

August 2012

Dear Judi,

Outstanding customer service equals company profits! It is critical that we keep learning ways to improve that service. I am passing along a few different twists on that subject.

Judi

Providing Quality Service

Quality is undeniably the single most important facet involved in retaining your clientele.

Improving satisfaction is critical to boosting profits and quality is the key to keeping customers happy. But how do you define quality and inject it into your relationships with customers? By living it.

Your company's commitment should be to meet or exceed your clientele's expectations. Make that the first topic discussed at weekly staff meetings. Do everything to ensure that your staff always offers superior service.

The best leaders know that quality and a successful business are synonymous. Practice these three steps to pay attention to detail and people will believe in your commitment to excellence:

Focus on customers' needs. Understand what your customers require and be uncompromising in responding to them. Send out frequent questionnaires to take the pulse on how your customers feel about every aspect of your business. Even if they don't respond, they'll see that you care.

Contact former customers. Ask them why they left and how you can win them back. Educate yourself and your staff about the cost of losing a customer.

Train employees and verify they are paying attention. Listen in on telephone calls and monitor face-to-face interactions with customers to ensure that staff members are always courteous. Make sure they know exactly what you expect. A ruffled customer can become a lost customer.

Don't rest on your laurels. If your company is already successful with your clientele, congratulations. But don't forget that paradigms change. Years ago, the Swiss were synonymous with quality when it came to timepieces, while Japanese watches were considered inferior. Then digital became the word of the day and Japan (think Seiko) became the new industry leader. Keep your eye on changing trends and customer tastes and you'll stay on top of your industry.

When you take quality seriously, success will follow. Certainly, it takes time and effort. But the payoff is a clientele that remains intact and a balance sheet that keeps improving.

Nathan Wechsler & Company

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Customer Service Basics

Servicing a customer is a part of every purchase and interaction with internal and external contacts. It can last a few seconds up to hours. So if we all do it and experience it everyday in almost everything we do, why isn't good customer service the norm?

We all have stories about when we were treated exceptionally well or extremely poorly. We tend to share these extraordinary stories with others. We all know that word of mouth marketing can be the absolute best advantage, or the worst drawback for a company.

Warren Buffett said it best: "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently. "

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By Barb Lyon

How to Make Customer Service Easy for Your Employees

Offering great customer service is hard. The definition of what it is exactly changes from customer to customer and from situation to situation. This makes it especially difficult for employees who try to apply their company training to a particular situation. In a connected world, customer service has become the new marketing. A dissatisfied customer used to be able to tell seven people. With social media, they now can tell 7 million people!

In focusing on customer service, leaders need to answer these questions first.

1. What does the customer mean to their company mission?
2. What is their personal attitude toward customers?
3. What do their employees and customers think they do right and wrong?
4. How do they personally stay in touch with customers?
5. What characteristics do they look for in front-line sales and service people?
6. Have they empowered their employees?
7. How much process is in place to identify issues and solutions immediately?

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By Barry Moltz

Workers Reflect Their Boss

One of my hobbies is watching people work and wondering what will make them more productive. Through these observations, I reflect on how leaders can have a greater impact. I guess this makes me somewhat of a leadership mystery shopper.

My wife is not too thrilled with this, as I seem to do it wherever we are - out to eat, shopping, travelling and in many other situations.

This hobby started when I had a great experience with a brand one day, and then on another was greatly let down by that same brand.

It made me wonder about the difference.

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By Tommy Weir

Upcoming Events:

Conference for Corporate Researchers - Sept 19-21 in Dallas, TX.

[Click here for more info](#)

ESOMAR Annual Congress - Sept 9-12 in Atlanta, GA. [Click here for more info](#)

Process Driven Innovation Conference - Sept 13-14 in Philadelphia, PA. [Click here for more info](#)

AMA Marketing Research Conference - Oct 1-3 in Las Vegas, NV.

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CASRO Annual Conference - Oct 8-11 in Scottsdale, AZ. [Click here for more info](#)

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