allow them time to think about their responses.

Have a volunteer read the first 2 paragraphs of “Importance of Explaining Features and Benefits”

Refer learners to Job Aid: Extra Services by Mail Classification

Allow learners time to review Job Aid.

Have volunteers give examples of how they promote products to their customers. Allow for discussion.

Benefits of Online Services

Ask, “Have any of you ever used our online services? Which online services did you use? What did you think about them?”

Note which services were used on a Flipchart.

Have a volunteer read the paragraph “Benefits of Online Services”

New Features of Online Services

Have a volunteer read paragraph.

Refer participants to eLabels-Domestic and eLabel International Services Job Aids.

Online Services Available

Have a volunteer read paragraph.

Ask the learners, “Did you know these services were available?” Have you ever told your customers about these online services?”

Customers who would benefit from our online services.

Lead a discussion on which customers would benefit from our online services. Be sure that the examples listed in the RevPak are included.

Ask the learners, “Do you have any of these customers who come into your lobby?”

Have a volunteer read the last paragraph of this section.

To close the Module, ask the learners “Are there any questions on Communicating Product Knowledge?”

RevPak 5

Guidelines for Revenue Generation in the United States Postal Service

Communicating Product Knowledge

Introduction

One of the best ways to increase the total customer experience is to share our knowledge of Postal products and services so customers can make informed decisions. Many of our products changed with the 2007 Rate Case. Customers look to you as the retail expert to know Postal Products and to recommend products and services that will best serve their needs.

Objective

Participants will be able to communicate the features and benefits of our products and services.

Identifying the Impact of the 2007 Rate Case

We recently experienced the most extensive Rate Case since Classification Reform. How have these changes affected the way we interact with our customers?

Pricing by Shape

The Pricing by Shape better aligns the true costs of processing and transportation with what we charge customers. This is good for the Postal Service and with your help; this can also be good for your customers. You can help them find ways to prepare their mail in shapes that both reduce their mailing costs and our processing costs. (See Pricing by Shape Flow Chart Job Aid)

Dimensional Weight Pricing

Dimensional weight pricing applies only to Priority Mail. It takes into account not only an item's weight, but also its size (cubic inches) to arrive at a "dimensional weight." If a large Priority Mail package is addressed for delivery to zones 5-8, it could be charged as a heavier-weight

item because of its size. Price will be based on either the Dimensional Weight or item weight, depending on which is more. Dimensional Weight Pricing helps ensure that postage accurately reflects transportation and operational costs when a package is large in size and takes up a lot of space. For example: air transportation costs are based on cubic size (capacity) of the package—not its weight. Similar practices are used by our competitors.

Retail Associates should recommend and inform customers who ship Priority Mail about USPS provided Priority Mail packaging products. This information might help your customers reduce their mailing costs.

Balloon Rate Pricing

Balloon Rate covers the additional cost the Postal Service pays for ground transport packages that are both large and lightweight. As you inform customers about balloon pricing, also tell them that balloon pricing does not apply if they use any of our Express Mail or Priority Mail packaging products.

International Products

International mailing has been simplified to the following four International products:

- Global Express Guaranteed
- Express Mail International
- Priority Mail International
- First Class Mail International.

These services are easier to understand and explain to our customers. Additionally, customers can now use the same *Express and Priority supplies for both domestic and international shipments*. Refer to International Features & Benefits Job Aid.

Domestic Insurance

All domestic insured items are now barcoded. This provides internal visibility for claim purposes but *is not* available to the public. Customers will still need to purchase an additional product such as Delivery Confirmation or Signature Confirmation to obtain delivery information. Insurance over \$200 requires a signature, while Insurance \$200 or less does not require a signature.

Post Office Box & Caller Service

Even with the recent changes, PO Box/Caller Service fees continue to be very reasonable and an excellent value. The value to the customer includes *Privacy, Convenience, Security, Affordability, and Earlier Delivery*. These are excellent selling points.

Importance of Explaining Features and Benefits

As a Retail Associate you are the face of the Postal Service to every one of the 8 million residential customers and 1-2 million small business customers who enter your lobby each day. It's your responsibility to explain to our customers the features and benefits of the products and services we offer.

Many times we assume our customers know what they want. However, customers tell us they look to us to help them identify the products and services that will best meet their needs. Are you listening for your customers' needs? Are you helping customers select the right products? (See Extra Services by Mail Classification Job Aid)

When customers leave your lobby do they have a clear understanding of what services they purchased? Will they purchase the same services again? Did you improve their overall customer experience?

