

HIRING FOR SERVICE APTITUDE



**Becoming the
employer of choice
while protecting
your culture**

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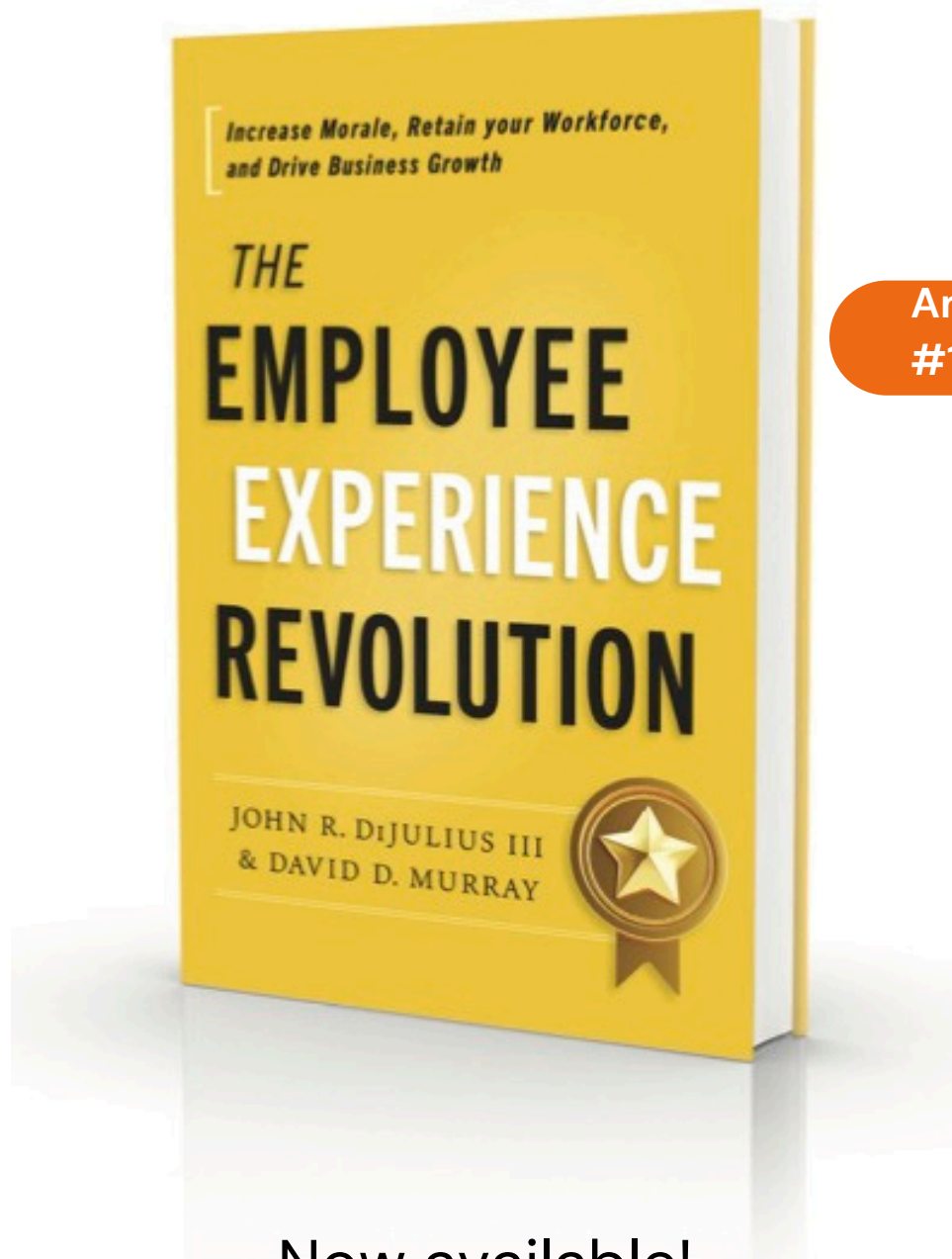
Welcome to the DiJulius Group, an employee and customer experience consulting firm dedicated to helping organizations create exceptional brand experiences. Founded by John DiJulius in 2006, our company has become a leading authority in the field of customer service and brand experience. With over 25 years of experience, we have worked with hundreds of clients across various industries, from healthcare to hospitality, finance to retail.

