



Fast Guide

Fast guide to Customer Service



Providing excellent Customer Service

Peel back the layers and you will discover that at the heart of any successful business lies its customers - cosseted, consulted, listened to, respected and appreciated. They are the leaders, the catalysts for future development. As Sir Terry Leahy, Chief Executive, Tesco once remarked, "We follow the customer, if they change, we change."

Quality customer service is critical - it is the differentiator between business success and mediocrity - even failure.

Four steps to excellent customer service:

1. See an individual in every customer

Remember that customers are individuals who, in this age of automated phone services, often crave and invariably appreciate some personal attention - the human touch.

If you listen actively and use their name you will be perceived as being polite and courteous, you will be delivering confidence, showing respect and in turn earning their respect, thus building a strong relationship that fosters loyalty, a vital factor in customer retention.

2. Welcome complaints

A complaint is precious. It is free, the best and often the only feedback you will get. It provides you with a golden opportunity to identify and address crucial aspects of your business that are not meeting your customers' expectations.

If handled swiftly, personally and professionally a business can recover extremely well even transforming complainants into walking advertisements for itself and its products.

3. View every interaction as a moment of truth

Respond as quickly as possible to all communications, whether face-to-face, on the telephone, e-mail or letter. Remember that every

interaction is an opportunity to impress not disappoint.

Keeping the customer informed pays dividends. If you say you are going to get back to them - you must. Keeping promises and commitments is an essential element of first class customer service.

4. Be proactive

Customer service begins with a positive attitude. Say what you can do, not what you can't. Smile and enjoy what you are doing. Contact a customer and ask if everything is OK and if there is anything else they require.

Every one of us can make a difference and legendary customer service means going that extra mile and delivering those 'little extras'. In an increasingly frantic world where time often eludes us it is well worth remembering that good customer service costs far less than bad customer service. **S**

Written by Rachel Davies of Peak Performance Training, providers of inspirational training to employees at all organisational levels.

Telephone: 01455 213683 Email: rachel.peakperformance@tinyonline.co.uk