Customer Service
CHILL

• Communications
• Honesty
• Integrity
• Listening
• Leadership
Who Are Your Customers?

What is Customer Service?
Establishing Your Attitude

We might all define customer service a little differently, but we can all agree on one thing: to provide great customer service, you need to put energy and enthusiasm into your interactions with customers.

Great customer service begins with a great attitude.

The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind.

William James
Appearance Counts!

• We all know that our appearance affects how people respond to us. But it can also affect our own self-image, and that in turn can affect how we interact with others.

• Most customers wish to be treated with courtesy and to deal with individuals who look like they have made an effort with their appearance.
The Power of a Smile

• A warm, genuine smile puts customers at ease and begins to build a connection with them. It can also help you maintain a positive attitude when you interact with customers.

• Having a smile on your face makes you look more welcoming. It is something that cannot be overestimated as a customer service and retention tool.
Stay Energized

We all experience low points during the course of the day, but there are ways to boost your energy when it is lagging.

• Take a walk, even if it’s just to the restroom.
• Drink a glass of cold water.
• Be sure to eat a good breakfast and lunch.
• Plug into others – being with energized people, keeps you energized!
• Listen to up-beat music.
• Try to stay humorous.
Staying Positive

Tips on staying positive:

• Rearrange or redecorate your workspace
• View negative situations as a training session for your future, use them to your benefit, they may help you later in life.
• Find ways to spend more time on tasks you enjoy
• Look for opportunities to learn new things
• Realize that you can find positives in any negative situation.
Identifying and Addressing Customer Needs

The first step in improving customer service is to determine what customer’s value in their interactions with your organization. What do they want? What do they need? The most obvious way to find out what customers want and need is to ask them.
Understanding the Customer’s Situation

• Ask them to explain the problem fully or if they have any suggestions that may help.
• 95% of the time the questions will seem a routine formality, but the other 5% are the ones that matter.
• Avoid vague answers; try to dig deep without being too intrusive. Be specific.
• Ask why they came to you and (tactfully as possible) why they left their previous supplier. You may be able to use this information to avoid similar mistakes.
Meeting Basic Needs

- **Friendliness**: Friendliness is the most basic of all customers needs, usually associated with being greeted graciously and with a smile.
- **Understanding and empathy**: Customers need to feel that you understand and appreciate their circumstances without criticism or judgment.
- **Fairness**: We all need to feel we are being treated fairly.
- **Control**: Control represents the customers’ need to feel they have an impact on the way things turn out.
- **Options and alternatives**: Customers need to feel that other avenues are available to getting what they want accomplished.
- **Information**: Customers need to be educated and informed about our products and services, and they don’t want us leaving anything out!
Try these simple tasks where applicable:

• Remember someone’s name and use it frequently in conversation
• Remember what someone has purchased
• Learn your customers likes and dislikes
• Contact your customers regularly
• Put their needs high on your priority list
• Inform customers of specials and sales
• Be available to meet his/her needs
• Follow up when you say you will
• Be organized and thorough
• Return customer calls promptly
• Demonstrate you want to fulfill their customer needs
Following Up
Dealing With Difficult People
Turning Difficult Customers Around

The seven situations of difficult customers are:

1. You don’t know the answer to a customer’s question.
2. You have to say no to a customer’s request.
3. Your computer is working slowly and the customer is getting impatient.
4. The customer makes an unrealistic request.
5. The customers doesn’t seem to believe you.
6. The customer is angry.
7. The customer doesn’t want to give you the information you need.
In any in-person interaction, body language has a major effect on how people interpret your message and respond to it.

• Types of body language:
  • Eye contact
  • Facial expression
  • Posture
  • Gestures
  • Nodding (or shaking your head “no”)
De-Escalating Anger

The first step in dealing with difficult customers is to lower the emotional temperature of the situation so that you can have a rational discussion.

The two essential steps in calming customers are:

• Show some empathy
• Make it clear that you want to help.
Establishing Common Ground

How to establish common ground when dealing with an unsatisfied customer:

• Let the customer vent
• Express empathy
• Make sure you understand the problem. Ask questions if you don’t.
• Find a solution
• Ask the customer to agree to the solution
• Follow up
Managing Your Own Emotions

Focus on these points to maintain control of your emotions when dealing with an agitated customer:

• Understand how you typically respond to situations like this.
• Don’t allow yourself to get angry or defensive. That will only make the situation worse.
• Show empathy for the customer.
• Turn the course of the interaction from negative to positive.
Understanding When to Escalate

Providing great customer service does not mean that you have to put up with threats, intimidation, or vulgar language from customers. If customers are out of control, you need to take over the situation and protect yourself.

Letting your customers set your standards is a dangerous game, because the race to the bottom is pretty easy to win.

Seth Godin
How to respond to physical threats:

• When a customer makes a physical threat, your number one priority is to protect yourself and your coworkers.
• Get help immediately, either from your coworkers or from security personnel.
• Inform your supervisor immediately.
Ten Things You Can Do to WOW Customers Every Time

1. Greet customers with a smile, either in person or on the phone.
2. Be helpful, even if there’s no profit in it.
3. Know your product or service.
4. Don’t make customers feel like dummies.
5. Listen to customers. In dealing with customers, listen more than you talk.
6. Remember that employees will treat customers the way they are treated by management.
7. Make customers feel important and appreciated.
8. Make things easy for customers.
9. Throw in something extra.
10. Say thank you. This might seem obvious, but it’s easy sometimes to forget to thank customers for their business.

Here is a simple but powerful rule — always give people more than what they expect.

Nelson Boswell
Emotional Intelligence

Why it is important
50% of time wasted in business is due to lack of trust

(John O. Whitney, Director, Deming Center for Quality Management).
The reasons for losing customers and clients are 70% EQ-related, e.g., didn’t like company customer service.

(Forum Corporation on Manufacturing and Service Companies, 2004-2005)
A Five Step Plan to Manage Feelings

1. Identify the primary Feelings
2. Identify the cause of the feelings.
3. Ask what would help (me/you) feel better?
4. Generate options.
5. Choose the best option.
Respect

- All humans need to feel respected, even the least powerful
- To show respect to someone we must respect their feelings
- Respecting feelings includes asking about feelings, validation and empathy
- Respecting someone means asking how they would feel before making decisions which affect them
How it Works in Customer Service

• Teach Representatives to look for and validate feelings - Ask what would help the customer feel better

• Use a simple scale such as 0-10 for each feeling

• Avoid saying things like “It is company policy” “I am not Authorized to do that.” “There is Nothing I can do.” “You should gotten the person’s name.”
Key Feelings you want customers and employees to have

• Respected
• Important
• Remembered
• Acknowledged
• Satisfied
• Helped
• Understood
Summary

- Start talking about feelings
- Start respecting them
- Include feelings in decision making and problem resolution
- Listen to the most sensitive people in the organization

- Strike a balance between emotion and logic
- Develop the EQ skills throughout the organization
- Make your business a place of mutual respect for feelings
- Identify the key feelings important for success
Questions