



Customer Service Notes for *Taking Initiative*



WIC staff who provide outstanding service to participants are often those who take initiative. Rather than wait to be told what to do, these employees see an opportunity to do something positive, and take it.

Participants will appreciate your stellar service when you demonstrate initiative. For instance, suppose you notice that a participant in your waiting area looks upset and is crying quietly, while seated with her young child. Take the initiative by going over to the woman and try to console her.

When working with participants, show initiative by providing value-added service. If a participant tells you that her son often won't eat raw or steamed carrots, and you have a recipe for a different way of preparing carrots, make a copy of it for the mom. She will appreciate receiving the information, and it may help get her son to eat more vegetables.

Be sure to take initiative with your co-workers. If you see that a colleague is overwhelmed, pitch in and help the person. If you are unsure of how to help, ask the other employee how you can be of assistance. She or he will appreciate your willingness to help, and your providing good internal service may cause the person to reciprocate when you are very busy.

Also, show initiative with your supervisor. If you are caught up on a slower day, ask your supervisor how you can help out. Or, you might notice, for example, that the office supplies area has gotten disorganized. Show your willingness to be a team player by cleaning up the office supplies area.

Remember, though, that taking initiative does not mean overriding WIC policies and procedures for the convenience of a participant. Always check with your supervisor before you make a decision that goes against established policies or procedures.

So, find an opportunity to take initiative – it will be valued by participants, your co-workers, and your supervisor.

Questions for Reflection:

1. What have you done in the last 2 weeks to demonstrate initiative and provide value-added service for a participant?
2. How can you demonstrate initiative and help a busy co-worker who could use your assistance?