At the DiJulius Group, we believe that the experience you deliver is the key differentiator in today's competitive marketplace. We help our clients understand their customers' needs and expectations and develop strategies to exceed them. Our approach is data-driven and results-oriented, and we have a proven track record of helping our clients achieve significant improvements in customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Our team of expert consultants brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to each engagement. We work closely with our clients to understand their unique challenges and opportunities and develop customized solutions to meet their needs. Whether it's designing and implementing a customer experience strategy, training frontline employees, or measuring and analyzing customer feedback, we are committed to delivering results that drive business success.

We are proud of the work we have done and the impact we have had on our clients' businesses. Our clients have seen measurable improvements in customer satisfaction, loyalty, and revenue, and we are honored to have contributed to their success.

Your Handbook to
Increase Morale
Retain Your Workforce
and Drive Business Growth



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FROM

John Dijulius

Natural customer experience rockstars genuinely like and care about others.

Your hiring process needs to identify those who do and those who do not.



Three objectives of an interview

- 1.Scare away the wrong candidates.
- 2.Find out who the potential rockstars are.
- 3.Make the potential rock stars want to work for your company.

Hire for the Heart, Train for the Part

Your goal is to find candidates who have exceptional service aptitude and are happy, kind, caring, empathetic, friendly, positive, optimistic, grateful, and genuinely like others.



The following list of optional interview questions only focuses on whether the candidates have the potential to provide excellent customer experience skills, primarily soft skills.

These questions should be combined with other interview questions not listed here that assess skills like technical knowledge, work ethic, cultural fit, etc.

We also do not recommend using all these questions; pick the ones that best fit your company's customer service culture.

Please note that the interview questions provided herein are designed to assist with evaluating candidates' qualifications, skills, and experience in a manner consistent with fair hiring practices and compliant with federal, state, and local employment laws. This disclaimer is provided for guidance and does not constitute legal advice. Interviewers should consult with the Human Resources Department or legal counsel if in doubt about the appropriateness of an interview question or topic.

John DiJulius,
Chief Revolution Officer
The DiJulius Group

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS





ENGAGEMENT INDICATOR

of times during the interview

- _____ Eye contact was made
- _____ Ear to Ear (smiled)
- _____ Enthusiasm was displayed
- _____ Engaged interviewer naturally

Create an Engagement Indicator Card to record the 5 E's

If you are looking for people who have the potential to be customer-centric service providers, evaluating their 5 E's might be your most powerful tool. Many of our consulting clients have incorporated the 5 E's into their interview process, literally counting the times a candidate demonstrates each one.

While I believe most employee candidates have the potential to provide excellent customer service, not all do. The 5 E's can help you identify candidates who are able to achieve a high service aptitude with rigorous training. During the interview process, if candidates are not smiling, making eye contact, and showing enthusiasm— then pass. No amount of customer-service training will change them. As for the engagement indicator, the key to that is having an interviewer who constantly displays all 5 E's.



The Interview Questions

Following is your list of interview questions designed to gauge your candidate's service aptitude potential. Immediately following each question is your key to know what kind of answer you should be looking for.

The questions are categorized into seven different sections:

Happy / Optimism

Genuinely Likes Others

Curious

Kind & Caring

Desire to be Great at Customer Service

Empathy

Advanced Interview Questions



Happy / Optimism

1. How are you doing today?
 - How happy are they? Looking for a better answer than “fine” or “okay.”
2. What do you like most about people/customers?
 - Do they genuinely like people and take an interest in them?
3. What do you like least about people/customers?
 - Are they jaded toward people?
4. What is something you love to do when you are not working?
 - Do they show enthusiasm for what they enjoy the most? If they don't show enthusiasm for what they enjoy the most, they won't show enthusiasm for much else
5. Do you think most customer complaints are legitimate?
 - Looking to see if they trust customers or are jaded and think they take advantage.



Happy / Optimism

6. Can you provide an example of how you've handled a sudden increase in workload and how it impacted the customer's experience?

- Looking for thoughtful and honest reflections on how the workload can impact the ability to serve customers and if it frustrated them that they couldn't serve the customer as well as they might have wanted.

