

What's possible...

...in your business

Turn ordinary business into extraordinary business with the help of FRED...

...Most people know that exceptional customer care wins friends, helps win new clients and helps win new profits.

...You probably agree too... So, meet FRED.

FRED couldn't have a less exciting job.

Every day, he's weighed down by hundreds of letters. Every day, he walks the exact same route. Every day, he places envelopes into letterboxes.

Turn drudgery into customer magic...

There are so few opportunities for FRED to be creative, to make changes, to provide extra service.

It's easy to imagine how such monotony and drudgery could drive a postman to despair.

Question: "OK, I get it, his job is boring, so why do we need to hear about FRED?"

Answer: "Because FRED takes the ordinary (his act of delivering the post) and turns it into something extraordinary."

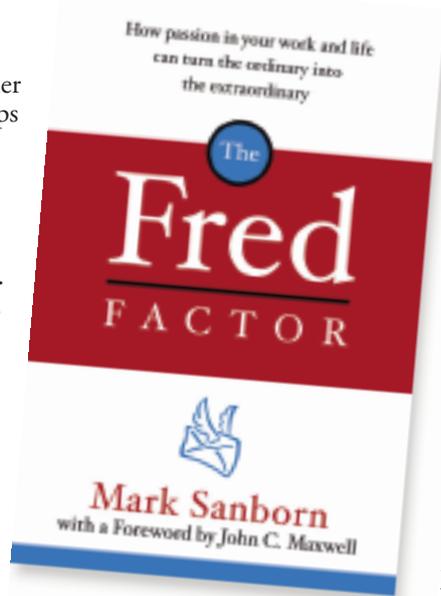
Every day, FRED puts in a bit more care, a bit more attention and a bit more effort to leave his customers delighted.



Here's how...

The author of "The FRED Factor" – Mark Sanborn – moves into his new home in Washington (not Tyne and Wear!).

• FRED introduces himself, finds out about Mark, his business and how he might help in his role of postman. How many 'posties' do this?



• When FRED discovers a parcel (from a courier) at the wrong address, FRED takes it to Mark's house (without any 'song and dance').

• When Mark's away on holiday or on business FRED holds his mail until he returns (leaving no hint to thieves that Mark is away).

Little things making a big impact. Little things over time adding up to a world-wide reputation for FRED!

The big question for your business?

If you approach customer care like FRED does, how would your business benefit?

"The FRED Factor" shows us how to build and nurture our own 'inner FRED' and eventually infect others with the same high levels of enthusiasm, passion and a desire to delight others.

You could view this as glib. Or you could see it as an opportunity to raise your 'customer care' game, and win a competitive advantage for your business.

Try FRED's principles on for size...

FRED Principle 1: EVERYONE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

If you're in any doubt have a look at this video (<http://www.stservicemovie.com>) and see how one person can make a difference, a big difference – to a supermarket!

This little video and FRED's story clearly demonstrate how...

"Setting a higher standard and challenging the status quo depends on your attitude not your job title." – The FRED Factor

FRED simply identifies **WHEN** he can make a difference (timing), and thinks about **WHO** he can make a difference to (relevance). After that he decides to **BE** the difference (action).

When you and your people acknowledge and accept you **can** make a difference, then you too can **make a difference**.

At one hospital a visitor (who) asks for directions (when), instead of just telling them how to get there, the staff personally escort the visitor to their destination (action).

And if a busy hospital can take the time to provide FRED-like service what lengths can you go to?

What's possible...

FRED Principle 2: SUCCESS IS BUILT ON RELATIONSHIPS

“The quality of the relationship determines the quality of the service” – The FRED Factor

FRED doesn't just see the houses on his route as faceless properties...

- FRED always takes the time to get to know the families living in the area
- FRED listens and learns about the home-owners
- FRED demonstrates his genuine interest and desire to serve them

Build relationships. It pays off...

Night Porter at Homewood Suites, Jack Foy, receives an unusual request late one evening.

The daughter of a guest wants to make sure, on Father's Day, her Daddy gets his favourite breakfast. Unfortunately, Homewood Suites has no restaurant.

But luckily Jack Foy answers the telephone.

As soon as his shift finishes he drives to a nearby restaurant and picks up the special breakfast. He even includes a card and signs it in crayon from “Daddy's Little Girl”.

I'm not sure it gets more FRED-like than this, does it? Needless to say, the guest was delighted. And due to the high level of service he received he later awards Homewood Suites a substantial contract!

FRED-like behaviour clearly pays off.

FRED Principle 3: CREATE VALUE, EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

FREDS not only talk about exceptional service, but deliver on it. They offer better ideas, products and services than their competitors. They do stuff to exceed expectations.

So how do you perform this alchemy and change the ordinary into the extraordinary?

Start with a few simple FRED-like concepts...



A. The Whole Truth – not just what you think your customers want to hear.

The more your customers feel they can trust and rely on you the more value you provide for them.

Your reputation hangs on how well you manage your 'Moments Of Truth' (from the book of the same name by Jan Carlson).

Carlson focuses on your performance at key moments of customer expectation.

For example: If a customer is expecting delivery on Tuesday and it arrives (late) on Wednesday they'll have a 'miserable' moment of truth, and your trustworthiness falls.

If it arrives (on time) Tuesday they'll have a 'neutral' experience and you'll neither improve nor hinder your reputation.

If it arrives (early) on Monday your customer will have a 'magical' experience – it was earlier than promised, whoopee! Your trustworthiness has improved.

