

# 12.06.09 > BOSTON UNCOMMON



> FIRST PERSON

## Bad Behavior

With his new blog, Boston native Patrick Maguire, 49, uses his 30-plus years in the service industry to explain why the customer isn't king.

### Why did you launch ServerNotServant.com?

There's so much emphasis on poor customer service. MSN comes out with a "Customer Service Hall of Shame" every year. No one has really taken the position to advocate for service industry workers. The spotlight needs to shine on the bad customers – there are a lot of them. I even bought the domain name Customer-HallofShame.com.

> **Isn't the customer always right?** Absolutely not. That old adage is antiquated because the entitlement factor has gotten so high and customers' expectations have gotten unrealistic. Folks who are completely out of line, inappropriate, rude, and disrespectful should not be tolerated.

> **What should businesses do with these people?** More managers of companies – whether it be a restaurant or other business –

need to back up their staff more often and remove the bad customer, kick them out of their place of business, and terminate the relationship. It's better for morale of staff. It's better for other customers. It shows some backbone, shows some guts for doing what's right.

> **Have you ever fired a customer?** Yes. I had a customer when I was in the mortgage business. I had to ask him for docu-

mentation he didn't want to provide. It was a bank requirement, and he was just screaming and swearing. I just terminated the conversation and told him his behavior was so unacceptable.

> **What's your biggest pet peeve?** The lack of respect for the service profession. One of my missions with the blog and the book I'm writing is to show that there are human beings doing these jobs. And

there are too many people who are dismissive and disrespectful of the people who are working in the cafeteria line, the security guard, the bank teller. There's a lack of decency, respect, and civility, and it's becoming rampant in our society.

> **Is there a behavior you find most intolerable?** When customers snap their fingers to get the attention of waiters. It's so rude.

– Jenn Abelson