


LANDLORD CONNECTIONS

Developing positive relationships
with property owners through high
levels of customer service

Kevin Westhuis
Utility Director










Landlord Connections

What is landlord Connections?
How did it get started?



Landlord Connections 

Quarterly Series for Landlords:

- An opportunity to network with other landlords and city staff
- Keep up to date on changes with local rental laws
- Round table discussions - what's working / what's not
- Relationship development
- Add value to help these small businesses succeed




City Staff Questions & Answers

Landlord Connections 


Past Topics


- Fire safety rules and codes for rentals
- Sewer lateral responsibilities
- Police related rental issues in River Falls
- Leases and evictions – what are the rules??
- UW-River Falls – Enrollment updates and how this may impact the market
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection
- security deposit refund do's and don'ts
- Utility – Tax Roll and Collections



Landlord Connections 


- Serve breakfast
- 7am to 8am
- 60 to 80 attendees
- Budget -\$1,000.00



Landlord Connections 

Grant - \$4,000.00

- DEED GRANT: Demonstration of Energy & Efficiency Development Program through the American Public Power Association (APPA).



Landlord Connections 

- Communication and invitations
 - Post cards
 - Calendar invites
 - Calls



Landlord Connections 




Collaboration
Problem Solving
Learning
Relationship Building
HAPPY PEOPLE



What specific behaviors and actions must we demonstrate



to fully execute great Customer Service?



Customer Service Model

We Put People First

- Engage customers – identify yourself and greet them
- Practice empathetic listening
- Create high quality outcomes and exceptional customer experiences

We Pursue Excellence

- Professional image and conduct
- Act with integrity
- Effective communication in a timely manner

We Embrace Change

- Flexible problem solving
- Embrace innovation and search for opportunities and evolve in the way we do things
- Ask "why"

We Serve Our Community

- Demonstrate passion and pride for our job
- Have a positive impact on our community
- Continuous feedback using surveys and monitoring dashboards



Strategic Plan Goals



1. **Ensuring Financial Sustainability** *(Finance)*
2. **Consistently Delivering Quality Municipal Services** *(Operations)*
3. **Promoting Economic Vitality** *(Managed Goals)*
4. **Connecting Community Members** *(Gathering Places & Spaces)*
5. **Considering Future Generations** *(Sustainability)*

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Two fun stories

 BAD SERVICE

 GOOD SERVICE

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BAD SERVICE



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Hotel Del CoronadoBRUNCH





GOOD SERVICE









Examples

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oywp2qRRyc&list=PLKKB_Zz5jnkA4iEdDKG10go--1lstbJME&index=8



Local People Local Control Local Decisions




- I believe it is very important to help your community understand why a Municipal Government is different than County, State, or Federal Government.
- Municipals are able to **nimbly** reflect local community values through rates, programs, services, and community giving.




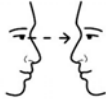



The first few seconds set the tone and create that crucial first impression



Remember these 3 greeting rules:

1. Good Eye Contact (customer is most important thing) and get up
2. Great Smile (smiles defuse tension)
3. Great Opener





The Opener.....

- How are you today?
- Comment on the weather.
- How can I help you?
- If you know them..... Call them by name.

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Other Tips

- Always be attentive to body language and non-verbals.
- You may have to temper your actions. judge the person, the line, customers attitude.
- Acknowledge if someone is in hurry.
- Have patience and practice empathetic listening.


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Next Level ?'s

"FORD" type questions

- Family
- Occupation
- Recreation
- Dreams

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If you are “feeling” it...

It is said that a persons favorite word in the English language is “Their name”.

For the confident close: Call them by name as you say goodbye.


If you can say their name upon Greeting; you will achieve rock star status!



Phone Greetings

When we answer the phone or are dealing with a customer in person, the image of our company, us as individuals, and representation of the City of River Falls is on the line...

An alert and cheerful greeting sets the tone for the conversation.





Rising tides raise all ships



Active Partners

We **ALL** have the opportunity to successfully shift customers’ perceptions so that we are seen as active partners of services and solutions,not just as a bureaucratic government agency.







Breaking the Cycle

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- 3-Part money management series
- Successful money management and provides insights to money habits.
- Offered to low income customers who qualify for funds through the Commitment to Community program.
- Participants who attend all three sessions receive \$150 credit on their RFMU Utility bill.

Corporate Leaders Breakfast

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- Exclusive invitation to top River Falls Corporate Leaders
- Scot Simpson, City Administrator
 - Local Economic Activity
- Keynote Speaker and best selling author Ross Bernstein
 - "The Champion's Code" – Identifies dozens of unique characteristics that are common among champions and make a tie through poignant and inspirational stories of how these traits off the field can lead to dynamic leadership, a culture of excellence, and extraordinary customer service in the business world".




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Annual Customer Appreciation Lunch



- Customers and community members enjoy a free lunch
- Learn about programs and opportunities at the City and Utility
- Live music, bounce house, kids activities, and more



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Community Involvement

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- Downtown Holiday Lighting
- Temporary Power for Community Events
- LED Light Exchange



Community Involvement

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- Giving to local organizations and nonprofits
- Proactive energy efficiency design for new businesses
- Energy Efficiency Programs



Community Involvement

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- Scholarships for kids
- Engaging school district and university



School and Teacher Highlights - Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program | UWSP
Meet Alesha Miller - a consultant in River Falls who provides Environmental Science, Conservation, and Public Education programming to area schools. Alesha is...
UWSP.EDU

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Community Involvement

- Blue Bike program



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Air Motion Systems

Community Involvement

- Made in River Falls



Designer Doors




Mei Mei's Cookies

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Community Involvement


- Community Art – Transformer Painting





Customer Service Model

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- **We Embrace Change**
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Personal Interactions







People rarely remember what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel.

Golf story




Communication Efforts

- Social Media – Facebook, Twitter, YouTube
- Facebook LIVE: https://www.facebook.com/pg/RiverFallsMunicipalUtilities/videos/?ref=page_internal

 **Nancy J. Cardarelli** 2:34 Thanks guys!!! You did a great job!! We appreciate your quick response to the problem last night and other times the power has gone out. Thank you for updating us.
 Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · January 13 at 12:12pm


 **Colleen Lauber Jahnke** 2:31 Great job! So nice of you to update and share what happened! Also kudos to the men who fixed it for all of us who may have been "chilly" in our homes, they were really out in the elements for all of us! Thank you
 Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · January 14 at 6:23am



Communication Efforts

One Minute City Rap
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mChqNhmC8I>
https://youtu.be/78u0sd7BU70m?list=PL4K4JALEP9M_51F331Ew89RvG66

Transparency - <http://www.rfmu.org/index.aspx?nid=878>
 Utility Reports
 Dashboards
 Electric
 Water
 Waste Water Treatment
 POWERful Choices



Municipal Services are "Unique" and Should be Valued

- We have a great story to tell / tell it
- Don't rest on "yesterday" and the "way we have always done things"
- Treat your customers like someday they will have a choice of Governing bodies. (hand written notes)
- Constantly and subtly remind your residents of the value your Municipal Government brings them.

HAVE FUN!!