

Procedure: *Planning Your Attack*

Purpose: To subtly answer the “*unspoken questions*” of the homeowner while at the same time planning out the logistics of the job.

Overview: You have already gained the confidence of your customer with the preceding customer service procedures in this manual. These include *Introducing Yourself*, *Breaking the Ice* and *The Customer Interview*. These three Procedures MUST be followed in order before you begin *Planning Your Attack*.

However, it is possible to carry our “warm and fuzzy” Value Added Service philosophy too far with your customer. Balance is essential. Yes, “80% of how the customer determines whether you do a good job or a bad job is based on her relationship with YOU”! But, remember the homeowner called your company to perform WORK and not chat all day. (And you need to produce work to make money!) So it is important to move the “process” along. Here’s how you do it ... in a tactful manner.

Steps:

1. **“Map out” the job with your client in a simple manner-** Using the information you have learned in Scene One- *The Customer Interview*. Remember, you have learned some essential information from the homeowner during your *Customer Interview*. You know what is most important ... to them. These Customer Concerns may or may not be the most pressing, technical problems with the job. That’s OK. “*Fix the customer first ... then fix the problem.*” You ignore the customer (and their concerns) at your peril!
 - A. **Mentally review the concerns of the customer-** Try to include and mention the solutions to their worries as you “*plan the attack.*”
 - B. **“Mrs. Jones, let me review your concerns ...”** It would be very insulting to perform the *Customer Interview* and then not “validate” their Customer Concerns by ignoring them as you Plan the Attack. So always start out by reviewing the customer’s worries.
 - C. **“Mrs. Jones, based on what you’ve shown me, I’d suggest we start with ...”** Remember that the homeowner doesn’t really want to be in charge of planning this work. If she did, she wouldn’t have called our company. BUT, Mrs. Jones wants to FEEL in control. Right now in this Home Front stage play you’re going to function as a “consultant.”
 - D. **Now lead the homeowner through the job-** Just simply and logically, in a deliberate and calm manner, describe how you will perform the work. This calm and assured confidence you display during this step will send the important Moment of Truth that yes, you really do know what you’re doing!
 - E. **“Have we missed anything? Do you have any questions?”** You can’t go wrong including the customer in planning out the work.

H-08 Planning the Attack

2. **Review your Home Safety Precautions-** One huge unspoken question the homeowner will always have is, “*Are these people going to be careful with my home?*” Now you know you’ll be careful, but the customer doesn’t ... yet. This step in the script is designed to get this concern out in the open ... and to give a positive Moment of Truth.

A. “*Here’s what I’m going to do to protect your home while I do the work ...*” Now briefly review the Home Safety Precautions (HSP) you’re going to take on this job, hopefully as you install the HSP’s.

NOTE: You may not need to explain all these items on repeat customers where we have worked before. But especially with first time clients it is important to orient them as the job is performed.

Further information on these HSP’s are found in the Technical Section in your Operations Manual, but here’s a few HSP’s that the project may call for:

1. A “*Wall Buddy*” to protect your customer’s corners- These Corner Guards MUST be placed on all corners where you will run TM hoses.
2. Foam blocks and carpet protector tabs- These are another “non-optional” item that MUST be placed under ALL furniture. (Remember, the carpet is never “*wet*” after you have finished cleaning, it is “*damp.*” Words are important!)
3. Drop cloths and/or protective plastic.
4. Protective runners down hallways.
5. “*Floor Guards*” for cleaning upholstery inside the home, especially over carpeted floors.
6. If needed, “*Tack-guards*” on exposed tack strips.
7. Post “*Wet Floor*” warning signs on water damage losses.
8. Place cotton mats at all “*walk off*” *transition areas* between the damp carpet and hard surface floors and remind customers to dry their feet on them.

B. **Remind your customer-** “*If you see any other special precautions you want me to take, just let me know.*” Always let the customer know you are open to suggestions from them.

3. **Ask the Second Magic Question-** Remember your goal during this Planning the Attack scene is to always give the customer the all-important “Illusion of Control”. Deep down inside the customer wants you to control the job. (After all, you’re the expert!) But the homeowner wants to FEEL like they are in control. This Second Magic Question helps you give them this Illusion of Control. (Remember your First Magic Question was asked in *The Customer Interview*, “*Would you please show me any areas of concern.*”)

H-08 Planning the Attack

- A. “Is it OK if I start first on the ...”-** Now 99% of the time your customer will say, “*Of course.*” And occasionally due to circumstances you’re not aware of (baby sleeping, etc.) they may wish you to start in another part of the house. But with this Second Magic Question 100% of the time you are giving the homeowner the Illusion of Control and a wonderful positive Moment of Truth!
- B. Always ask permission to do anything in the customer’s home-** Here’s some examples:
1. Before you go into a part of the house you haven’t entered before or been shown by the customer always ask permission to enter. (Of course, you should never enter a part of the home that you don’t need to.)
 2. Its better not to use the customer’s restroom or telephone, but if you must, ASK PERMISSION before doing so. (And of course, leave both of them absolutely spotless after use!)
NOTE: NEVER use the homeowner’s master bathroom. Always use the guest restroom.
 - a. If you must call the office remember “*the customer is always listening*” and to keep your conversation brief with the office.
 - b. NEVER make personal phone calls at any time in the customer’s home.
 3. If the customer is in the room and you must open a closet, cabinet or piece of furniture, ask permission before doing so.
- C. NEVER “ask permission” to smoke-** It is against company policy to smoke on the customer’s property. This includes in their home or yard. For further information please see your Company Employee Manual.