Benefits of Online Services

Help customers understand that most of the services offered at the Post Office can be done from their computer at home or office on usps.com. Customers can pay postage, print shipping labels, look up ZIP Codes, create and send postcards, purchase insurance, request carrier pick-up for packages, and receive free Delivery Confirmation on domestic packages. It's like having a Retail Associate at their finger tips! It makes doing business with the Postal Service Quick, Easy and Convenient.

Online Services and Benefits

There are several new benefits and services available to our customers online. Customers paying postage online for International products can now receive the following discounts:

- 10% - Global Express Guaranteed
- 8% - Express Mail International
- 5% - Priority Mail International

In addition to the discounts, the on-line label combines the shipping label with the appropriate customs form in one convenient document (including APO/FPO). New enhancements include electronic signature and date stamp. (Refer to eLabels-Domestic Services and eLabels International Services Job Aids)

DID YOU KNOW? When accepting on-line Global Express Guaranteed and Express Mail International mail pieces, Retail Associates must round date the label over the electronic date stamp to start the clock.

Another new service is Shipment Confirmation Acceptance Notice (SCAN), which utilizes a master barcode for tracking acceptance and delivery of multiple packages. With SCAN, multiple packages can be manifested and tracked utilizing one barcode scan.

Online Services Available

In addition to mailing services, customers can conduct the following online:

- Submit Change of Address
- Place Mail on Hold
- Purchase Personalized Stamps
- Purchase Postal Art and OLRP
- Purchase Greeting Cards with/without Gift Cards
- Buy Stamps and Philatelic Products
- File an on-line Insurance claim for Click-N-SHIP and EBay customers only
- Request Carrier Pickup

Customers who would benefit from our online services

- Customers with Small Home Businesses
- Stay at Home Parents with Small Children
- Busy Professionals
- Customers with Disabilities
- Almost all Customers Can Benefit

Take the time to inform customers about our online mailing services. Remember, company growth depends on meeting the needs of *all* customers which includes those who would benefit from our on-line services. Also, the

Postal Service is not the only package and shipping company offering online shipping options to their customers. Our competitors would like nothing more than to have your customers use their online services because we failed to inform our customers. Remember, the more channels customers have of accessing postal products and services, the happier our customers will be. This is why it is important for you, the Retail Associate, to not only know what services we offer at the retail counter, but also to know what services customers can access through other channels (including usps.com).

Job Aids

- Pricing by Shape Flowchart
- Special Services by Mail Classification
- eLabels - Domestic and International
- International Mail Features & Benefits

Other Sources

- www.usps.com/ratecase
- www.usps.com
- Retail Insider

Pricing by Shape Flowchart



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Weight 13 oz or less
(More than 13 oz Priority Mail)

LETTER

Maximum Weight & Dimensions:
(NOT according to address orientation)

- 11 1/2 inches in length
- 6 1/8 inches in height
- 1/4 inches in thickness
- Weight not more than 3.5oz

If one dimension or weight exceeds any one of the above:



LARGE ENVELOPE

Maximum Dimensions:

- 15 inches in length
- 12 inches in height
- 3/4 inches in thickness

If any one dimension exceeds:



PACKAGE

Length plus girth combined cannot exceed 108 inches.

Nonmachinable Criteria - Letter

**17¢
Surcharge**

- Rigid
- Keys, Coins, Pens, etc...
- Delivery address is not parallel to the longest side
- Has clasps, strings, buttons, etc...
- Aspect Ratio by address orientation
- Enclosed in plastic material

A 17 cent Nonmachinable Surcharge is assessed if any of the above criteria is evident

Nonmachinable Criteria - Large Envelope

- Rigid
- Not rectangular (Squares are rectangular)
- Not uniform in thickness
(1/4 "Variation in thickness allowed)

If large envelope with Nonmachinable Criteria then price as a package

eLabels – Domestic Services



Domestic eLabels

The images below are examples of USPS and PC Postage vendor online postage paid labels bearing information-based indicia (IBI) with hidden postage (sometimes called “stealth postage”). Because the actual postage amount (in dollars and cents) is hidden, conventional visual postage verification is not possible.



