



The Five Service Principles?

Help Guide Moments of Truth For Your Customer Contact Teams

Clear principles can make a big difference in governing and guiding our decisions and behaviors. Principles can be expressed as norms, rules, or values that point the way to achieving what is desirable. That includes steering to what is right and away from what is wrong. Does your organization have guiding principles that actually get used? When it comes to the managing the Customer Experience do you have clear principles that guide your customer contact teams to choose behaviors and make decisions that increase the probability of delivering the desired Customer Experience?

The Challenge for Leaders

What do your customer contact people do when they don't know what to do?

Your Customer Contact people face moments of truth continuously and don't always know what to do. How do you prepare them for those moments of truth? We are sharing five service principles to serve as a catalyst for leaders. The purpose is for service, support, and other customer contact leaders to “hit the pause button” and assess what principles are in place to guide moments of truth with your customers. We suggest you begin by asking your people – what guides your actions and decisions with customers other than our policies? See what you learn. Then independently review the five sample service principles below and make some notes about what fits your context and what doesn't. We also suggest you discuss this with key members of your team. Debate and edit the principles to maximize their potential value.

The five sample service principles:

1. Be **Easy To Do Business With (ETDBW)**: The key is having everyone on the team know and believe that every customer experience must be perceived as EASY by the customer. There is a never-ending requirement to provide an effortless experience for the CUSTOMER. The focus needs to be on their priorities and how to make everything easy for them vs. convenient, fast or easy for us.
2. **Reliability**: It is always a priority to deliver what the customer expects when it is expected and how it is expected. The only exception is when you can positively exceed their expectations. We need to fulfill promises and meet expectations to be reliable. The ongoing, effective management of customer expectations is part of the reliability principle.
3. **Responsiveness**: This is both the willingness and ability to quickly address any wants, needs, issues, or opportunities for individual customers. Being proactive and anticipating customer needs is also an aspect of responsiveness. Have we designed systems, processes, and technology to support and enable EASE? RELIABILITY? RESPONSIVENESS? Have we selected, trained, and performance managed our people to be ETDBW; reliable and responsive?
4. **Relationships**: Promoting a positive association between the customer and the individual service provider, service team, and organization. Working the relationship principle is the ability to enhance trust, manage tension, and boost confidence. It is consistently demonstrating that you are going to “do the right thing” for the customer, even if it costs your organization something.
5. **Design your Tangibles and Environment**: The customer experience is created at every touch point. Customer perceptions and expectations are influenced by brick and mortar environments and your digital environments. This principle includes designing your websites, apps and everything about your physical environment to be in support of your desired customer experience and brand promise.

The consistent execution of the right principles will help orchestrate a predictably positive customer experience when supported with systems, processes, tools and well-trained teams. How do the sample principles fit your world? What edits and or enhancements should you make? We'd like to hear from you. Share any insights about your service principles and ask us about any service challenges that may be impacting customer retention and loyalty.

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