

GOOD SERVICE IS MORE THAN NO PROBLEM

Good customer service should be gracious customer service. It seems that everywhere I go these days and thank people for their help, they respond with "No problem." Last week, I thanked the room service delivery person for his promptness and his response was, "No problem." Why would I think providing good and gracious service was a problem? Isn't that what people are paid to do?

This issue is much bigger than the commonality of this expression. "No problem" is ungracious. It is a lethargic acknowledgment of minimal gratitude. It just sounds bad. How much nicer it sounds to hear, "My pleasure." Or "I'm thrilled to help." Have we become so rude a culture that a simple "You're welcome" is too much trouble?

Earlier this year, I was at the St. Louis airport, and a Brigadier US Army General (one star for you civilians) was in line in front of me. I struck up a conversation and offered my service credentials from a long time ago. He was gracious to indulge an old soldier. When we parted ways, I thanked him for his service. His response was, "It is my honor to serve, sir." A far cry from "No problem."

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