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Ditch the motherhood statements

 [Guest Author](#) 14/04/2019



Pharmacies are being ill-served by generic mission statements written up by their banner group head office, says Glenn Guilfoyle

Too often when I ask an owner to have a look at their mission/vision statement, if they have one, it will often be a hand-me-down from their brand or group head office. Straight away, it is by definition going to be generic.

Secondly, it will often be replete with "Mum and Motherhood" statements about providing great service... 'the customer is the most important person'.... 'we act with honour and integrity'.... and on and on. Blah Blah Blah.

I nearly always have the sinking feeling that I could take this document from one pharmacy and pass to another, and no one would know any difference.

The terms vision and/or mission statements often carry negative connotations for the very reason exemplified above.

Alternatively a set of well crafted service standards, produced by the whole team, can be an enormously powerful "contract" between all team members – and a commitment or promise to the customers.

The starting point

Start with the health section of your business. Think about each and every customer "touch point" in relation to a single visit.

These could include the script-in counter interaction, the OTC counter interaction, the interaction with the customer browsing the health product gondolas, the interaction with the customer sitting at the waiting chairs, standing at a queue at script out and so on.

Think about how you will marshal your team and deploy your rosters so that every one of these touchpoints will have adequate staff coverage to provide the desired customer experience at EVERY touch point.

It is as old as Noah coming off the Ark, but by crikey, it is a ripper and grossly under-utilised still.....the acronym "SMART".

When you convene your team to brainstorm these customer touchpoints and how you want to give your customer the differentiated "wow" experience, whichever touchpoints they will experience on any visit to your pharmacy, use this model to ensure that your collaborative team write up avoids bland "Mum and Motherhood" statements.

Five key points

Here's list of key points to remember:

- Specific – we will greet the customer within 30 seconds of arrival at any service counter
- Measurable – have your team members at cash and wrap to ask random customers during quiet times at cash and wrap whether they were served by a white coat and run a count for measurement (if, say you hold a service standard that a white coat is going to serve customers at script out x% of occasions)
- Achievable – don't set a specific and measurable service standard that is pie-in-the-sky. Better to start off conservative and progressively sharpen from there

- Results oriented – sticking with the health customer example, think about what is really important for them in terms of a more complete solution offer. A service standard to recruit them to your loyalty program might be results oriented for you and may well be laudable – but not at the expense of or as a priority over a chance for a consultation with a white coat (however brief) EVERY visit
- Time framed – ie. the more you can couch each service standard in terms of duration, eg “within 1 minute” or frequency, eg “90% of times” the better

Such an endeavour will not be easy. That in itself is a good indicator of its merit.

Once you’ve drafted it, run it as an internal credo amongst the team for a month or two. Adjust and refine, and then gazette and communicate it to your customers.

Tell them you are not perfect and that these service standards are what you are aspiring to. The customers will love you for it.

Glenn Guilfoyle is principal of The Next Level. Contact him [here](#) or by calling 0418 519 755



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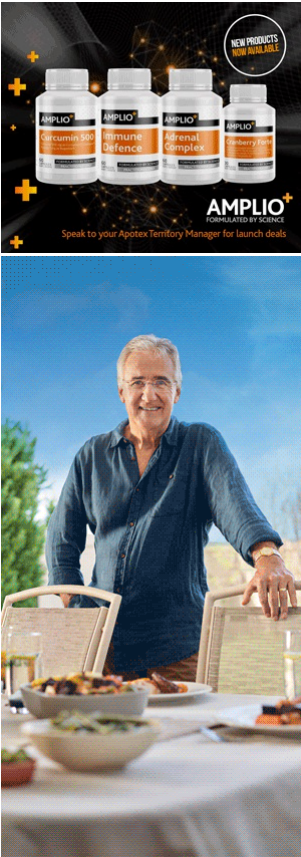
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