

Procedure: *Value Added Service for the Elderly*

Purpose: Some of our target population is aging and they need special procedures both from a practical and emotional standpoint.

Overview: The elderly are a great market for our company because they physically need our services and usually have the disposable income to pay for them. Older folks also usually become valuable Cheerleaders for us as they have many friends and relatives. Even better, the Procedure detailed here is *“the right thing”* to do.

## Steps:

### 1. Focus on the emotional feelings of the elderly.

- A. Older people are more afraid.** And with good reason. All too often companies in our industry prey on the elderly. Fight these negative feelings by:
  - 1. Slowing down initially. The elderly come from a slower (and more gentle) time. During the first few minutes take extra time to question them about their concerns or to praise something they own.
  - 2. If you have worked for any neighbors be sure to mention this to help build trust.
- B. The elderly are lonely.** So very likely you will need to listen more. Many times they just want a hearing ear. If you have an assistant maybe they can keep cleaning while you are in the “listening mode”.
- C. Seniors are suspicious and have lots of time.** This combination can be deadly when someone has nothing better to do than to “witch hunt” you.

### 2. Help them physically.

- A. Talk slightly louder and a little slower.** As we age our hearing diminishes. But be careful here as you don’t want to appear be patronizing an old person. One way to avoid this is to be sure you are facing them when you talk. Many people with poor hearing read lips even when they don’t realize it. Also by facing the person they will hear you better.
- B. Be extra cautious with hoses to avoid tripping hazards.** Always use shock cords to control hoses when running up stairs.
- C. Use extra towels to keep floors dry at walk off areas.**

### 3. Build in extra positive Moments of Truth by offering extra “Senior Services”.

- A. Offer to clean the walls, baseboards or backs of dusty hard surface furniture while you are moving things.** (Be careful that this doesn’t degenerate into “Spring Cleaning”. But often this type of “touch up cleaning” can be done with no loss of time.)
- B. Explain that we offer our “Senior Customers” a no charge return visit on the following day to remove the tabs and blocks under the furniture.**
  - 1. If the client wants this service ask if you may use the phone to call the office from their home to schedule the visit. (Be sure to tell the office if one person can remove the tabs or if two will be needed.) Write the info on the *Production Day Sheet*.
  - 2. Confirm the scheduled time with the customer and write it on their *Work Order*.

Procedure: “*Kiddy Bags*”

Purpose: To create a Positive Moment of Truth with the home owner that has young children present.

Overview: In *Strategies for Success* we learn that home owners love two groups more than anything else- their pets and their children! (For a positive MOT you can carry dog biscuits and with the customer’s permission give one to the pet.) The “goody bag” concept offers us many advantages.

- a) Shows the parent that both the tech and our company like and appreciate children.
- b) Let’s the children bond with the technician.
- c) Allows the home owner to focus on the job because her kids will be “distracted” examining their new present.

### Steps:

**1. Assemble bags.** We recommend small brown paper bags with handles. (A nice touch is to have them printed with our company logo on the outside.) These paper bags give a nice “green” appearance and offer no suffocation or ingestion danger like plastic would.

**A. Fill the bags.** These bags don’t need to be chock full of toys. It truly is the thought that counts here. Some options include:

1. Small coloring book with eight pack of crayons. (Hint: Check into having a “personalized” company coloring book done up with pictures to color of carpet cleaning and our van logo included.)
2. Personalized stickers with our company logo are good.
3. Include sealed snack bags of “healthy food” such as raisins, dried fruit, etc.

**B. Maintain inventory.** All the kiddy bag supplies should be kept with the Job Folder inventory items. (See Procedure: *Stocking of Job Folders* under **Paperwork/ Office 1-3**) When the Office Assistant refills *Job Folders* he or she should also make up more Kiddy Bags. Keep a bin full (with at least 20 at all times) of Kiddy Bags in the van restocking area next to the freshly laundered rolled up white cotton door mats.

**C. Trucks always stocked.** Each van should have a separate plastic bin with sealable cover for our Kiddy Bags. (The paper bags get shabby quickly in a carpet cleaning van environment unless they are sealed away in an air-tight container.)

NOTE: The Kiddy Bags should be located next to the door mat bin on the truck. As part of the daily restocking procedure the crew should verify that there are at least 10 kiddy bags on board. (Remember that some customers have multiple kids at home.)

**2. On the job.** Remember that all of our assembly and restocking efforts detailed above will be wasted if the on-site employee above does not take the initiative in gifting these bags to the hone owner’s children.

- A. Ask the parent's permission.** When the technician notices children in the home he should introduce himself to them (see Procedure: The Ice-Breaker in this Operations Manual- **On the Job/ The Ice Breaker- 1**) and then privately ask the parent if he can give the kid(s) a "goody bag" with a coloring book, stickers and raisins in it. (The tech should always mention what our goody bag contains when checking with the parent and ask how many bags they would like.)

NOTE: This 'asking permission" step should be done during the introduction step with the customer and BEFORE the technician brings the bag(s) up from the van.

- B. If the parent says "yes".** On the next trip out to the van the tech should retrieve the Kiddy Bags and offer them to the kids when he sees them in the house.
1. If at all possible try to give the child the Bag in front of their parent and say, *"You know, Charlie, I checked with your mom and she says I can give you this gift bag. It has a coloring book with pictures to color of us cleaning your carpet. Could you work on one for me while we are here? I'd like to see it before I leave."*
  2. Now the child will be dutifully occupied with their 'assignment and the parent can concentrate on the job, including having the carpet protection "reapplied". (See Procedures In-Home Carpet Protectant Demonstration and Closing the Protectant Sale in On the Job/ Protectant Sales 1-3 and point #3 in Pre-orienting the Home Owner on our Scotchgard Protective Finish in Marketing/ Carpet Protector Marketing 1-2.)
  3. If the child does start coloring in their book be sure to check and praise their work before you leave the job. If the child offers you the colored page as a gift be sure to graciously accept it.

