



THE BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE

SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF

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WOW



- Creative Pros have 2 things in common;
 - They care
 - They're empowered

A good job doesn't cut it anymore.
The prize goes to the trail blazers.

It doesn't take money to get good customers, it takes commitment

- How do we get this level of commitment from employees?
 1. Get Excited – The first professional to motivate is YOU!
 2. Hire motivated people – "hire smart or manage tough"
 - Indoctrinate new staff into the customer service culture during orientation.
 3. Measure – Measurements motivate in different ways.
Competitive; compete with self; non-competitive;
 4. Institute profit sharing - What gets rewarded gets repeated.

Customer Service Zone By Robert Bacal

- Most compelling reason for good customer service:
 - When delivered, you experience less stress, less hassle and grief from the customer.
 - You can also save huge amounts of time.

The Ten Commandments of Great Customer Service!

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| I. Know who is boss | VI. Appreciate the power of YES |
| II. Be a good listener | VII. Know how to apologize |
| III. Identify and anticipate needs | VIII. Give more than expected (lagniappe) |
| IV. Make customers feel important and appreciated | IX. Get regular feedback |
| V. Help customers understand your system | X. Treat employees well |

First Contact: The Source of Customer Loyalty

- "Customer Satisfaction is Worthless; Customer Loyalty is Priceless"
- So says Jeffery Gitomer – paradigm shift
- May be the first step, but the next step is to shift the focus from loyal customers to loyal employees.
- The foundation for a loyal relationship begins with the employee.

- 5% of all communication is received as it was intended (Helsinki School of Business Research Study)
- 5 out of every 100 words are actually received by the customer as the employee intended.
- The source for many dissatisfied customers begins with this first contact.

Why are these folks so angry!

- On hold too long
- Previous problems with customer service
- Perceived injustice
- Legitimate service complaint
- F. Scott Fitzgerald: "It's not a slam at you when people are rude, it's a slam at the people they've met before".
- What makes you angry as a customer?

How to cool them down

- Let them vent
- Speak slowly in a low, resonant tone
- "That is frustrating, isn't it?" "I'd probably be upset if that happened to me".
- Calming language – "OK, let's start at the beginning".

George Columbo – "Killer Customer Care" Handle complaints with DEHEAT

- Deal with the customer, not the problem
- Exorcise your ego – You don't have to be right. Calm the customer, resolve situation
- Hear the customer out – Let 'em vent!
- Empathize – "I understand how you feel".
- Apologize – "I'm sorry this happened".
- Troubleshoot – How can we solve this?

What About Meeeeeeeeeee!

- Don't get caught up in an argument
- Take a few deep breathes
- Isometrics or just walk around
- Stare out into space.....
- If you can keep it together throughout the rant, you'll see a turn around from before to after.

Abusive Customers

- Direct and assertive – not combative
- "I care very much about your problem, but when you speak to me this way, I find it difficult to focus on a solution."
- "I understand this is difficult for you. Let's see what we can do to fix the problem."

Everybody Makes Mistakes

- Take Responsibility
- Don't place blame or speak bad about your organization or another employee
- Sincere apology
- Thank customer for pointing out the problem.

No No's

- "It's against our policy"
- "It's against the rules"
- Try this: "Oh, I'm so sorry. If I could do that for you, I would. Let me tell you what I can do".

Telephone Greetings that Customers Love

- Simplicity
- 1st impression is critical
- Pleasantry, Brevity, Sincerity
- Positive body language to attain the right emotional state
- Edge of chair, shoulders back, deep breathe, smile, 2 rings, answer
- No scripts – insincere, and irritating
- "Westminster Community Services and Recreation Department, this is Greg, how can I help you?" or, "Good Morning, this is Greg!"

Listening for \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$'s

- Customer complaints create profit
- Complaints are like medicine – nobody likes them but they make us better. More like preventative medicine because they provide advanced warning about problems.
- Frank Layton quote – "... I don't know and I don't care!"
- People complain to front liners about 45% of the time for service related issues. They complain to management about 5%, and 50% just go away!
- Complaining to people who act like they don't care ensures customer defection

Customer Retention is Profitable

- Resolving a complaint within 24 hours results in 96% retention. For each day of delay, about 10% additional loss. (Sertec, Atlanta complaint monitoring company)
- Companies can boost profits 100% by retaining 5% more of their customers (Reichheld and Sasser)

Circle of Service

Why keep customers satisfied?

- Treat them right, they'll come back because they like you;
- If they like you, they'll spend more money;
- If they spend more money you want to treat them better;
- If you treat them better, they keep coming back.

Why do customers come back?

Give them:

- What was promised
- Knowledgeable help
- Prompt, willing attention
- Good treatment

Don't give them one of these reasons to leave

- Ignore them or treat them indifferently
- Know too little about your classes, programs or organization
- Make excuses not to help
- Treat them like numbers
- Are cold, rude, unfriendly, impatient or generally unpleasant
- Talk down or make them feel ignorant or slow
- Make promises that aren't fulfilled

Demonstrate Empathy

- Walk a mile...
- Do unto others
- Shhhhhhhhhhh!
- Ask Questions
- Involve them in the solution
- Personalize, if possible
- Thank them by name

WEB – Friend or Foe?

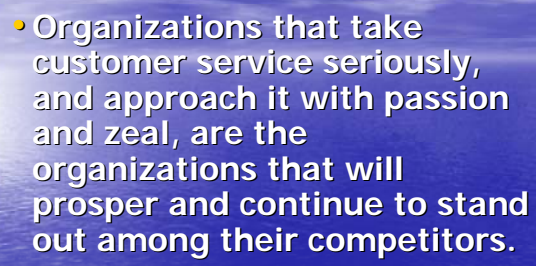
- Traditional customer contact – in person and phone
- Web Based – website, e-mail, chat, blogs
- Must be able to communicate using customer's channel of choice
- From costly phone calls to web-based communications for basic information
- Empower customers to find answers conveniently
- All staff need access to customer info

The Human Touch

- Through increased automation to reduce costs, being a customer has become devoid of any emotional value
- Look for excuses to chat with customers; customers crave human attention.
- Forrester Research found 71% of on-line buyers requested customer service by e-mail compared to 11% through web page FAQ's.
- Product-centric to customer-centric – Software needs to be capable of easy store/retrieve of customer history

- **"A lot of people have fancy things to say about customer service, including me. But it's just a day-in, day-out, ongoing, never ending, unremitting, persevering, compassionate type of activity"**

Leon Gorman, President of L.L. Bean

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- Organizations that take customer service seriously, and approach it with passion and zeal, are the organizations that will prosper and continue to stand out among their competitors.