

The Collector Chronicle

NORTH AMERICAN RECOVERY

NOVEMBER 2020

AMERICA'S COLLECTION AUTHORITY

LAST MONTH'S LUCKY WINNER

The lucky winner of our client prize for last month is Rocky Mountain Emergency Specialists. They have been a client since 2003! We will be sending Matthew F. Harris, M.D. a gift basket from Western Nut Company! Enjoy!

Rocky Mountain Emergency Specialists

THIS MONTH'S PRIZE

This month we will be giving away a gift card to the Darden restaurant group! Each client who sends new accounts during the month of November will have their name entered into a drawing. At the end of the month, we will draw a name. If it's yours, you'll win the prize.

*Don't miss out on your chance to win.
Send new accounts in November!
Good Luck!!*

*The Olive Garden
Longhorn Steakhouse
Bahama Breeze
Seasons 52 Fresh Grill
Yard House
Red Lobster*

COMMUNICATION

BY: DAVID J. SAXTON
PRESIDENT, NORTH AMERICAN RECOVERY

Good verbal communication skills are vital. In the collection industry, they are our number one tool. That's why our employees receive continual training in this area.

On the surface it seems like a simple task: asking someone to pay a bill. However, there's much more to it. When we speak with a consumer, it's critical we don't presume anything. While the general public believes that most people pay their bills, making an assumption like that could spell disaster for us.

At times, however, miscommunication can have a humorous result. The following conversation is a good example. This was taken from a speech given by the former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, R. James Woosley, at a conference on organized crime.

I want to relate a true intercept the FBI made of itself while conducting an investigation in San Diego.

Several FBI agents had just conducted a raid of a San Diego psychiatric hospital that was under investigation for medical insurance fraud. After hours of reviewing thousands of medical records, the dozens of agents worked up quite an appetite. The agent in charge called a nearby pizza parlor to order dinner for his crew and this was the conversation:

Agent: "I would like to order 19 large pizzas and 67 cans of soda."

Pizza Man: "And where would you like them delivered?"

Agent: "We're over at the psychiatric hospital."

Pizza Man: "The psychiatric hospital?"

Agent: "Yes. I'm an FBI agent."

Pizza Man: "You're an FBI agent?"

Agent: "That's correct, and just about everybody here is."

Pizza Man: "And you're all over at the psychiatric hospital?"

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Agent: "Yes. And make sure you don't go through the front doors. We have them locked. You will have to go around the back to the service entrance."

Pizza Man: "And you say that you're all FBI agents?"

Agent: "That's right. How soon can you have the pizza here?"

Pizza Man: "And everyone at the psychiatric hospital is an FBI agent?"

Agent: "That's right. We've been here all day and we're starving."

Pizza Man: "How are you going to pay for all of this?"

Agent: "I have my checkbook right here."

Pizza Man: "And you're all FBI agents?"

Agent: "Yes! Everyone here is. Can you remember to bring the pizzas and sodas to the service entrance?"

Pizza Man: "I don't think so." **CLICK!**

If all miscommunication merely resulted in a few hungry FBI agents, it wouldn't be a big deal. But unfortunately, miscommunication can create frustration and, at times, problems.

When we deal with consumers, we go to extraordinary lengths to communicate clearly and precisely; our success depends on it.

We believe it's a cumulative effect. Several little things done the right way, add up to BIG differences. One example is the way we ask a consumer for employment information.

Before we send an account to our attorney, we must be certain we will be able to collect it. We do this by making sure the consumer has a job.

New collectors who haven't gone through our training would attempt to verify employment like this:

Collector: "Are you working right now?"

Consumer: "Yes."

Collector: "Okay, where do you work?"

Consumer: "I'd rather not say."

What's happening is the collector is giving the consumer a preview of what they are going to ask, and a savvy consumer starts to think, "They are going to ask where I work, and I don't want to tell them." Then, when the collector asks the question, the consumer is prepared and refuses to give up the information.

A small mistake like this will make it much more difficult to collect the account. Here's why: If we are unable to find out where the consumer works, and they change their phone number and move—our chances of collecting the account plummet.

If, however, the collector were to change the way they ask for this information in one small way, the consumer wouldn't have time to think, and the exchange would go something like this:

Collector: "Are you still working over at ABC company?"

Consumer: "Yes." (Then thinks; "*Ugh! Why did I just say that?!*")

Since the consumer wasn't put on guard by the first, incorrect question, they responded the same way they would if anyone asked. This one small change will result in a collector obtaining the information they need, and the consumer knowing that, if they don't pay, we can garnish their wages. (This gives us a huge psychological advantage during the rest of the conversation, and any subsequent dealings we have with the consumer.)

So there you have it, one small example of how effective communication can help make the difference between collecting an account or not. There are many more examples, and our collectors are always refining their techniques to improve the way we collect for you.

When you send your accounts to us, you can rest assured, you are receiving the best recovery service money can buy! Have a great month!

The Collector Chronicle is published by NORTH AMERICAN RECOVERY for prospective and current clients. The owner, David Saxton, welcomes your questions or comments. DaveSaxton@North-American-Recovery.com

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