



Helping Organizations Define and Develop Top Talent

Delivering Great Customer Service

By Jennifer C. Zamecki and the Team at Well-Run Concepts

The goals for delivering great customer service starts with delivering a service-oriented attitude that is genuine. You want to exceed the client's expectations and apply the service standards. It is also important to measure your effectiveness in delivering great customer service.

There are three service standards to keep in mind when dealing with a client or customer. These include using and giving personal attention to the customer, teamwork, and taking personal responsibility. There are a couple of ways you can give personal attention to your customers. First, you can anticipate their needs by recommending services or ideas that would benefit them, as well as noticing the clients' wants and needs before they have to ask. Another way is to treat every client as a "Very Important Person". This can be accomplished by treating each client as a unique individual, using their name whenever possible, and by making the clients feel as if they are your top priority.

There are a number of ways to take responsibility. Be sure to follow through (be timely and responsive, keep promises, see a project through until the end) with a client. You should check customer satisfaction, offer alternatives, and show appreciation as well. These service standards will help you to exceed your client's expectations, show your positive attitude, and measure the level of service you are delivering to your client.

Clients are worth more than a one-time interaction. You should take several things into consideration when dealing with a customer, such as revenue from a single sale, the average number of sales per year, and the average number of sales with a client over his/her lifetime. And by providing genuine service, you are giving your clients what they expect, as well as setting yourself apart from all other organizations. If you can go beyond what the client expects and do more for the client than other competing companies, this will lead to 100% client satisfaction. Donald A. Adams said, "To give real service, you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity."

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Another important aspect to delivering great customer service is to develop a consulting partnership with your clients. It is important to be the one to make the opening move and take the initiative. If you approach each interaction with a positive, caring attitude and view it as an opportunity to exceed their expectations, you will be well on your way to developing a valuable and lasting partnership. Three guidelines for creating a truly memorable impression include smiling and warmth with every interaction; presenting an "I'm here for you" attitude (by seeming ready, eager, attentive and caring); and finally by personalizing every interaction.

Satisfying the client can be a tricky endeavor when you are faced with multiple complaints and angry clients. When faced with complaints, it is necessary to listen to the client, apologize, sympathize, and most importantly, to take action. Angry clients are probably the biggest challenge opportunity you can face. Make sure to remain calm and not to take it personally. Kill 'em with kindness, and they won't be able to resist you! It is a good idea to remember the client's names (and use them) as well as referring to details about the clients. This little bit of personal attention may be all that is needed to win them over.

Goethe once said, "When we treat a man as he is, we make him worse than he is. When we treat him as if he already were what he potentially could be, we make him what he should be." There are many reasons customers quit returning to a place of business. 4% of them move away (you can't do anything about them). 5% change their habits (meaning they want to try something new for a while, the novelty factor). 9% of them quit because they're attracted to your competition. 14% of your customers leave because they're unhappy with your service. And an overwhelming 68% of your customers will leave you because they encounter an attitude of indifference. Certainly there are precautionary measures you can take to prevent some of your customers from leaving if you are aware of factors like these.

Delivering great customer service will not happen over night, but with a few well thought-out strategies, you can achieve 100% client satisfaction. If you are looking for a quick reference to great customer service, here are the "Six Secrets of Service."

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1. If you don't like people, you have no business being in the people business.
2. Serve them well, you keep them. Service them poorly, you lose them.
3. Give the client, not what he wants, but what he really needs.
4. Make your clients feel good about spending their money.
5. If you can't get out of it, get into it!
6. When you give great service, EVERYBODY WINS!!!

For further information on delivering exceptional customer service, please feel free to contact us. Best of luck in WOW Service!

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