When you first walk into the World Famous Pike Place Fish market, you might think you are being entertained. The flying fish, shouts, chants, teasing of customers, and antics are entertaining. But you come to realize that you have walked onto a stage and have become a member of the cast. The fish guys are sizing you up and just waiting for an opportunity to throw you a line. They are committed to recreating their vision of the market each day. But that can only happen if they find a way to make a memory for you so that when you leave, whether you are carrying a fish or not, you leave with something you will want to share with others. Then those others will themselves come to the market. And they too will leave with a memory. More will come. The word will spread as the ripples go out. And more will come… you get the picture.

At the center of the incredible success of Pike Place Fish is the engagement of one person at a time. It bears repeating. They are not selling fish; they are making the world a better place to live, one engagement at a time. By the way, they sell a lot of fish.

There is nothing quite as powerful as turning your attention away from yourself and asking how you might connect with another human being, customer, family member, or colleague and “make their day.” Or as Justin at the market says, “At least make their moment.”

MAKE THEIR DAY can be a big production – flowers, candy, decorating a coworker’s office for their birthday – but it doesn’t have to be. It might be as simple as holding open a door for someone whose arms are full, remembering the name of a customer who comes in every few weeks, or telling a clerk you actually owed more than she charged you. It might mean telling a coworker or employee, from your heart, how much you appreciate them.

So what’s the difference between MAKE THEIR DAY and simply being pleasant? The difference lies in doing something unexpected or out of the ordinary – taking the extra step you didn’t have to.
What’s ordinary to one person may be extraordinary to another. It’s up to you to know the difference. Observe or ask people what makes their day. When they least expect it or when they need it most, make it happen!

“The Wheels on the Bus Go round and Round....”

Remember riding the school bus as a kid? The driver often ignored you; you just hoped the bullies did too. Here’s how the supervisor of safety and training for a large metropolitan school district in Colorado makes the ride fun and memorable.

Whenever he drives the school bus, he acknowledges every student that boards the bus. Randomly, as a student boards, he’ll ask the student for his or her bus pass (his district doesn’t use passes) just to get a reaction. When the kids respond that they don’t have one, he says, “Well, you will just have to take a seat and have fun.”

When the bus is almost full, he tells the kids to sing “Happy Birthday” to the next kid who gets on the bus. The reaction is always priceless. Sometimes he will ask a student with really cool shoes what size they are, and would she mind trading for the day?

The driver says the students enjoy this type of humor. He also is letting them know that he notices them and cares about them. He has had to discipline students much less often and they are having a lot more fun on their 77-passenger yellow limousine.

MAKE THEIR DAY is easier when you understand that in every moment lies the possibility to make a positive impact on anyone you meet. A police officer told of a shoplifter who was moved to tears by the full and respectful attention he received while being fingerprinted and photographed. The man knew he had done wrong and wasn’t trying to evade punishment. He told the officer he had never encountered that kind of attention in a restaurant or store – so he was amazed to find it in jail. Get in the MAKE THEIR DAY mindset and possibilities will emerge in the most unlikely places.

MAKE THEIR DAY starts by focusing on one person at a time. The fishmongers look at it this way: They are not just selling fish. They are making the world a better place to be, one person at a time. They are “being” world famous.

It’s natural to want to MAKE THEIR DAY when it comes to those who brighten your day. But what about those coworkers or customers who seem to suck the energy out of a room whenever they enter? Why not see how far this principle can go and conspire with a few coworkers to MAKE THEIR DAY? You might be surprised at their positive responses, and they might pass it on. After all, everyone wants to feel valued.