



Looking from the Outside In

Would You Buy from YOU?

It's interesting to note that most people know how they prefer to be treated when they are the customer; they know clearly what they expect. The fundamentals of customer service are not at all complicated, so why do we witness such appallingly poor, almost rude customer service practices and standards? We are very forgiving as Canadians; I commonly hear people thanking people even after having received horrendous customer service! In fact, I'm guilty of it myself.

If you are in a customer service business, consider taking a close look at yourself from the outside in. Would you buy from YOU?

First impressions

Remember, you and your staff will be assessed within the first 10 seconds. It starts with having the right attitude! Make a great first impression by demonstrating a positive attitude!

I recently bought a mattress from a store that demonstrated a very professional approach. The sales person smiled, displayed an upbeat greeting and a positive and sincere approach. He demonstrated a sincere desire to genuinely help, identify my needs by asking all the right questions, and listen attentively. He presented me with options, and then sought my order for the item I thought best suited my needs. Guess what? He closed me... I bought the item I wanted; he then sold me a new mattress cover that I didn't know I needed. He thanked me for my business, shook my hand, gave me his card and asked me to please come again. I said I will be glad to and thanked him for the great service.

Here are some important points to re-assess your customer service standards - Take a look from the outside in. **How do you rate yourself?**

Do you/are you...	Poor	Fair	Excellent
Smile and present a polite friendly upbeat greeting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listen carefully to the customer's needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take the time to do it right?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passionate to be thorough?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take care of your appearance & grooming standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sell complementary products?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suggest alternate options?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow up?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organized?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remember to say THANK YOU?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remember to invite them back?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Answer the phone professionally?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have closing skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Try to exceed customers' expectations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you would like to improve in any of the above areas, prioritize what is most important to improve upon, set the goal and be sure to write a realistic action

plan that you can measure. Continue the process and watch your customer service standards Excel to great levels.

Do people want rushed or efficient service?

We live in a rush-rush society; however we all know what can be the result of rushed work: often unfinished, not thorough, with mistakes left behind.

Never enough time to do it right, always enough time to do it twice. In this case, you likely would NOT get a second chance to make a first impression.

Slow Down and Do It Right!

Watch your relationships improve with your customers.

Watch your bottom line improve as well!

People want professional, efficient and consistent customer service.

Are we allowed to let customer service standards slide just because we are too busy? Stay professional, in control even when busy or when things may not be going your way and remember to always sincerely thank your customers. ■

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