



The Customer Communicator Web Extra



Strive to celebrate the year round

In the customer service center or call center, celebrations can foster relationship-building, improve morale, and encourage teams to achieve higher performance levels.

According to Liz Jazwiec, a consultant and author of *Eat That Cookie!: Make Workplace Positivity Pay Off ... For Individuals, Teams, and Organizations*, workplace celebrations at any time of year are a great way to promote positivity and cooperation, and shouldn't be limited to Customer Service Week or the year-end holidays. Here are some tips from Jazwiec on how to create the sort of celebrations that achieve success:

■ **Make the most of milestones.** Make your larger goals — like reaching a 95 percent customer satisfaction rate or other high-level goals — into something more manageable by setting milestones along the way. And then once those milestones are set, plan a method for celebrating when you achieve that milestone. "That keeps people excited throughout the process," Jazwiec says.

■ **Sweat the small stuff.** Most customer service centers will have smaller achievements that they can celebrate every week or every month. "Maybe your team went a month without an incorrect customer order, or you went a week without a rep being late for his or her shift on the phones," Jazwiec says. Celebrating these small accomplishments helps you remember that there are more good weeks than bad.

■ **Celebrate one person at a time.**

Celebrations are also a great way to recognize the accomplishments of individuals, says Jazwiec. So try recognizing the years of service that members of your team have put in by celebrating anniversary dates. Or celebrate when an individual reaches a service performance goal, gets a glowing customer testimonial, or scores well on a customer satisfaction survey.

■ **Think outside the box.** Get your team members to come up with some ideas on accomplishments or other things that they would like to celebrate. "It can be practically anything," Jazwiec says. "I know of one team that gets candy every time they go an entire week without any member calling in sick."

■ **Go traditional.** It's always great to celebrate the obvious — like birthdays and the December holidays. But you can also consider celebrating Halloween, and encouraging everyone to dress up for the occasion — or establish a regular summer celebration around the 4th of July or Labor Day. Or turn the first day of Spring into an annual "Spring Cleaning Day." Whether it's a traditional holiday or one that you've made up for your organization, Jazwiec says, "the possibilities are endless."