The text of these postage indicia will always show the following information: mail class, shipped-from Zip Code™, weight, and any appropriate surcharge. In addition, zones and the date may also be printed in the indicia area. If the article matches the description in the text, then the correct postage has been paid. Process and handle items with these indicia in the same manner as any other PC Postage® product. Refunds are initiated through the provider.

eLabels – International Services



International eLabels

The images below are examples of USPS and PC Postage vendor online postage paid labels bearing information-based indicia (IBI) with hidden postage (sometimes called “stealth postage”). Because the actual postage amount (in dollars and cents) is hidden, conventional visual postage verification is not possible.

USPS Express Mail Label (PS Form 3849):

- Service: EXPRESS MAIL
- Tracking Number: EV 978 000 700 US
- Postage: \$10.00
- Insurance: \$111.40
- Contents: DISH TOWELS, SOAP, TOOTH PASTE, TOOTHBRUSH
- Weight: 4.46 lb
- Total Rate: \$100.00

USPS Priority Mail International Flat Rate Envelope Label (PS Form 3825):

- Service: USPS® Priority Mail International Flat Rate Envelope
- Tracking Number: LJ 978 000 700 US
- Postage: \$10.00
- Insurance: \$111.40
- Contents: DISH TOWELS, SOAP, TOOTH PASTE, TOOTHBRUSH
- Weight: 4.46 lb
- Total Rate: \$100.00

Additional key points to remember for international e-labels:

These shipping labels include the appropriate customs declaration form all in one convenient document; all should contain the following PS Form numbers:

- Express Mail International - PS Form 2976-A-EMI;
- Priority Mail International flat rate envelope -PS Form 2976-PMI;
- Priority Mail International variable weight or flat rate boxes - PS Form 2976-A-PMI

Postage discounts are available for international postage paid online:

- Global Express Guaranteed R – 10% discount
- Express Mail International TM - 8% discount – see above sample
- Priority Mail International TM - 5% discount – see above sample

NOTE: Additional information available on Retail Ops website: product SOPs and acceptance procedures.

Extra Services by Mail Classification



Domestic Mail Classes and Services				
Classes of Mail	First Class Mail	Priority Mail	Package Services	Express Mail
Services & Forms				
Delivery Confirmation PS 152	X (parcel)	X	X	
Signature Confirmation	X (Parcel)	X	X	
Insured (\$200 or less) PS 3813	X	X	X	Automatic \$100 on merchandise
Insured (More than \$200) PS 3813-P	X	X	X	Automatic \$100 on merchandise
Registered PS 3806	X	X		
Certified PS3800	X	X		
Return Receipt PS 3811	X	X	X	X
Return Receipt for Merchandise PS 3804	X	X	X	
Certificate of Mailing PS 3817	X	X	X	
COD PS 3816	X	X	X	X
Registered COD	X	X		

International Mail Features & Benefits



Product	Features	Time in Transit Business Days	Rates
<p>Global Express Guaranteed</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service to over 190 countries • Money back delivery guarantee • Tracking available • Free \$100 Insurance • Free Packaging & Carrier Pickup • 10% discount online 	<p style="text-align: center;">1 to 3</p>	<p>Starting @ \$29.95</p>
<p>Express Mail International</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service to over 190 countries • Guaranteed to select destinations • Tracking available • Free \$100 Insurance • Flat Rate Envelope • Free Packaging & Carrier Pickup • 8% discount online 	<p style="text-align: center;">3 to 5</p>	<p>Starting @ \$23.95</p> <p>\$23.95 Canada & Mexico \$25.95 All other countries</p>
<p>Priority Mail International</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service to over 190 countries • Tracking to major destinations • Flat Rate Envelope and Flat Rate Boxes • Registered Service w/o insurance (flat rate envelope only) • Free Packaging & Carrier Pickup • 5% discount online 	<p style="text-align: center;">6 to 10</p>	<p>Starting @ \$17.00</p> <p>Flat Rate Envelope: \$9.95 Canada & Mexico \$11.95 All other countries Flat Rate Boxes: \$23.95 Canada & Mexico \$38.95 All other countries</p>
<p>First Class Mail International</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service available worldwide • Registered Mail w/o insurance available 	<p style="text-align: center;">Varies by destination</p>	<p>Starting @ \$.72 for one ounce letter or postcard to Canada & Mexico</p>

Module 6: Promotion and Merchandising

Objective:

Participants will be able to recognize and apply promotion and merchandising principles to improve the total customer experience.

