



Lizz Insights

# Making a Difference

by Lizz Chambers, CHA, CHE

**"It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference." – Tom Brokaw**

*That is one of my favorite quotes. I begin my day with it and end my day with the question, "Today, did I make a difference?" I am not talking about altering the entire course of someone's life. It's the little things that count.*

**There are so many ways you can make a difference. Here are the ten easiest ways I know:**

- **Smile:** It is amazing what a difference a smile makes. It lets our guests and team members know we are approachable, and we care without saying a word. No matter how bad your day is if you can force a smile, it won't be long until you can feel the change. Then when people start smiling back, it gets easier. And guess what? It's contagious.
- **Sincere compliments:** Who doesn't like to hear something nice? From admiring a piece of jewelry to a comment on the behavior or appearance of someone's child – a compliment elicits a positive response from even the grumpiest person.
- **Go beyond what someone expects:** Guests and team members alike bring certain expectations to us every day. We can fall short, meet them, or exceed them. When we fall short there is a certain disappointment. When we meet them, well, that was what was expected, so what? However, when we exceed them, we make their day and ours a little brighter.
- **Send a personal note:** To express thanks for a kindness send a handwritten thank you to a guest (not every letter needs to come from the manager) or a note to a team member just because you appreciate them. Such a simple gesture can make a difference in someone's day.
- **Ask someone about their goals:** When is the last time someone asked you what you wanted out of life or out of your career? We don't ask that often enough. If you are a supervisor, and you haven't asked this of each member of your staff – shame on you! We should measure our success by how many people we have helped succeed.
- **Help someone take a step toward accomplishing their goals:** Once you know your team members goals, try to help them take a step toward accomplishing them. It may be by offering to work a shift so they can attend a class or ensuring they get the training necessary to advance.
- **Make a vow each morning to give something away that day:** Then do. I don't mean literally, it may be a smile, appreciation, a compliment, encouragement, or praise.
- **Love what you do:** If you love what you do and feel that it matters, you can't help but make a difference. This type of enthusiasm is contagious. Your team members feel it and want to be around you. Your guests feel it and think, "Wow, did I choose the right place to stay."
- **Understand that different people have different motivators:** During your property orientation, pass around a questionnaire to be completed by each team member. Questions may be as simple as, what is their favorite color, favorite food, or restaurant or if they had a day to pamper themselves what they would do. Then tailor awards to the person. It means so much more if thought went into the award.

***What this all comes down to is caring about those around us. Caring about the people we spend a lot of time with the people we work with day after day, and the guests who by their presence ensure that we continue to get paid for doing what we love. Make a difference in someone's life every day and it will make a difference in your life as well.***

