

Uncommon Service: How to Win by Putting Customers at the Core of Your Business

By Frances Frei, Anne Morriss



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Most companies treat service as a low-priority business operation, keeping it out of the spotlight until a customer complains. Then service gets to make a brief appearance – for as long as it takes to calm the customer down and fix whatever foul-up jeopardized the relationship.


In *Uncommon Service*, Frances Frei and Anne Morriss show how, in a volatile economy where the old rules of strategic advantage no longer hold true, service must become a competitive weapon, not a damage-control function. That means weaving service tightly into every core decision your company makes.

The authors reveal a transformed view of service, presenting an operating model built on tough choices organizations must make:

- **How do customers define “excellence” in your offering?** Is it convenience? Friendliness? Flexible choices? Price?
- **How will you get paid for that excellence?** Will you charge customers more? Get them to handle more service tasks themselves?
- **How will you empower your employees to deliver excellence?** What will your recruiting, selection, training, and job design practices look like? What about your organizational culture?
- **How will you get your customers to behave?** For example, what do you need to do to get them to treat your employees with respect? Do you need to make it easier for them to use new technology?

Practical and engaging, *Uncommon Service* makes a powerful case for a new and systematic approach to service as a means of boosting productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The book was uncommonly excellent. Very straightforward and to the point. Frei and Morriss uncover four basic truths about customer service, discuss the important ingredient of culture and provide guidance on how companies can scale to get bigger...this might be the best book I’ve ever read on achieving service excellence.” — **Stan Phelps, CustomerThink (customerthink.com)**

“This book is a practical guide for leaders who want to use service to strategically differentiate their companies from the competition.” — **Jeff Toister, CustomerThink (customerthink.com)**

“Anne Morriss and Harvard Business School Professor Frances Frei make the counterintuitive, but compelling argument that true success for service businesses requires that you give up on being perfect; that you make some tradeoffs.” — **Business Insider (businessinsider.com)**

“Morriss and Frei have a powerful and surprising answer...” — **Forbes.com**

“In this upbeat and highly readable book, the authors isolate four “service truths” that companies must understand...” — **BizEd magazine**

“The book is full of case studies showing how companies have harnessed their strengths but cut corners elsewhere, in pursuit of the ultimate goal: excellent service.” — **South Africa Financial Mail**

“I found *Uncommon Service* to be a refreshing, frank and honest look at how any organization can increase profitability, satisfaction and competitive advantage by delivering consistently outstanding service.” — **American Express Open Forum**

About the Author

Frances Frei is UPS Foundation Professor of Service Management at Harvard Business School, where she developed the school’s successful Managing Service Operations course. **Anne Morriss** is the Managing Director of the Concire Leadership Institute, a consulting firm that helps leaders to surface and remove performance barriers.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Minerva Gagliano:

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Robert Sanders:

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