

The Essentials

Customer service is an indispensable component of transit operations. *The Essentials* provides transit operators with skills that will allow them to meet—and exceed—customer expectations for service. Operators learn the minimum service that should be provided at the fare box, at the terminal, and while in transit. They will also learn what is necessary to meet ADA requirements and provide customer service to riders with mobility problems. The course is designed around the principle that specific core skills—when consistently practiced—will transform bus drivers into professional bus operators and ensure customer service excellence.

Audience

New and veteran operators will benefit from *The Essentials*. Other transit employees can also benefit from understanding the Operator's environment.

Program Topics

Major Topics include the core skills of customer service. Core skills are actions and behaviors that an operator is expected to perform daily, which have been researched and their effectiveness verified:

- Getting ready for the workday:
 - » Attitude
 - » Appearance
 - » Preparing the vehicle
- Welcoming customers;
- Showing appreciation to customers for choosing transit;
- Providing service to customers with disabilities;
- How to behave in common situations such dealing with complaints and helping first-time riders;
- Working as a team and considering the next operator; and
- Functioning in the community as a cooperative neighbor.

Program Objectives

The Essentials will enable operators to:

- Understand the importance of maintaining a good attitude at work;

- Describe a professional appearance;
- List steps in performing a customer service bus inspection;
- Identify components of a greeting;
- Explain requirements for welcoming customers;
- Describe how body language can be effective in customer relations;
- Identify ways to show appreciation to customers for their business;
- Describe how to use driving skills to enhance safety and customer service;
- Understand requirements for boarding and alighting customers with disabilities, including expected customer services;
- Describe ways to deal with customer complaints and concerns;
- Explain strategies for being a team member and working with other operators;
- Identify ways to show transit as a positive community resource; and
- Explain how to function agreeably in the community and not create problems.

Meets Requirements

The Essentials satisfies general requirements for customer service and provides a proactive approach for meeting ADA regulations and sensitivity training.