

### **What is Mystery Shopping?**

Most customers who have a bad experience at an establishment do not complain to managers - they tell their friends and family.

The quality of service your employees deliver is directly connected to the success or failure of your business. Objective, anonymous, third-party customer service assessments are sure ways to monitor the experience your customers are receiving.

Through the Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC) Mystery Shopper program, secret shoppers measure the customer service, quality, price and total shopping environment your establishment offers.

### **The Process**

Mystery shops are performed through in-person visits as well as over the phone. Results are delivered in a written report that identifies areas in need of improvement. The ISBDC knows that identifying problems is not enough to ensure quality customer service practices. After the mystery shop is completed, the ISBDC provides free, ongoing, one-on-one consultations with an ISBDC Business Advisor. Business Advisors help clients identify and implement any changes that need to be made to reach customer service goals.

ISBDC's Mystery Shopper program helps clients:

- establish customer service guidelines
- motivate employees to provide excellent service
- identify training deficiencies
- ensure objective analysis of business and employee performance
- improve telephone performance
- monitor the performance of one location compared to others
- monitor the performance of locations over a period of time
- identify and resolve service problems while they are still manageable

### **The Return on Investment**

The return on investment for mystery shopping can be seen through the positive change of employee behavior. For example, mystery shopping might reveal that fifty percent of the time your employees fail to acknowledge customers when they enter the store. Your company can then take steps to ensure your employees understand it is expected of them to greet customers within thirty seconds of arrival. Subsequent mystery shopping might reveal that customers are greeted within thirty seconds ninety-five percent of the time. In that example employee behavior has improved by forty-five percent. The financial value of that improvement may be hard to gauge, but consider this: a customer who feels welcome and valued is far more likely to do business with a company than a customer who is ignored.

### **More Information**

Contact your local ISBDC office to learn more. To find your office, visit [www.isbdc.org](http://www.isbdc.org).

