

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IS A

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SUPERPOWER

A FOCUS ON CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

- **GABBY CLARK ON UTILIZING BILINGUAL SKILLS**
- **BECOMING A JETBLUE SCHOLARS PROGRAM COACH**
- **LANGUAGE TESTING EARNED HER COLLEGE CREDITS**
- ***AND SO MUCH MORE!***

Navigating a corporate environment that is customer service focused is not for the faint of heart. Customer service personnel must have resiliency, flexibility, and mindfulness to engage effectively with a wide variety of people to handle their needs and personalities, while seeking opportunities for professional growth.

Gabby Clark has been part of the JetBlue family for almost a decade, a testament to the supportive work environment that this international airline has created for career-driven individuals that are resilient, flexible, and mindful like her. However, Gabby had no idea that her command of Spanish - her language superpower - would have a tremendous role in helping her advance professionally at JetBlue.



In her early days at the company, Gabby was an ESP Reservations (email service provider) crewmember. After only two years at JetBlue, she was able to transition to the Customer Commitment email team as an ESP Crewmember where she had an opportunity to be the supervisor of an ESP Reservations team, monitoring their calls and chats with Spanish-speaking customers.

One of Gabby's greatest contributions to the Customer Commitment team was suggesting the development of Spanish messages as part of the communication efforts of JetBlue's email program. "When I started in the Customer Commitment team, the email program that we used had pre-written answers, the majority of which were only in English. When I realized this, I brought it up to my supervisor and with her permission started creating the Spanish versions of them", Gabby shares. "This not only helped me but other ESP crewmembers in the department that, until then, had been typing up their own responses in Spanish, and it helped the team's overall response time", she added.

At JetBlue, as in many other companies, employees who speak a second language are in high demand. In Gabby's case, she was able to help her team be more efficient in providing in-language services to their large Latino customer base. She attributes her command of Spanish as the key to new opportunities for her because she was assigned to special projects

doing translations for the Communications Team. "Knowing another language has opened doors for me and given me a competitive advantage that I would not have otherwise", Gabby states. "It has allowed me to communicate with a wider variety of customers", she explains.

Most recently, Gabby transitioned to becoming a JetBlue Scholars Program coach. This program affords JetBlue crewmembers a chance to complete a college degree online through approved accredited courses that the company pays for and/or discounted tuitions with partner universities. Gabby was always determined to earn a degree, but life's circumstances kept interfering with her plans, until this program created a pathway for her to reach her academic goals. "JetBlue Scholars has opened doors for me and has made my goal a realistic possibility. I have been in the program for three years and hope to graduate with my Bachelor's in Liberal Arts in 2022", she affirms. Thanks to Gabby's command of Spanish and a Language Testing International (LTI) partnership with the JetBlue Scholars Program to conduct language proficiency assessments, she was able to secure 21 credits towards her degree by testing for her reading, writing, listening and oral skills. "I received LTI certifications for all four!", she says happily pointing out that her language skills are helping her complete a degree much faster.



While Gabby realizes that her language superpower has helped her advance professionally and benefit from the pay increase that comes along with being bilingual, she cherishes her ability to better connect with her family in Guatemala and preserve Hispanic traditions. "I am able to interact and help neighbors and other members of my community that don't speak very much English. I've also been able to participate in a Spanish choir called Luz de las Naciones and performed in Latin cultural activities", Gabby offers. "It has also encouraged me to teach my children Spanish so that they can also have more opportunities."