Customer Service

Customer service is simply doing the best you can to meet the needs of someone using your services or buying your product. There are numerous ways to provide customer service. But fundamentally, if the service is not good, customers won’t return, they will tell others of the negative service, and you will get bad reviews online.

The customer service you and your staff provide to patrons is fundamental to building a loyal customer base. When people feel comfortable with you and your establishment, not only do they repeatedly patronize, but they tell others about the service, encouraging patronage by other. Word of mouth recommendations is arguably the most powerful form of marketing you can benefit from.

Customer service is a continuous process. It begins before the customer even considers your business. Your advertising and marketing presents your business, service, or product with a certain perception by the consumer. If the perception instills a belief that the customer would have good service at your business, then the customer is likely to patronize your establishment. But customer service then continues upon entering your business, during your business, and after they leave your business. How the customer is greeted and treated upon entering the establishment. Remember, people want to feel important. But greeting them immediately upon entering, the customer immediately feels acknowledged and valued rather than ignore and unimportant to your business.

Of all the methodologies and techniques you may read about regarding how to provide good customer service pale in comparison to the one fundamental tenant of good customer service. Smiling. As simple as it sounds, it is by far the most effective and engaging form of customer service you and your staff can provide. A smile is disarming. People come in with the problems of their own lives and it is unfortunate that they take them out on staff at times. Among the easiest ways to disarm someone, provide positive energy to counteract their negative energy, and initiate a rapport with the customer is simply to smile.

The caveat is that the smile must be genuine. People can read a fake smile. People can sense a feigned interest in their needs. We all want to be a billionaire living on a yacht, but that is not the real world. The important thing you and your staff need to do first and foremost before ever engaging with a customer is accept the job for what it is. There’s nothing wrong with letting the job be a stepping-stone toward another goal. However, you and your staff must accept that until that other goal is reached, this is the job you have now, and this is what the job requires - it requires you to provide good customer service.

As I said, people want to feel important and valued. This expends to your staff as well. An employee can perform all the appropriate behaviors, say all the correct things, and complete all the correct tasks and still give bad customer service simply because it is not genuine. If the smile is forced, if the body language is directed away form the customer, if the purchase and checkout is rushed or carried out without ye contact and engagement, the customer is given an energetic message that he/she was a bother, was an interruption to the employee’s day, and not welcomed. That will make that customer go somewhere else the next time they need that product again.

Once you have a genuine engagement with the customer, the next requirement to ensure the customer service provided is good customer service is to be knowledgeable about the product or service. Your employee can be the sweetest, nicest, kindest person, but if they don’t know anything about the product or service the customer will get frustrated, lose confidence in your business, and choose to go somewhere else.

The other main component of good customer service is to understand the customer. Knowing your target demographic (those specific types of customers you are looking to service) is a major component in providing good customer service. For example, if you have a motorcycle shop, you are not likely targeting schoolgirls who like playing with dolls. Knowing who your demographic is and what their needs are allows for good customer service. If your staff are not motorcycle enthusiasts themselves, it may be difficult to translate a genuine interest in the customers’ needs, which can come across as bad service.

Basic customer service principles:

1. Greet with a smile
2. Accept this is the job
3. Be genuine
4. Be knowledgeable
5. Understand your customer