Handout #1:

Internal Customer Service Becomes External Customer Service

*Read and discuss the scenario below with a partner. Highlight phrases that indicate the attitudes of employees toward one another. Underline phrases that indicate the attitudes of employees toward customers. Then, re-write this scenario using the best practices for internal customer service discussed in class and answer the questions that follow.*

Heavenly Hamburgers is a national fast food chain that specializes in charcoal broiled hamburgers. It has a good reputation for quality, and there is a significant amount of repeat business.

You are part of a six-person team that works the evening shift. You work the drive-in window, and two team members work the main counter. The kitchen/prep area has three employees.

It’s 5:00 p.m., and the vehicles in the drive-in window lane are backing up. It has taken a bit longer than usual for the kitchen to prepare and deliver your last order, and you are feeling impatient. You shout at Bob, the lead in the kitchen, that you need your order #301. Bob hears you, continues to work, and says, “You’ll get it when it’s ready!” You respond with “Speed it up!”

Order #301 comes to you in a couple of minutes. You turn back to Bob and say, “It’s about time!” You see Bob walk off to take a break as you give the customer his order; he looks disgusted as he says, “You must have new help in the kitchen. I’ve been waiting almost 10 minutes! You won’t see me in this restaurant again!” The customer drives off in a rush. You roll your eyes as the next customer approaches, looking impatient.

As you take the next order, you hear yourself saying, “What do you want?” rather than “How may I help you?”

Questions for discussion:

*How is internal customer service related to external customer service?*

*If internal customer service equals external customer service, what kind of service might the next few customers receive?*

*What changes did you make when you re-wrote the scenario?*

*How do you predict the interactions with customers would change based on changing the way employees interact with each other?*