

Being a long-distance operator is great for building customer relationships

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One of the values that Hull Trains was formed on was to provide the highest standards of customer service for all who travelled with us. More than 19 years later, and that value still remains as strong as it did back when the first train left for London.

Providing that high level of service is very important for all train operating companies. As a long-distance operator, it gives our team the opportunity to spend time with our customers and build connections and that has been seen through the feedback we receive about our team on a daily basis.

Even through past disruption, we had people coming to us to say that our staff are brilliant, and the on board service is why they continue to use Hull Trains. It is comments like this that really emphasise the importance of good customer service.

We are very select about who we employ to represent the business on our trains – there are certain skills that go a long way towards providing the levels of service we expect. The success of it is through embedding the ‘Hull Trains way’ into their mindset and it will reflect in their work.

Our team has built up a rapport with people who travel with us regularly to keep them coming back.

I also feel, in some ways, the fact that we have a small team has worked to our benefit, especially from a familiarity point of view. Sometimes, strength isn't in numbers and the fact that our team knows customers by name and vice versa really reinforces the community feel we want to create.

A customer once said to me that as soon as they boarded a Hull Trains service, they heard the Hull accent and they already felt as if they were home. There's a lot to take from that statement. Yes, a lot of our people are from Hull and East Yorkshire, so they'll have the famous Hull accent, but it shows that the added extras our team does to make the service special make people feel comfortable and at home before they've even got there.

Considering the huge range of choice that is available to customers these days, a focus on good service from the team will go a long way.