

Seeing your customer makes you better at your job

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The mere sight of a customer motivates you to do your job better, new research (<https://www.mgmt.ucl.ac.uk/news/seeing-your-customer-makes-you-better-your-job>) from UCL School of Management finds.

Assistant Professor Chia-Jung Tsay found that visual transparency between customers and providers improved service and performance, creating value for both.

She studied the food industry, with Ryan Buell and Tami Kim from Harvard Business School, and found that when chefs and their patrons can see each other, not only did the food quality receive higher ratings, service also improved.

The research suggests that seeing customers makes employees feel more appreciated, more satisfied with their jobs, and more willing to exert effort.

At the same time, seeing the workers allowed customers to perceive greater effort, and they became more appreciative of the employees and valued the service more.

"In many industries, effort is hidden from customers," say the researchers. "But feelings about an office job that's separate from the customer, for example, could change if suddenly the beneficiary of that work is visible.

"It's being appreciated that makes people feel that their work is meaningful and what they do matters."

The researchers suggest subtle alternations to create visual transparency between consumers and producers. By opening up the work environment, organisations can give processes meaning for customers and employees alike, promoting gains through improved customer satisfaction and loyalty, decreasing employee turnover, and increasing employees' accountability to the customer.

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