

## It's time for a little praise

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### Regular

readers may perhaps have formed an opinion about me as a curmudgeonly, cynical person with a perpetual axe to grind, particularly about all things Doug Ford and/or the drastic cuts he is making to our education system. After all, it's a topic about which I write frequently. But I am not only that I promise you! In fact, I am mostly a relentlessly optimistic person (an optimist who is frequently disappointed mind you) but still, my general life motto is to always 'try nice first, be nice first' and see where that gets you. With that in mind, today I want to talk about something nice and that is: customer service in Caledon.

I have lived in this community for over 20 years and while by some residents' standards this makes me a 'newbie,' I feel it's more than long enough to be able to comment on my many interactions dealing with the Town. A couple of very recent experiences served as an important reminder to me about just how focused on customer service our Town employees really are. While I would be reluctant to 'out' any one staff member for fear of forgetting others over the years who have been equally helpful, what I can share is that recent dealings with personnel at the Town offices (from a variety of departments and at the front desk) and with Parks and Recreation staff, have all proven to be pleasant and so I think time for a little praise is in order.

### Before

you all rush in head long to disagree with me and tell me all about 'that' time you were on hold forever, I want you to be honest with yourself and think about all the times you weren't on hold 'forever,' got the help you needed promptly and had your questions answered and any concerns addressed. To be fair, you must include those times you may not have liked the information you were given or the answer to your question wasn't one you wanted to hear but at least you were answered. It's important to remember that while in general our Town employees provide great service 'you cannot hold them responsible for telling you something you don't like to hear but which they are duty-bound to share. As an example, I have had both 'good' news and 'bad' news from our By-law department but in either case the staff were equally pleasant and helpful. The 'bad' news scenario was primarily the fault of one of my family members and yet the staff still worked hard to help mitigate the consequences and really, that's all anyone can ask for.

### More

recently, registering for a program based on scant information provided in a newspaper ad sent a Town employee on a mission to determine how best they could help me given the few facts I provided. Mission accomplished with many apologies on their end that were unnecessary but nice to hear. During the 2018 election I had occasion to interact with many Town staff and each was a

pleasure to deal with. Finally, we would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge our Area and Regional Councilors who perhaps have the toughest job of all ? thanks for all you do. They listen, they support community, they advocate on our behalf. Again ? we might not always like the answers (or, as is happening currently where I live) they need the help of other provincial government agencies to help resolve the issue ? but at least we know they are trying.

As

I said in the opening paragraph, I am an optimist who is sometimes disappointed but I'd rather that than go through life a cynic always expecting the worst. I also firmly believe that our attitude, when we interact with others, has everything to do with how we are treated in return so I'm sticking with my ?try nice first? approach to life. All that said, give Mr. Ford another day or two to come up with a way to cut yet another service, hack away at our education system or say or do something outrageous (because he will) and no doubt my curmudgeonly, cynical side will have no choice but to resurface.