Time Allocated for Module:

20 minutes

Instructional Methods:

- Presentation
- Discussion

Summary:

- Signage Placement for Maximum Benefit
- Merchandising Strategies

Participant Material Used:

- Participant Guide
- Job Aids: From Postal Team Makeover (Retail Standardization) Kit and Signage Instruction Guides

Media Required:

- Flipchart with markers
- LCD projector

For Further Information

- Contact your local Postmaster, Station/Branch Manager.

Facilitator Notes:

Refer learners to RevPak 6 – Promotion and Merchandising

Have different volunteers read the Introduction and the Objective.

Ask the learner, “Think about your own Post Office lobby; would it be a place you would want to shop? Why or why not?”

Have a volunteer list the responses on a flipchart – why on one side, why not on the other side.

How Does Promotion & Merchandising Improve the Customer Experience?

Have a participant read the paragraph.

Promotional Signage Placement for Maximum Benefit

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Ask the learner, “How many of you go to McDonald’s or Starbucks?”
“How is their signage placed?”

From their responses, emphasize the location of the signage up and above the counters should all look the same no matter where they go.

Proper Promotional Placement

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Have a volunteer read the second paragraph.

Current Promotional Signage

Have different volunteers read each paragraph.

Negative Signage

Read the first sentence.

Ask the learners, “How do you feel when hearing this?”

Promote discussion on how signage can negatively impact the customer experience.

Have a volunteer read the rest of the paragraph.

Merchandising Strategies

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Ask the learners, “Did you know that 74% of all purchasing decisions are made in-store?”

Then ask, “How many of you have bought something you didn’t plan to buy when you went to a store? Give some examples of impulse purchases you have made.”

Relate their responses to the Post Office, if possible. For example: a grandmother buying an OLRP Teddy Bear for her grandchild.

Have a volunteer read the next paragraphs.

Ask the learners, “When do you offer or suggest Ready Post?”

Visual Influence

Remind the learners, “Remember we asked that you think of your own Post Office? Keep that in mind for this next portion.

Have a volunteer read this paragraph.

Invite discussion on the questions listed.

Merchandise Displays

Have a volunteer read the first paragraph.

Ask a different volunteer to read each of bulleted items.

Ask the learner, “What thematic displays have worked well in your office?”

To close the Section, ask the learners, “Are there any questions on Promotion and Merchandising?”

Retail Counter & Open Merchandising

Have different volunteers read the bullets.

Job Aids:

Review and discuss Job Aids with participants.

RevPak 6

Guidelines for Revenue Generation in
the United States Postal Service

Promotion and Merchandising

Introduction

As a Retail Associate, you have an opportunity to make a difference in your customers' experience as you offer them products and services to meet their mailing needs. Promotional and merchandising tools have been provided to assist you in your efforts. The objective of these tools is to provide a consistent retail environment, increase customer satisfaction and influence the buying decisions of your customers.

Objective

Participants will be able to recognize and apply promotion and merchandising principles to improve the total customer experience.

How Does Promotion & Merchandising Improve the Customer Experience?

Promotion and Merchandising informs customers about our products and services before reaching the retail counter. It assists the customer to determine which products or services they need and what forms they should use. This way when the customer approaches your counter, they have a better understanding of how you can assist them. This is similar to viewing a menu board and signage at McDonald's.

Promotional Signage Placement for Maximum Benefit

Signage is placed within a retail environment to inform customers about product availability and attributes and offer a reason to buy it. Current signage properly placed will result in maximum benefits for the Postal Service.



Proper Placement of Promotional Signage

Correct placement of signage is vital. Promotional signage is designed to be strategically placed within the retail environment to inform customers about our products and services. By simply placing the right message, in the right place, at the right time the Postal Service can influence customer behavior and impact revenue. Signage Instruction Guides are provided with each POP Signage Kit to guide you in placing signage. See Job Aid.

Keep in mind less is more! Too much signage just confuses customers. The less signage displayed, the more people will read the signs you do display. Do everything you can to ensure the proper signage is in the correct location so your customer's experience will be excellent!

Current Promotional Signage

Promotional signage is designed to promote specific products and services for a specific period of time. Each sign displays the dates it should be hung as well as the dates it should be removed. You can identify whether or not signage is current by referring to the up/down arrows located on the bottom right corner of each sign.



The goal of all retail merchandising is to attract customers to our products, and motivate them to interact (pick it up and look at it) and act (buy it). That's where the revenue is. Customers are not likely to ask for an item that is out of reach.

