



Excellence In Customer Service

A sale is not something you pursue; it is something that happens to you while you are immersed in serving the customer.

-Unknown

Customer service is the ability of an organization to constantly and consistently exceed the customer's expectations. Simply put, it is the way in which an organization deals with its customers. Customer service is most evident in sales and after-sales service, but should inform all aspects of a transaction. Good customer service is the result of putting the customer first.

Providing outstanding customer service is one of the most rewarding challenges facing an organization. Exceptional organizations that provide outstanding customer service will experience numerous benefits: increased customer satisfaction, higher revenues, repeat and referral customer traffic, less employee turnover and increased profits.

A company may attempt to differentiate itself from its competition through the provision of better customer service. The consistent delivery of superior service requires the careful design and execution of a whole system of activities that includes people, technology and processes.



On average, _____% of customer defection takes place because customers feel they were treated poorly.



Common customer service mistakes

1. Not apologizing for mistakes you have made
2. Avoiding eye contact
3. Not following through on commitments
4. Not asking for feedback and input
5. Not articulating questions
6. Losing your cool
7. Communicating disinterest with your body language
8. Being elusive or too general with answers and solutions

Although your customers won't love you if you give bad service, your competitors will.

-Kate Zabriskie

Tips for effective customer service

1. **Communicate with a strong intention.** Always be professional, approachable, and accountable.
2. **Anticipate customer needs.** Understand your customers' perspectives and try to anticipate what problems or needs they may encounter so you can be prepared to handle their concerns efficiently and empathetically.
3. **Respond immediately.** Customers need to be heard and addressed as soon as possible to ensure situations are mediated effectively.
4. **Listen actively.** Listen to understand, not to respond. It is important for customers to know you are truly listening.
5. **Honor your commitments.** Provide clear, realistic expectations of what you can do and when. Don't over-promise and under-deliver.
6. **Empathize.** Think as if you were "in the customer's shoes" to understand his/her point of view.
7. **Check in.** Where necessary, keep the customer updated REGULARLY along the way, seeking feedback for improvement and assurance that the customer is satisfied.



*Your most unhappy customers are
your greatest source of learning.*

-Bill Gates

Customer Service Super Quiz

1. Customers are more easily satisfied if their expectations are effectively managed. (True/False)
2. In responding to a frustrated customer's question, it's a good idea to immediately offer a solution. (True/False)
3. Most upset customers will calm down if you offer a sincere apology. (True/False)
4. If a customer becomes abusive and begins to raise the volume of his voice, it is important to match that volume and intensity to assert yourself. (True/False)
5. The customer is always right. (True/False)
6. When you answer a call and the customer really needs to resolve the issue with another department, it's your responsibility to make sure the customer reaches someone who can help. (True/False)
7. When dealing with an angry customer face to face, making no eye contact and looking away will feel better for you and the customer. (True/False)
8. When dealing with an abusive customer on the phone, it's important to hang up right away. (True/False)
9. The employees who are the most knowledgeable are always rated most helpful and customer-friendly by the customer. (True/False)
10. Customers with complaints or gripes have nothing to offer but negativity and it is best to finish with them as quickly as possible. (True/False)
11. Customers trust you more if they have problems with your product or service and receive speedy resolution than if they have no problems with your product at all. (True/False)
12. The most credible advertising is a satisfied customer. (True/False)



EXERCISE: Courtesy Under Fire