Characteristics of Good Customer Service

Customer service is the act of taking care of the customer's needs by providing and delivering professional, helpful, high quality service and assistance before, during, and after the customer's requirements are met. **Customer service** is meeting the needs and desires of any customer. Some characteristics of good customer service include:

* **Promptness**: Promises for delivery of products must be on time. Delays and cancellations of products should be avoided.
* **Politeness**: Politeness is almost a lost art. Saying 'hello,' 'good afternoon,' 'sir,' and 'thank you very much' are a part of good customer service. For any business, using good manners is appropriate whether the customer makes a purchase or not.
* **Professionalism**: All customers should be treated professionally, which means the use of competence or skill expected of the professional. Professionalism shows the customer they're cared for.
* **Personalization**: Using the customer's name is very effective in producing loyalty. Customers like the idea that whom they do business with knows them on a personal level.

# **9 Tips for Providing Excellent Customer Service**

Excellent customer service creates loyal customers for life; customers who are willing to refer your business to friends, family and colleagues. Providing this type of excellent customer service starts with a genuine desire to delight your customers, but you also have to think beyond selling your products or services. You need to consider the cumulative experience your customers have when they visit your store or website, what they think and feel, and what you can do to make it better.

## Know Your Product or Service

## In order to provide good customer service, you need to know what you're selling, inside and out. Make sure you -- and all of your customer-facing staff -- know how your products or services work. Be aware the most common questions customers ask, and know how to articulate the answers that will leave them satisfied.

## Be Friendly

## As they say, customer service starts with a smile. When you are in a face-to-face situation, a warm greeting should be the first thing your customers see and hear when they ask for help. And even when handling customer service requests via telephone, a smile can come through in your voice, so make sure you're ready to be friendly.

## Say Thank You

## Gratitude is memorable, and it can remind your customers why they shopped at your store or hired your company. Regardless of the type of business you have, saying thank you after every transaction is one of the easiest ways to start a habit of good customer service.

## Train Your Staff

## It's important to make sure all of your employees, not just your customer service representatives, understand the way they should talk to, interact with, and problem-solve for customers. Provide employee training that gives your staff the tools they need to carry good customer service through the entire customer experience.

## Show Respect

## Customer service can often involve emotions, so it's important to make sure you and others you have handling your customer service tasks are always courteous and respectful. Never let your own emotions overtake your desire to see your customer walk away happy.

## Listen

## Listening is one of the simplest secrets of customer service. Listening means hearing what your customers are saying out loud, as well as what they are communicating non-verbally. Watch for signs that they are displeased, while listening to what they say to you directly.

## Be Responsive

## There may be nothing worse than non-responsiveness to a customer who is trying to get help, resolve an issue, or find out more about what you're selling. It's important to respond quickly to all inquiries, even if it is only to say you are looking into the issue and will be back in touch. Some response is always better than none so the customer doesn't feel ignored.

## Ask For Feedback

## You may be surprised what you learn about your customers and their needs when you ask them what they think of your business, products, and services. You can use customer surveys, feedback forms and questionnaires, but you can also make it a common practice to ask customers first-hand for feedback when they are completing their orders.

## Use Feedback You Recieve

## You need to do something with the feedback you receive from customers in order to make it useful in your customer service process. Take time to regularly review feedback, identify areas for improvement, and make specific changes in your business. Excellent customer service often comes down to consistently checking in with your customers and making sure they are happy with not only the products and services you're selling, but also the process of purchasing, ordering, working with you, etc. If you do that successfully, you are on your way to becoming known for providing excellent customer service.

**Customer Service Tools**

In response, more and more organizations are providing customer service technologies to ensure they’re providing customers with all the tools they’ll need in order to make a good purchase. This is a smart strategy, considering consumer-to-consumer word of mouth generates more than twice the sales of paid advertising. By making services accessible to your customers, you’ll increase the likelihood that your customer will have a good experience and inturn become a brand advocate.

1. Online communities

Statistics show that 25% of people choose to engage with brands because they “want to join the community of brand fans.”

Online communities allow customers to engage with other customers, give direct feedback on products, and share their passion for your product or brand. Maintaining online communities is the company’s opportunity to monitor customer feedback and improve brand experience. Online communities can be accessed via social media and there are also several marketing applications that can help you build your own online community (ahem, like our Community Cloud).

