

Why settle for fine?

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Editor's Note - We have known Laura for over 10 years as a computer systems integration business owner, entrepreneur, and prolific writer.

Have you ever said, "I'm fine" rather than, "I'm great"? How about when you've gone to a restaurant and said the food was fine rather than it's wonderful and yet you kept going back to that same place rather than find another restaurant that had better food and service and perhaps even a better price? Fine to me means that it is just satisfactory. That the experience just meets my minimum requirements for that interaction. I don't know about you, but I prefer my life to be filled with exceptional experiences whenever possible especially if it is possible for me to shift the experience with just a little effort.

I was talking to my mom the other day, she recently had open heart surgery and is recovering at our house, and I asked her how she was feeling. She said she was fine but when I prodded her for a deeper answer she said she had a headache and she was in pain. Comparatively, she was fine to where she had been a few weeks prior, but she really wasn't fine. A couple of Tylenol and about 20 minutes later she felt great. You could even see it in her eyes. Why are we willing to settle for fine when we can be great?

All it took for great to happen in this case was Mom being willing to admit what wasn't great and then analyze if there was a way to change fine to great. I have found that 99% of the time it is that easy to move from fine to great, wonderful, awesome or even just to good. In a restaurant, it may mean sending the salad back if you asked for it with no dressing and it came out laden with dressing or engaging the wait staff in a conversation and asking their name to let them know you appreciate them. Watch how your service improves with just that little bit of attention on your part.

In your business, it could be a simple shift in how you answer the phone to change a client experience from fine to, "I will gladly refer you all the time." One easy way to make the move is to make sure you follow up after you have performed a service to make sure the client is happy with the work, or make a random call to say hi and let them know you are paying attention to them. Also try smiling whenever you answer the phone as you greet the caller.

In your personal relationships you can tell your loved ones you appreciate them and are grateful they are in your lives and why. Even a random hug or a note left in a lunch bag or briefcase can bring a smile to someone's day and move them from fine to good or beyond. Asking for what you need and being honest with yourself about your experiences will take you off the "it's fine" auto pilot and create awareness to how you can shift the experience to a more powerful one.

Fine does not have to be the end of your story. Your life and business deserves to be great. Look at what is just fine and see if you can shift it to spectacular!

Laura Steward Atchison is a creative entrepreneur and writer who brings wit and wisdom to her readers. Her current endeavor is founding Wisdom Learned, LLC. Ms. Atchison gave birth to the idea of a new company that focuses on educating other business leaders through experience and lessons learned from the trenches. Her current book in process is entitled **"What Would a Wise Woman Do? Questions I Should Have Asked Along the Way"**. Link to www.lauraatchison.com for lots more.