

Client Testimonials / Experience

Cornerstone / Customer Astonishment™ / CustomerChampion™

Darby Checketts is the president of Cornerstone Professional Development, which he founded in 1985. He began his career at the Ford Motor Company Design Center in Dearborn, Michigan. He later served as Sales Training Program Development Manager and as Corporate Quality Services Manager for Digital Equipment Corporation. He was Vice President of Training Systems at Wicat Systems, Inc. Over the years, he has worked with many leading organizations, including the Mercury Insurance Group, Intel Corporation, Motorola, Oracle, Arizona Public Service, Hewlett-Packard, Duke Energy, Gulfstream Aerospace, BlueCross BlueShield of Arizona, Abbott Laboratories–Ross Products, AT&T, Intermountain Healthcare, Ward/Kraft, Nu Skin, Kitchell Corporation, U.S. Veterans Affairs and other federal agencies, plus numerous state government agencies, colleges and universities, and various professional associations. Darby's consulting work has provided invaluable exposure to over 300 client organizations worldwide; across many sectors of industry and government. Darby is the author of twelve books.

The following is a sampling of client testimonials...

"Darby Checketts has amplified our spirit and understanding of *Service Excellence* through his "Customer Astonishment" teachings and strategic vision. Mercury Insurance Group was in search of a customer service visionary to assist us with our commitment to lead, foster, and grow a true culture of service excellence. Darby Checketts has helped our leadership team create an environment where this is possible. He also provided mentoring to a team of "Customer Champions" who help to promote, sustain, and grow the *Customer Astonishment* culture within our company. It is Darby's many-pronged approach that has kept our three-year program vital and alive."

– **Melissa Eaton**, Director - National Call Center, Mercury Insurance Group

"I am very impressed with Darby's Service Excellence work at Mercury. Darby has the unique ability to create energy and drive change within an organization. He shakes things up – in a good way! And once he does, he has the tools available to help in carrying the organization forward. The *Customer Astonishment* book, the video CD, Darby's "Rallies" and training and the *CustomerChampion* Certification Program have kept our entire organization involved and engaged in our journey towards Service Excellence. Each and every employee truly knows that they can make a positive impact towards our goals and they have the skills to do so. Stated simply, our partnership with Darby and his Service Excellence program is helping to pave the way for Mercury to achieve success in this area. I would highly recommend Darby's Customer Astonishment and CustomerChampion programs to any organization that is striving to improve service performance, grow, and maximize profitability."

– **Michael J. Hawking**, Director - Service Quality & Excellence, Mercury Insurance Group

"I have served in the business world for over 25 years. I have continued to search for the one thing that would truly inspire my team, focus our efforts and become much more than the "flavor of the month." I am happy to say there is such a message and I know it works for any team, in any circumstance, serving any customer one can imagine. Darby's message of personal ownership, focusing on customer needs, and striving for excellence was a catalyst for me to change my life. After your recent training, the buzz is filling the air. Employees are putting up signs with their 'Customer Outcome Responsibility' (COR) titles on their doors. Thank you for your powerful message and for the stimulating way you deliver it."

– **Jody Mitchell**, Duke Energy

"This is just a note to thank you for your continued support in the professional development of the MSS Management and Consulting Teams. After years of searching and evaluating a variety of organizations and programs, our experience with Cornerstone over the past six months has been refreshing. The Customer Champion program established a foundation for our consultants to begin the quest for Customer Astonishment. I cannot think of any other training, program, or activity MSS has undertaken that evoked the number of positive comments from my professionals. I want to personally thank you for the interest you have shown in MSS' achievement of our corporate goals."

– **Michael Hawksworth**, *MSS Technologies*

"I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed your "Customer Astonishment" rally on Friday. It was very exciting and so good to hear someone promote a higher level of customer service ethic. Normal customer satisfaction is no longer the norm, people expect "exceptional" to be the standard these days and I am a firm believer in a little bit extra goes a very long way."

– **Carol Maertz**, *Paddock Pools*

"When we first contacted you we were looking for a customer service training program that would reinforce a customer focus throughout our company. We got that with your training, and much more. You got us to think out-of-the-box and not just deliver good customer service, but to think of ways to "astonish" our customers. I appreciate the passion with which you delivered your message. You appealed to a very diverse group and made the training have meaning for everyone involved."

– **Cheryl Slater**, *Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative*

"Ever since we met years ago, I have continued to follow what you write. A large part of our thinking is in parallel. *Customer Astonishment* is a phrase I use often with credits to you, of course... and it is something we apply consistently with wonderful results. I have been so incredibly pleased with the results we have achieved based on the simple notion that success is a by-product of doing the right thing—even when no one is looking. Succeeding is a by-product of helping others... frequently much to their astonishment and glee. The joy derived from observing this astonishment is priceless."

– **John Foltz**, *Realty Executives*

"After a rigorous process of due diligence in choosing our customer service training program, we chose Cornerstone Professional Development. Now that the program has been implemented within our company, not only have our criteria been met, but our expectations have been exceeded in many ways: 1) the presentations were dynamic and powerful, 2) you worked with our leadership to institutionalize the program, 3) you provided the inspiration as well as the 'nuts and bolts' needed to effect change, and 4) you guided our leadership into defining our Core Purpose. I strongly recommend using Cornerstone as a vehicle to achieve results."

– **Michael Del Chiaro**, *Ward/Kraft*

"Darby has a unique ability to weave through individual's defenses, rally them into participation and rebuild the group into a unified team. His impressive coaching skills and outstanding team building structure made our project a success."

– **Dave Thomas**, *Alaska Interstate Construction*

"I can truly say that I have never worked with such a motivating individual."

– **Phil Schroeder**, *Adams State College*