2. Discussion Forums

A forum is a specific type of online community that creates an opportunity for crowdsourcing. Here, you can collect and respond to customer feedback. Popular forums will quickly grow in popularity and become a place where product experts who many not even work for your company can combine forces with your own customer service agents, creating a community that can chime in about a products or help to resolve issues in a much more timely matter. You get the benefit of seeing a lot of customer feedback, and you can see how customers react to the solutions that are provided in the community.

3. Social Media

Social media is an essential tool for businesses of any size. Maintaining a static social page is not enough. Nowadays an inactive social media profile is the online version of having an empty store. Create a social media presence and use it to engage with customers, connectig with them and responding to their problems or issues on a timely basis.

We know that customers who engage with companies via social media channels spend somewhere between 20% to 40% more with that company, so harness that opportunity to increase sales by maintaining good social practices.

4. Automatic callback

I personally love it when a company offers up this service. We’ve all had the unpleasant experience of being put on hold for an annoyingly long period of time. By the time an operator is able to assist you, you’re already irritated at having had to wait for X amount of time.

If your service system allows a user to enter their phone number for an agent to call them back without losing their place in the service queue, even better. Some phone systems provide an automatic callback option (i.e., dialing the number “six” and then hanging up to have the system call you back when an operator is available), you can more efficiently manage call queues and provide a positive brand experience.

Many popular business telephone systems have automatic callback embedded in their services and you should, too. With automatic callback, the customer still waits without having to wait on the line listening to their own music instead of muzak.

5. Live chat

As more people shopping online, there are people are looking for online support. Offering a live chat option (like the one included in the Salesforce Service Cloud) is another way to foster a good online experience for your customers. Live chat options can be used for more than just customer service questions—it’s also a good way to provide information that might encourage a purchase decision. For example, clothing retailers often offer live chat with a “style consultant”, and department stores sometimes offer a live chat for help with gift registries.

6. SMS text support

As an organization, you want to be where the customer is. According to comScore, SMS is used regularly by 75% of all Americans. Considering this, you may want to add a new communications channel into your customer support mix by offering SMS text support as an option. Whereas customer service cases are sometimes opened, handled, and closed via email, SMS texts can reach the consumer immediately via their phone. However, be sure that the customer has opted in before using this tool.

7. Self-service sites

Another option is to let your customer have full control over their customer support experience. Several retailers, such as Desk.com, offer branded support sites that help customers solve their own problems. Customers can log in to check case status, and find answers easily from their desktop or mobile phones. This saves time for both you and your customer, and empowers your customer to find their own solutions.

8. Mobile apps

Consider offering a free mobile application for your connected customers. Mobile apps can reach consumers in real-time and increase interaction with your brand, an important step when you consider that 4 in every 5 consumers use smartphones to shop and 50% of mobile users prefer to use a customer service app to resolve their issue before jumping on the phone.

Serving the customer through a mobile app, which is already optimized for mobile use, provides a quick and easy purchase and resolution experience. Another perk: Mobile apps keep your company or brand top-of-mind for your customer.

9. Help ticket system

Help ticket or help desk systems, such as those offered through Salesforce’s Service Cloud, help your customer get a quick, accurate answer to their issue. Help tickets can  track an issue from beginning to end and your customers can receive notifications as to the progress of their issues, so they know your organization is being proactive. The new trend in this type of customer support is “predictive support”, which means a company can anticipate problems via software, and proactively work on fixing them.

10. Customer satisfaction surveys

Customer satisfaction surveys are important at various touch points, such as after a sale or after an issue is resolved. Allowing your customers to give feedback provides you with valuable information on how to build a better customer journey, and it can help instill trust in your brand. This trust is important to build, because it can cost five to 15 times more to acquire a new customer than gain repeat business from an existing one.

11. Customer portal

A customer portal is a dedicated internal system, usually within your website, that allows your customers access to personal data. Customers can view their purchase history, track orders, save favorite items, or get personalized assistance through their customer portal. Portals allow customers to personalize their shopping experience, which encourages consistent interaction with your brand and repeat business. Customers that take the time to nurture their space on your online portal are making a valuable investment in your company by sharing and storing personal information.

12. Connected devices

Another way to enhance the customer journey is to offer connected devices (such as wearables) that can “talk” to one another. With the rise of the Internet of Things (IoT), more and more consumers are gravitating toward devices that can send data to other devices. More companies will continue to harness this trend to connect more intimately with consumers. Investigate this option when loking at ways to improve the experience for your customer.

