

the **NAPKIN** the **MELON**  
& the **MONKEY** by BARBARA BURKE

[www.napkinmelonmonkey.com](http://www.napkinmelonmonkey.com)

**Welcome to the Napkin, Melon & Monkey Community of Readers!**

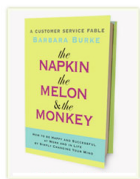
Since the book was published in 2006, hundreds of customer service managers and supervisors have used *The Napkin, the Melon & the Monkey: A Customer Service Fable* to enhance employee engagement, improve performance and reduce personnel costs.

Here is a condensed list of 15 examples of how the book is being used in the US and elsewhere to make a difference. To learn more, please visit the website:  
[www.napkinmelonmonkey.com](http://www.napkinmelonmonkey.com)

1. Prepare **new agents** to be successful faster and avoid newbie stress by making the book required reading for new hires. Break up the monotony of systems training by facilitating 20-minute “mini-book club” discussions.
2. When working with agents on their annual **performance improvement** plans use the book as a resource for employees who want to reduce job-related stress. When agents apply the SODA Principle or make unplugging part of their day, stress levels go down and performance improves.
3. Use the book as a **tool for supervisors** to “connect” with the reps. Since the main character in the book struggles with the same challenges as most agents, supervisors use the experiences in the book as a jumping off point to talk about “what matters” to their reps.
4. If agent attrition is a problem, consider using the book as part of a strategy for reducing **agent turnover**. In 2009 Barbara partnered with Vertex to demonstrate how supervisors could use the book to improve employee engagement, one of the key drivers to negative turnover. (If you are interested in conducting a similar project in 2009/2010, contact Barbara to see if you qualify.)
5. Use the book as the theme for **Customer Service Appreciation Week**. Since 2006 call centers have used the book as the theme for a week’s worth of activities based on the Aha!s in the book. Event planners who were polled raved about the reception the book got and said that agents were still talking about and implementing the ideas several weeks later. (Contact Barbara for a complimentary copy of the Best Ever Customer Service Week Appreciation Activity Guide.)
6. Supervisors looking for fresh, new topics for their regular team meetings have discovered the book the perfect solution. Each week the supervisors lead a discussion of a different chapter or conduct an activity such as, “Select your Personal Aha!”, “What would Isabel do?” or “When all else fails have a SODA!” (Ask Barbara for a team meeting discussion guide.)
7. Use the book as part of your call center’s strategy for improving **employee engagement** scores. Surveys typically reveal the need for supervisors to do more to recognize, reward and praise their agents. This book is a creative solution that is easy to use.

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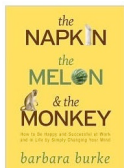
8. Create a Napkin Melon Monkey **Book Club** for supervisors, agents and support staff. The book has been a top pick for employee book clubs because it is easy to read and relate to. Over 90% of agents who receive the book read it once if not twice in a matter of days.
9. Supervisors use the book in **performance coaching** sessions to illustrate what to do (and not do) when handling customer situations. Supervisors say coaching sessions are more productive when they can reference situations in the story as examples.
10. The book makes a thoughtful **employee gift**. Buy a book for your team to thank them for completing a project or reaching a performance goal. Give the book to employees to honor their birthday, employment anniversary or as a Holiday present.
11. Provide the book to **new supervisors**. The book is packed with valuable, highly relevant lessons any supervisor can use to be a more effective coach, mentor and team leader.
12. Reduce **agent stress** and improve **schedule adherence** by encouraging reps to “unplug” during the day in whatever way works for them. **Many call centers now have designated quiet rooms where agents can go to “unplug.”**
13. Facilitate a “story circle” as a **teambuilding** exercise. Supervisors discover that the sharing of personal stories creates an unshakable bond between team members.
14. Supervisors have discovered the magic of using the book as a **coaching tool** for their agents. One of the benefits of reading a fable book is that it creates a shared experience for readers. Aspects of that shared experience can be discussed in endless ways.
15. Invite Barbara to introduce employees to the power of the SODA Principle at your next **company meeting**, division meeting or annual summit. Each keynote presentation and seminar is customized to fit your audience and guaranteed to entertain, inspire and educate. Make the event extra special by including a book signing. (Contact Barbara for more information.)



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Look for the new hardcover version published by Hay House which will be released in the US February 2010; in the UK March 2010.

*Available now for pre-order at Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.com.*