

Customer Service

As I gain in years, I no longer take life's minor chores as seriously as I once did. For example, I was lulled into a lackadaisical attitude regarding the choice of a bank for our financial transactions. As for a bank's honesty, it turns out that over the years no financial house ever cheated me and no one institution's accuracy or service ever beat any other. Maybe a large amount of regulation is responsible for that. I could probably choose a bank even without being careful. So I wasn't.

As for services, I figured they can dress banking up any way that helps their advertising goals, but the business hasn't changed significantly in centuries. Almost every banker knows his or her business and does it well. But not all, of course.

When we arrived in a new town down south we needed to choose from a huge assortment of contenders. I listed a few banks and searched online for reviews. None stood out as unusually good or bad. And so because I'm a lover of words I chose an institution based solely on the lyrical attractiveness of its name. It may be true old names like "First Citizen's Trust" inspired confidence, but "The South Seas Treasure Chest & Loan" captured my imagination and won my whimsical heart. A visit to their establishment found all the young women tellers bubbly, flirtatious and ... I couldn't remember what else I wanted from a bank.

Convinced that a place with a pretty name and pretty girls couldn't be all bad, I declared my search victorious and reported my choice of "The S.S. Treasure Chest" to Mrs. Dave. She was not impressed with the science of my method.

"Are they pirates?" she asked, "Or just bimbos."

"I'm sure they're simply working girls," I said. "It's so nice to do business with young professionals who are so healthy looking."

My wife found an institution for her accounts that was more to her liking. She mentioned something about being realistic, but such comments have always gone way over my head.

It turned out my choice was probably not the best. But having made my decision, I continued to struggle on, dealing with constant screw-ups. Each was more bizarre than the preceding, but each afforded me the opportunity to work with customer service reps like Layla Sue.

Layla Sue is just the cutest little thing. She has the finest long blonde hair and the sweetest southern drawl. But she lacks the ability to add a column of figures twice and come up with the same total. And I'll admit it's rather disconcerting to hear someone in a bank always saying "Close enough."

On the plus side, Layla Sue wears dresses that would embarrass Lady Gaga, eye makeup she probably buys by the pound and a perfume so strongly provocative it's been known to set off smoke detectors.

Of all her outfits, the most intriguing is a sheer blouse worn over a dainty and girlish bra with a thin strap across her back featuring an embroidered message. It took me the longest time and many discreet glances to decipher the phrase, which I am too embarrassed to ask about. I don't know where anyone would ever find a bra that says, "I've Been To Reno."

I like working with young women to help improve their professional skills, even if it's only basic arithmetic. And doing business with someone as interesting as Layla Sue is not a hardship. But I have no idea if my checking account balance is \$3,000 or three cents. My last monthly statement said I wired in 400,000 Euros from a bank in Bogota and still wound up with a negative balance. Layla Sue says to not sweat the details. When I add it all up ... twice ... there's no way I can be described as anyone but a happy, satisfied customer. That's what I told the FBI when they came to visit yesterday.

copyright 2015 by David Griffin

The Windswept Press
Murrells Inlet, South Carolina

Write to me. www.windsweptpress.com