

10 Top Tips for Excellent Customer Service

Don't lose your shirt... or worse still, your business

Lets face it, when people buy, **they are buying the certainty** that you can do what you say you do. When they stop buying it's because they've either lost faith in the promise or they just don't like the way you carry out that service. People and providers who only focus on 'the job', get a label as a 'jobs-worth' if the promise comes with absolutely nothing else, let me explain...

Customers always want more than just what is on 'the ticket'. Whilst people do complain about the product, very frequently it has more to do with the manner in which something was delivered.

Bad experiences in a restaurant for example often focus on the food or the service. Both are important. You can forgive the restaurant more readily for cold food (the job) that was rectified promptly and reasonably (the service).

Frequently the reason that people would refuse to go back to a restaurant would be because the manner of the people (the service) was so appalling or rude.

So, the loss of business for, say a plumber is not normally because they couldn't fix the radiator (the job), it's because, they were late, made excuses or fobbed you off with something at the time of doing the job (the service).

Contractors often win contracts on price and keep them with their levels of service. Customers invariably buy with emotion and customer service is always emotional – whether it's good, or bad.

Poor customer service will literally 'cost' you your contract. Beware.

10 Top Tips to providing great customer service.

1. **Be honest** -
And don't make promises that you can't keep. Think of the number of times that you've been let down by a promise of a phone call by a supplier. It taints your view of their service.
2. **1st impressions** -
People make friends within a matter of seconds. They can also go 'off' someone just as fast. Get your people to believe that customers do matter and that they ARE your business..
3. **Smile – It's positive** -
Everyone knows who the moaning and negative people are. So do your customers!
4. **Don't pass the Customer from pillar to post and know your stuff** -
Everyone likes to feel valued and that they are being looked after. You know what it feels like to be passed over to someone else because they can't deal with your enquiry. It's frustrating.

5. **Listen -**
It's amazing what they can tell you. What they say and what they don't say, the words they use and how they say them – all indicate how the customer is feeling. LISTEN
6. **Think about how you can improve what you do -**
If everybody is moaning about the same thing, then you know what it is that you need to do.
7. **Never argue with your customer -**
You won't win! Well, you might do, but it won't help. Sometimes its better to back down even when you know you're in the right.
8. **Don't be elusive, make it easy for customers to contact you -**
Identify how your customers like to communicate with you and be available.
9. **Avoid Jargon -**
Stick to simple language that your customer will understand. But never, ever patronise them!
10. **Really understand the customer's complaint -**
Don't jump to conclusions, summarise and check back with the customer to ensure that you understand the complaint from their perspective. After all, you don't want to waste time resolving the wrong issue!