



IS IT ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

So, here's the thing, if you get good service, is it because those you have dealt with are being responsible or is it that they are just good at what they do? You might argue that being good in your role is being responsible, but it doesn't always translate into providing a good experience for customers.

There are of course many characteristics of responsible people and at FRB we list some of them - informative, brave, resilient, conscientious, diligent, holistic, respectful, and taking ownership. To illustrate how these play out, this story describes a recent retail shopping experience.

A personal shopping day was organised as a birthday present for someone who had not had the experience before and, hands up, was a little apprehensive about how it would go. Would there be pressure to buy, would it be embarrassing... but right from the start it could not have been made more enjoyable. A very warm welcome at the door with birthday flowers (it was a big one!), a friendly introduction to the other members of staff, coffee and easy chat, feeling thoroughly comfortable and now excited to try on all that had been prepared in the right size and preferred colours. Many reading this will be thinking, all good sales tactics, but there was no pressure to buy, none. Yes, purchases were made and have been a joy to wear as they are a reminder of what was a really enjoyable, easy, fun experience.

Before posing the question of where the responsibility for this experience lay, there's another element to add. The person who arranged the personal shopping day has a disability, a long time frequent visitor to the store to browse, as can only afford to buy during sale time. Her disability means that trying on clothes is arduous and takes a long time, so purchases are taken home to try, meaning the effort of returning if they don't fit. During the personal shopping experience, the difficulty of changing clothes for her was raised. There was an immediate offer to help, done in a very easy and unpatronising way, even suggesting visiting at the end of the day so no rush. Joyful.

So was it just chance that the three members of staff individually had the responsible characteristics mentioned at the start of our story? Without doubt they all had lovely personalities, but was this great experience just down to that, or was it a result of responsible recruitment, responsible training and a responsible culture?