7. What is your superpower?

- Encourage them to reflect on their unique strengths and talents.

8. Looking back over the past year, what would you say was a highlight for you?

- What matters to them? Where do they find fulfillment?



Genuinely Likes Others

1. Think about some of your favorite people you have ever met, such as friends, family, colleagues, etc. What characteristics did they possess that made you like them so much?
 - Looking for a 10.
2. Follow up on question #1: Why?
3. Think about some of your favorite people you have ever met, such as friends, family, colleagues, etc. What characteristics did they possess that made you like them so much?
 - Looking for what characteristics they admire and want to model.
4. Would you rather work alone or collaborate with a team?
 - Looking to see if they enjoy working with others
5. How demanding do you think customers are today?
 - Another way to see if they are jaded toward customers
6. Are people getting better or worse?
 - Another way to see if they are jaded toward people
7. Can you share an example of when you received outstanding customer service as a customer yourself?
 - It helps identify what they consider to be excellent customer service.



Genuinely Likes Others

8. Tell me about a time you went above and beyond for a customer.
 - Do they look for opportunities to exceed customer's expectations? Have they felt empowered in the past to handle things, or did they come from an environment where they had little autonomy?
9. Tell me about when you worked with a team and had a successful outcome.
 - It assesses the individual's ability to work collaboratively with others towards a common goal and reveals how effectively the person communicates and coordinates with team members.
10. Share an experience where you worked with a team to resolve a customer issue. What was your role, and what was the outcome?
 - It assesses how the individual and the team approach and resolve customer issues. It highlights the individual's ability to work collaboratively with others to address challenges.
11. How do you collaborate with other departments to enhance customer satisfaction?
 - It assesses the individual's ability to communicate effectively across different teams and departments. It shows how well the person understands the interconnectedness of various departments in delivering a seamless customer experience.



Genuinely Likes Others

12. What do you enjoy most about working with others?

- Do they like others? Do they enjoy working with others? This shows what aspects of teamwork the person finds most fulfilling, which can indicate their preferred role or function within a team.

13. What do you enjoy least about working with others?

- Do they like others? Do they enjoy working with others? Are the things they enjoy least about working with others most likely going to be an issue in their potential job?



Curious

1. How would you get someone to like you during a conversation?
 - The best answer is “Ask them questions to learn more about them, and listen to them.”
2. What would you like to ask me (the interviewer)?
 - Are they curious? Do they want to learn about the interviewer, company, etc? (Besides the next steps in the interview process.) Do they want to learn about the team?
3. How do you handle situations where you disagree with someone's viewpoint? Provide a specific example.
 - Assesses the ability to maintain empathy towards others' viewpoints, even in disagreement, and seek mutual understanding or compromise.



Kind & Caring

1. When did you last make someone's day, and how did you do it?
 - Are they someone that looks for opportunities to help others? ·What do they consider "making someone's day"? Was this something they struggled with coming up with an answer?
2. Follow-up question: How did it make you feel?
 - Do they get pure enjoyment from helping others?
3. After coming in contact with you, how do you want customers to feel emotionally?
 - Do they want to leave people better than they found them?
4. Follow-up question: How would you do that?
 - Looking for a specific answer, not just a general answer like "Make them happy"
5. How do you want customers to describe their interaction with you?
 - Do they care about leaving a positive impression?



Kind & Caring

6. Follow-up question: How would you accomplish that?
 - Do they know what it takes to make raving customers?
7. Can you talk about a cause or community service you are passionate about and why?
 - Do they care about a bigger purpose? Are they selfless?



Desire to be Great at Customer Service

1. Are there any companies you do business with that you couldn't live without, and why?
 - Looking to see what matters to them besides price?
2. What is important to you, as a customer, in a great customer experience?
 - Looking to see what matters to them besides price?
3. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the best), how would you rate yourself for delivering customer experience and why?
 - Does their answer to this question align with how they answered many earlier questions?
4. Do you feel you need training on customer experience?
 - It always can get better. Are they open to a company that constantly trains on CX?
5. What does customer experience mean to you?
 - This provides valuable insights into their understanding and approach to customer service and their level of service aptitude.