Customers only spend a few seconds looking throughout the store. You play an important role in making sure signage is properly placed and merchandise is effectively displayed to get customers' attention

Negative Signage

NO SMOKING, NO CELL PHONES, NO PETS ALLOWED! Do you have these types of signs posted in your lobby? Why? You cannot project a positive experience when your walls and doors are full of signs that say NO. Research indicates that customers are turned off by negative messaging. It weakens the positive effects of the signage intended to increase customer knowledge and revenue.

Merchandising Strategies

The full service lobby is where customers browse and select products the Post Office has to offer such as Ready Post and OLRP. All products should be prominently displayed so that customers can look, touch, and purchase.

Did you know that 74% of all purchasing decisions are made in-store? That means there's a real opportunity to grow revenue through impulse purchases.

ReadyPost items should be displayed so your customers notice them first, before they see the complimentary Express and Priority supplies. Do not discourage your customers from purchasing ReadyPost products. They are a customer convenience as the products they need are right there, right now. When a customer buys a ReadyPost box, even if they choose Parcel Post service, the profit for the Postal Service is larger than if the customer used a complimentary Priority Mail box and paid the Priority Mail rate.

Encourage your customers to purchase additional ReadyPost products for future use.

Complimentary shipping supplies for Express and Priority should also be displayed in your lobby; however, keep in mind that the ReadyPost should be prominently displayed and should be seen first by a customer walking in the main entrance and heading for the full-service counter.

Customers can now use our Express Mail supplies to ship Express Mail International and Priority Mail supplies to ship Priority Mail International; you should inform your international customers of this benefit.

Visual Influence

Consider how your full service lobby appears to customers. Is it clean, bright, tidy, and fully stocked with retail items attractively displayed? Or, is it the complete opposite – dark, cluttered and nothing displayed but worn, faded, and torn products? Which of these would appeal to you? Well-lit, clean, and attractive lobbies entice customers to come in and also to return at a later date.

Merchandise Displays

Merchandising is the promotion of a product by developing strategies for packaging, displaying, and publicizing it.

- Customers can't buy products if the racks are empty. Keep stock ordered and on display.
- Rotate stock to keep it fresh and interesting.
- All signs and displays should be professional in appearance. Post only authorized signage.

Retail Counter & Open Merchandising

- Remove dirty, worn, or damaged products (including acrylics, hooks, pegs, hardware, forms, and signage).
- Display items at eye level – If they can't see and touch it, they won't buy it!!
- Use a theme in your displays. For example, OLRP wedding-themed products, wedding stamps, and decorative ReadyPost shipping

supplies could be displayed together to give customers some ideas about additional items to buy.

- Ensure customers have access to supplies and forms they need *before* they get to the counter. This is a win-win situation for customers and Retail Associates.

Job Aids

- Full Service Lobby Zone & Retail Counter Zone Signage
- Merchandising Techniques

Other Sources

- <http://blue.usps.gov/marketing/retail>

Full Service Lobby Zone & Retail Counter Zone Signage



Full service lobby zone signage may include:



Stamps Poster



Product Poster



Promotional Standee



Writing Table Decal (Place on writing table or parcel slide above slots for Extra Services forms.)

Retail Counter Zone signage may include:



Counter Mat Insert



Promotional Menuboard



Continuity Menuboard

Poster 37, Help Keep the Mail Safe, is mandatory signage in the Retail Counter Zone.

Merchandising Techniques



Disney Product Themed Display

When you display products in themed displays, it encourages customers to buy multiple, related items. For example, when you see a mannequin in a department store, you don't just see a suit. You see other items that go with the suit – a blouse or shirt, shoes, a tie or scarf, etc. You can do something similar in your Post Office by selecting merchandise from ReadyPost, Official Licensed Retail Products, and philatelic products and combining them to encourage customers to buy several items. Some examples of themes would be ones related to holidays or special occasions such as Mothers' Day, patriotic holidays (Memorial Day and July 4th), graduation, or weddings. Another example would be to create a thematic display related to the subject matter of the products such as flowers, Disney, or animals.



Flowers/Wedding Themed Products

Here are some merchandising techniques to remember:

- Red slatwall headers (like the “Gifts” sign in the photo above left) may be ordered from the Material Distribution Center in Topeka but are available only to Postal Stores. When using these headers, hang them two slats down from the top.
- With or without headers, start displays five slats down from the top to get closer to customer eye level.
- Use approved pegs and acrylic holders.