Whether it’s as simple as providing online reviews or as complex as building an online community, you have the power to provide your customers with tools to empower them during their customer journey. The more tools you provide, the greater the chance that you’ll be building brand advocates along the way.

**Customer Service’s Attitude**

## 1. Cultivate Self-Awareness

One of the most important factors in developing a positive attitude is starting recognizing and analyzing your emotions. Once you can identify negative emotions in relation to your job, you can take control of your feelings. Ask yourself how exactly you are feeling at each particular moment, why, and what can be done about it. Try to describe your feelings using verbal subtleties like “annoyed”, “upset”, “anxious” or “downtrodden”, rather than just “bad” or “unhappy”. By practicing this exercise you can determine what happens in each micro-situation, find a way to respond more meaningfully and prevent negative experiences from gathering like a snowball.

## 2. Overcome Problems with Creativity

A flexible and creative approach helps turn your can’ts into cans and beat unhelpful thinking. Whenever you find yourself in a difficult situation, remind yourself gently that it’s up to you whether to perceive it as a disaster or the notorious last straw. In fact, you always have the power of seeing any problem as an opportunity to creatively find a way to fix the failure or draw a useful lesson from the situation. Start with asking yourself what you should do to solve the problem, then come up with a list of options (and there’s always a few) and pick the best one.

## 3. Say Cheese

Smile or make someone else smile. This may sound trivial, but a simple smile can work wonders. It helps you create the welcoming and friendly frame of mind that is so important in customer service. Let a smile recharge your batteries after each conversation and take away the emotions you have experienced while handling a previous customer request.

## 4. Tame the Voice in Your Head

When you start to notice a negative thought arising, always acknowledge it and use a pattern to interrupt it. Just like Jack Nicholson used the goos fraba mantra in the “[Anger Management](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anger_Management_(film))” movie, get a habit of practicing something that would help you smile and stop negative thoughts in their tracks. It does work perfectly for me! Whenever I find my self-talk is negative, I start humming “You’d better stop before” by Sam Brown, and I find myself feeling far better pretty soon.

## 5. Surround Yourself with Positive Anchors

While working on this blog post, I was delighted to discover another wonderful tip in my email inbox. [Jeff Toister’s](https://twitter.com/toister) Customer Service Tip of the Week turned up just at the right moment to let me include it into this article. Jeff suggests focusing on something positive that “anchors” your attitude where it needs to be to deliver outstanding service. You can surround yourself with things like pictures of family or friends, motivational or funny quote posters, upbeat music and many other sorts of goodies to keep your negative feelings neutralized when dealing with a difficult customer or handling a challenging situation.

## 6. Dream. Wisely

Your dreams can work as positive anchors, too. When you focus on what you want to achieve and start imagining yourself with the goal already achieved, the visualization technique helps hit the target. The trick is not only to drift from reality to a relaxing beach vacation or layout of your dream home. To make the dream come true, you need to make a plan and put in the necessary effort.

There’s another interesting exercise that involves dreaming about the future introduced by psychology professor Gabriele Oettingen in “[Rethinking Positive Thinking](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/20821304-rethinking-positive-thinking)” called mental contrasting. Based on her large-scale scientific studies, Oettingen suggests focusing in rotation on your dreams and the obstacles that stand in their way. The exercise helps you face the reality and address your fears, make concrete plans, and gain energy to take action while working on achieving your goals. In case you are interested in finding out more about the mental contrasting technique, check out [this article](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/23/science/gabriele-oettingen-turns-her-mind-to-motivation-in-rethinking-positive-thinking.html).

## 7. Create Slice-of-Joy Moments

Life is always full of pleasant moments. You can easily treat yourself and reward for the job you do by simply recognizing and enjoying the smallest, often unremarkable, but still delightful moments in your daily life. This is what Google’s former happiness guru Chade-Meng Tan describes in his book “[Joy on Demand](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/27189099-joy-on-demand)” as an effective [three-second brain exercise](http://qz.com/818998/googles-former-happiness-guru-developed-a-three-second-brain-exercise-for-finding-joy/)for finding joy and relieving stress. Developing the habit of consciously savoring your pleasant moments does more than hours of therapy. “Thin slices of joy occur in life everywhere… and once you start noticing it, something happens, you find it’s always there. Joy becomes something you can count on.”

## Attitude : <https://www.providesupport.com/blog/7-tips-for-maintaining-a-positive-attitude-in-customer-service/>