Desire to be Great at Customer Service

6. What do you know about our company's customer experience?
 - Have they tried to learn about the company and the high standards we have for CX?
7. This is our Customer Experience Action Statement and our three supporting pillars... What does that mean to you?
 - How do they interpret that; are they inspired by our CXAS and do feel they can meet the standard this company has been committed to?
8. How would you accomplish that?
 - Do they realize the ongoing commitment it takes to be world-class?
9. If a customer was upset with you about something that was not your fault, how would you handle it?
 - Looking for them to take ownership and make the situation right for the customer while not oversharing or blaming others.
10. Have you ever received negative customer feedback, and how did you handle it?
 - Looking to see if they are defensive or used it as a learning moment to how they could of handled the situation better.



Desire to be Great at Customer Service

11. Tell me about a time when you did not deliver a great customer experience, and it was no one else's fault.

- Looking for honestly, they take ownership, and that realize they could of done better.

12. How do you manage your emotions when dealing with stressful customer interactions?

- What level is their emotional intelligence? Are they able to balance stress, resilience, and professionalism?

13. Give an example of a complex customer issue you resolved. What steps did you take, and how did you ensure the customer was satisfied?

- Looking to see that length of which they will go to resolve a customer's issue and make it right.

14. Can you describe a time when you had to make a quick decision to solve a customer's problem? What was the situation, and what was the result?

- Have they felt empowered in the past to handle things or did they come from an environment where they had little autonomy?



Desire to be Great at Customer Service

15. What strategies do you use to maintain professional relationships in your network?

- Are they proactive in building relationships with others? What techniques do they use to build and sustain relationships over time?

16. What does the following quote mean to you; “We work in the customer perception business?”

- Do they understand that what customers think is the reality of the company's customer service? It doesn't matter what we (the business) think or why it sucks for the customer.



Empathy

1. Let's watch a video (Day in the Life of a Customer). Follow-up question: tell me what you think.
 - Did it move them, inspire them, or were they uninspired?
2. Can you tell me a time when you showed empathy for a customer?
 - Do they really have empathy and understand the plight of the customer?
3. If a customer overreacted to something minor, how would you react? (Maybe give a specific example)
 - Do they take it personally or do they understand that something more may be happening in the customer's day/life?
4. Give me an example of a time when a guest asked you for something unreasonable. (Be specific) How did you handle it?
 - What do they determine as "unreasonable," and what attempt did they make at not making the customer feel like their request was unreasonable?
5. Tell me about a time you dealt with a demanding customer. How did you handle the situation, and what was the outcome?
 - What do they determine as "demanding," and what attempt did they make at not making the customer feel like their request was demanding?



Empathy

6. Describe a scenario where you had to refuse a customer's request. How did you manage their expectations?
 - Did they do it with grace and empathy, or as a matter of fact, "No"?
7. Describe a situation where you had to collaborate with a difficult colleague. How did you manage the relationship?
 - Did they work to improve the relationship with the co-worker or just place blame?
8. How would you go about it if you had to communicate bad news to a customer?
 - Did they do it with grace and empathy, or as a matter of fact?
9. Describe how you would explain a complicated policy or procedure to a customer.
 - Did they do it with grace and empathy, or as a matter of fact?



Advanced Interview Questions

The following are questions for professionals with experience to determine if they have the service aptitude needed. It is much harder to improve a person's service aptitude that has years of experience.

Relationship Building

1. What do you think are the top reasons why someone chooses to buy from someone?
 - Where does price fall into their list? Do they understand how to make it less about price?
2. How do you make price irrelevant?
 - Do they know how to differentiate from their competition besides lowering prices?
3. How would you answer the following: "I can get it somewhere for a lower price."
 - How do they articulate the value they offer justifies the customer paying higher prices?



Advanced Interview Questions

4. How do you build a relationship with a potential customer (must be specific)?
 - Do they truly know how to build rapport and get others to like them, rather than just answering their questions and treating them as a transaction?
5. How do you continue to build a relationship with an existing customer (must be specific)?
 - Do they share ideas about how they play offense (reach out, touch base) rather than defense (respond to customers' inquiries)?
6. How do you continue to build a relationship with a co-worker (must be specific)?
 - Do they see the value in building relationships with team members?
7. Do you have any listening habits/best practices?
 - Looking for answers like making the other person the centerpiece, asking more questions than they answer.

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