

Don't leave rapport building in group services to chance

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Abstract

In group services, multiple customers are intentionally batched together to consume activities such as a winery tour, a river rafting trip, a cooking class, or an MBA course. While researchers and practitioners recognize that the rapport among and between the customers in a group service is central to service satisfaction, there has been a dearth of research on how to build and manage this rapport systematically. Drawing upon advances in rapport theory and interviews with customers, employees, and managers, we present a framework for building group rapport. The framework shows how two group-based dimensions of rapport (service congruity and group attentiveness) and two dyadic dimensions of group rapport (enjoyable interaction and personal connection) can be developed, using tactics corresponding to each of the three Ps of service delivery (people, process, and physical evidence).

Subject Areas: *Consumer Services, Customer Relationship Management and Customer Satisfaction, Service Marketing*

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