

## RETAIN AND “GROW” YOUR CUSTOMERS

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**Remember: 60% of your sales will come from your existing customers**

### **It's All About Relationships!**

- Customer Is King / Queen – most times!
- Over Deliver – follow your Checklist
- Customer Surveys – Ask them what they want!
- Loyalty – show how you care for them
- Don't Under-Estimate The “little grey lady/man”
- LISTEN to Your Customer – 70/30 Rule
- Always Be Professional
- Right Mind Attitude & Body Language

### **Exceptional Customer Service**

1. Let no customer wait more than 3 minutes
2. Do a little extra each time
3. Redress a customer's concerns immediately
4. Seek customer ideas on improving service
5. Attend to detail
6. Keep those promises
7. Make sure you and your support team are 'in the know' – share your tasks
8. Be confident that your products work i.e. what the customer wants
9. Get to the customers before they get to you – to squash any rumors in the marketplace
10. Spend as much time as possible with your customer
11. Give customers individual attention
12. Wear name badges
13. Give customers feedback
14. Confidentiality

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### Customer Service Questions

- Who is your customer?
- How well do you satisfy their wants?
- Are all your activities focused on creating value for your customers?
- Do you focus on the 20% of customers who give you 80% of your sales?
- Is there a winning feeling throughout your company?
- How confident are you of your competitive capability?

### If You’ve Messed Up – Accept responsibility and Say you’re sorry, then fix it!

Upset customers want ....

- You to listen to their problem
- You to understand their problem and the reason they are upset
- Some type of compensation for the inconvenience they incurred, if warranted
- Their problem to be handled quickly
- Avoidance of further inconvenience
- To be treated with respect
- Assurance it won’t happen again
- Deliver a “Sorry Cake”

### Key Things to Remember

- Some customers have a negative value
- Don’t take it personally – upset people often say things they don’t mean
- Don’t re-hash the experience with your colleagues or in your own mind – move on!
- Keep upset customers out of the public eye
- Let the customer blow off steam
- Listen !!!

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**Telephone Techniques** can be summarized in one word: COURTESY. If the caller is a potential customer and you are courteous to him, you have an excellent chance of gaining a new customer. If he is an existing customer, you’ll keep him for life!

- Speak directly into the mouthpiece. If this is a problem because you use other equipment while on the telephone (i.e., computer), consider purchasing a headset, which will free your hands.
- Do not eat or chew gum while talking on the telephone (your caller may ask what you’re having for lunch!!)
- Answer your own telephone within 2-3 rings and give the caller your name. e.g. “Hello, this is John Smith, how may I help you today?” People tend to make mistakes when using “Good Morning” or “Good Afternoon” (i.e. saying “good morning” when it’s really afternoon and vice versa).
- In some situations, you may need to put your caller on hold e.g. to negotiate with your Manager for a discount. If this happens ...
  - ❖ ask your caller “Do you mind holding?” or “May I put you on hold?” before doing so – then be sure to listen to their response.
  - ❖ After placing your caller on hold, check back periodically (between 30-45 seconds). Give them the option to continue to hold if it will take longer to find information OR offer to call them back.
  - ❖ When returning to your caller, remember to thank them for waiting.
  - ❖ If your caller cannot hold, offer to call them back (and then you capture their direct landline or mobile number!) or arrange for them to return their call at a specific time.
- Returning phone calls. Most people find it frustrating when they return phone calls only to learn the other person isn’t in. To avoid playing telephone tag, try the following:
  - ❖ When calling someone, establish specific call-back times. Ask, “When is the best time for me to call again?” or “When is the best time for them to call me back?”

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- ❖ When taking calls for another individual, schedule return calls during specific blocks of time i.e. “I expect him to return by 2:00 p.m. You can reach him between 2 and 5”.
- Tell the customer clearly what you will do and when you will get back to them.
- Closing the conversation. Many times, people find it difficult to end a telephone conversation. There are some specific things that you can say to close your conversation professionally:
  - ❖ Thanking the caller lets them know the call is over. e.g. “Thank you for calling” or “I’m really glad you called” or “I’m glad we resolved this concern”.
  - ❖ State the action you will take.
  - ❖ Spell out follow-up action, including time frames/deadlines.
  - ❖ Say “Good-bye” not “bye-bye,” “Okie-dokie,” “Alrighty,” or any other slang phrase.

**Telephone language.** Although we tell our callers a lot through our voice tone, the words and phrases we use convey a message. Unfortunately, sometimes we send a negative message to our caller. Be aware of the language you are using.

- ❖ Instead of saying “You have to...You need to...Why didn’t you?” try “Will you please...Would you please?”
- ❖ “Your problem” or “Your complaint,” would sound better phrased as “Your question,” “Your concern,” or “this situation.”
- ❖ Some people use phrases like “I can’t do that” or “it’s not my job.” Instead, tell the caller what you can do i.e. “While I’m not able to establish policy on this matter, I will speak to my manager about your concern.”
- ❖ At all costs, avoid sounding abrupt. The following are examples:
  - “Hang on” --“Hold on” --“Who’s calling?” --“I can’t hear you, speak up!”
  - “I can’t help you. You’ll have to speak to someone else.”

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The following would be more appropriate:

--"May I put you on hold?" --"May I say who is calling please?"

--"I am having a little difficulty hearing you. Can you please speak up?"

- Get back to the caller!
- Be friendly and tactful

### Email Marketing

Communicating with your customers via email can be time effective, but they need to be done as text rather than an image.

Ideally, the company's website should be used as a lead generator – a showcase to the world and a catalogue of choices for a viewer.

Consequently, sending a short attention-grabbing email to your customers with a link to the website's relevant page can have an impact on bringing customers into your store eg to the catalogue page for ideas.

This link could also be redirected to an educational style article on the website – helping your customer in some way e.g. how to measure a kitchen correctly for the number of tiles required or how to lay tiles correctly.

Emails can also be used to follow up with customers after their purchases – however, telephonic or verbal communication has more impact for this.

### Mobile Marketing

Mobile phones are now playing a significant role in product marketing.

Your customer is likely to look at his/her mobile phone before opening an email.

Use WhatsApp to group your customers, promote products and follow up quotations.