

## Title:

Battling with Customer Service: How to Win the War, Part 2 of 2

## Word Count:

564

## Summary:

Have you been aggravated by the customer service experience by the last time? Read the second half of this two-part series on getting what you want from customer service.

## Keywords:

customer, service, phone, company, utility, rubber, stamp, stamps, cable, satellite, FCC, PUC, federal, communication, commission

## Article Body:

If you've already read Part 1 of "Battling with Customer Service: How to Win the War," congratulations! You're halfway to becoming a pro. Follow these last five steps and you'll be on track to bending the minds of customer service representatives everywhere. Without further ado...

## 6. Don't drink and dial.

It seems like a good idea at first; the mind says no, but the six-pack says yes. You've had a great relationship for years. Why throw it all away over a silly dispute? You decide to pick up that phone, one last time, and see if they realize what they're missing. Has this logic ever worked? Here's a hint: no. Calling customer service in an obviously altered state of mind will cause your pleas to fall on deaf, yet slightly amused, ears. If you want customer service to take a complaint or concern seriously, save the six-pack for when you call your ex.

## 7. Call during off-hours.

Yes, hold music is corporate America's version of water torture. To keep your sanity intact, try calling during off-hours. What are off-hours, you ask? If Company X has 24x7 customer service, try calling after 10pm. If not, try calling Tuesday-Thursday between 10am-8pm or any time on Sunday.

## 8. Don't call a "special number."

The blog of a spurned employee, a news station, or a radio show might give you

some kind of "secret" and "internal" number to Company X. They may claim it will eliminate hold time. Oftentimes, these "special numbers" are specifically for field technicians or an obscure department that cannot handle the concern. Call the main customer service number and pick the correct department. The towering inferno that is the Voice Response Unit may mistake your spoken request to "pay a bill in Iowa" for "cancelling all services immediately in Connecticut," but simply stating "agent" to the VRU may get you to a real, live person. If "agent" does not work, try similar terms such as "operator," "representative," "customer service," "parasite from the nether world," or "spawn of Satan."

9. Escalate, but only if necessary.

If there's no light at the end of a bleak tunnel, ask for a supervisor; however, do not immediately ask for management if you were mishandled on a previous call. Customer service representatives undergo weeks of training and, oftentimes, are more familiar with current customer issues than their supervisors. Supervisors are there to ensure that customer service representatives are doing their jobs; it is the job of the customer service representative to handle your call and concern.

10. Carefully consider contacting outside regulatory authorities.

If absolutely necessary, contact the Federal Communications Commission, established in 1934 to regulate communications by wire, cable, satellite, radio, and television. Complaints to the FCC are taken seriously and will be handled at Company X by a department well trained on their rules and regulations. Due to the escalated nature of this department, they may have higher hold times and more restricted hours of operation than regular customer service. If you've been completely, hideously, utterly, and unforgivably wronged, feel free to call a regulatory organization. If you'd like to voice a complaint, but do not need any further action taken regarding your concern, call or e-mail the company itself.

If you follow these ten tips, the balance may swing in your favor. May the customer service workforce be with you.