The most important thing is keeping your word by delivering, on time (or better), every time. Tell the truth and make your promises explicit (rather than vague and open to interpretation).

B. Use Your Personality - be child-like – warm, enthusiastic and genuine.

Why do most adults smile at young children?

Young children mostly return a smile with a genuine, ear-to-ear, face-cracking grin.

It's because children live in the moment. For one split second, all their attention is focused on you and on reciprocating your smile.

Be child-like for your customers, co-workers, friends and family. Make sure you focus on giving them your full attention, so they feel important and valuable.

FRED shows his humanity by protecting his customer's homes while they are away on holiday. He holds their mail (and even cleans up their lawns) to reduce the chances of a break-in.

FRED shows his customers he cares for them. He empathises with their concerns over security and lets them know he 'has their back covered'.

...in your business

C. Attract Through Artistry - we all love something beautiful, unusual or unique.

Jack Foy knew exactly what he was doing when he signed the Father's Day card in crayon from "Daddy's Little Girl".

This simple, thoughtful addition to the breakfast made it all the more personal for his guest. He used artistry to inject personality and warmth, he added 'the human touch.'

What if your team put the same kind of thought and attention-to-detail into how your business is presented? Ways to make your product or service seem as special as 'Daddy's special breakfast'.

D. Meet needs in advance - anticipate what people want and offer it before they need to ask.

Nobody would dream of asking their postman if he would make sure their garden remained tidy while they were away on holiday. But on FRED's route nobody needed to! He anticipated their needs by making sure everything appeared neat-and-tidy until they returned.

What could or should you do to anticipate your customers' needs?

For example: Why would you let a torch-buying customer leave the store without the batteries to power the torch? Not only would the store's profitability increase but customer frustration (even customer caused frustration!) would be eliminated, as people would leave the store with everything they require.



E. Add good stuff to others - (fun, jokes, entertainment, surprises, energy, enthusiasm)....and subtract bad stuff from them (stress, waiting, defects, mistakes and misinformation).

Cebu Pacific Airlines (from The Philippines) has transformed an otherwise boring safety demonstration – you know the one – by making a song and dance (literally!) about their in-flight safety announcement!

To watch the air stewards strutting their stuff, click this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoTK0k85Qro>

F. Improve - "do the common things uncommonly well" said H.J. Heinz.

In FRED's example he not only performs his job well, he performs other people's jobs well!

When he sees a parcel from another courier delivered to the wrong address FRED takes it upon himself to take it to the correct address. He takes responsibility and solves problems before his customers realise.

What can you do to improve your product, your service or your systems to make them easier, more efficient and more enjoyable for your customers?

FRED Principle 4: REINVENT YOURSELF REGULARLY

Become a sponge for new ideas.

Continually learning and improving will add to the value you provide for others.

Use your life's experiences (and insights from book summaries like these!) and keep notes of your ideas.

Capture your moments of inspiration, write them down.

And then, Like FRED suggests, raise your I.Q. – raise your **Implementation Quotient**.

Act on your ideas. DO THEM!

Developing your flock of FREDs...

Question: "How do I turn my workforce into a flock of FREDs?"

Answer: "One FRED at a time."

There are lots of people like FRED out there. The challenge is (F) finding them.

Start by looking internally for people showing flair on a well-done project, an elegant client meeting or a clever suggestion (all suggesting hidden FRED talent).

And when you find them (R) reward them with your attention and interest.

Then (E) educate them about FRED ways so they, like you, spread "FREDishness" far and wide.

And last but not least (D) demonstrate FRED-like behaviour to inspire them further. Become a shining example yourself.

As John Maxwell, the leadership guru, suggests:

"You teach what you know, but you reproduce who you are."

"Acts of FRED" tend to have a ripple effect. Their actions provide an inspiring example to others, and in turn brighten people's lives, making them more likely to commit an 'act of FRED' for someone else the same day! eg. At the supermarket Johnny's FRED-like behaviour inspired the florists to do something out of the ordinary too.

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A FRED maxim –“Measure what you treasure...”

And as Aristotle reminds us:

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

So Mark Sanborn finishes the book by suggesting we use **The FRED Report Card** to help us promote FRED-like habits. And measure what you treasure...

Score your performance:

1. Awareness. Ignorance isn't bliss, it's blind.

Remaining aware of FRED as a role model for customer care helps keep us focused.

2. Agenda. An agenda moves you from awareness to intention.

Does your team meeting agenda include the kind of tasks that will add value to your work? Build better relationships?

Your team-meeting agenda clearly shows you what you plan to do to become more FRED-like.

3. Attitude. Attitude colours everything you and I do in life...

What won't work: Acting like FRED because you feel you have to.

What will work: Acting like FRED because you want to.

4. Action. “Intention without action is just a dream.”

It's what we actually do different that makes the difference. How's your I.Q. (Implementation Quotient)?

5. Accomplishment. The final way to score yourself is by assessing what you accomplish.

Evaluating your accomplishments gives you a way to fine-tune your efforts for maximum effect and impact.

Not yet getting 10 out of 10 on your report card??

Then look again at your levels of 'awareness', your 'agenda', your 'attitude' and your 'action'.

And if you want to know which skills get you to 10 out of 10

- Help everyone on your team realise they **make a difference**
- Help everyone know how to build **better relationships**
- Help everyone realise how to **create more** value

Ready to become a FRED and inspire other FRED's in your business?



Your thoughts...

Your Actions (next steps)

1.

2.

3.