

# Customer Service

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Is good quality Customer Service a thing of the past?

Things that I am passionate about and weigh heavily on my mind are the very things that find me wide awake at 4am and ready to solve the world's problem. Customer satisfaction is definitely on my top 10 list of hot topics. Having dual interest (consumer & business owner) in the area may be the root of my obsession with this issue.

As a consumer, I know my expectations of good quality customer service. However, many times when leaving a business establishment, I find myself wondering what in the world were they thinking to have treated me the way they did! At the same time, I make a conscious decision to never return to their establishment. It doesn't stop there. The next course of action is to tell everyone in my circle of influence about my bad experience and the way I was treated. The chain is started for negative feedback.

As a business owner, the same expectations of quality customer service exist, however, I find myself asking how long do they think they will stay in business if they continue to operate in this way? Do they realize that this one transaction could impact the bottom line of the business? Do they know or even care about my customer service needs and expectations? So, instead of telling my circle of influence about the bad experience, constructive feedback is provided to the business establishment. This is a tough step and one of the paths least traveled. It gives the business owner the opportunity to turn a negative into a positive and make improvements to the performance of the business and/or the employee.

So, ask yourself – would I tell ten friends about the bad experience or would I tell the business establishment about the bad experience? You are the business owner so ask yourself the most important question - would you want your customer telling ten friends or would you want them telling you?

As a business owner, you definitely want the customer telling you – good and bad feedback. The majority of your customers will not provide you feedback. Instead, they are going to tell the world and not you. This is why it is so important that as a business owner you make sure you have processes in place for collecting this information proactively on a continual basis. By collecting feedback, you will be in a better position to implement changes and improvements to the business that leads to a satisfied customer and employee. In addition, the information gathered will help reinforce the positive things you are doing as well as identify the areas where improvements are needed to ensure customer satisfaction. Customer needs change all the time and seeking the information will keep you abreast to the changing needs and expectations.

Do you know what your customer's are saying? Do you know what your employees are saying? You don't know what you don't know unless you ask. The customer and employee are the pulse of your business. They are your main source to collect information of how well you are doing and what you need to put in place to better serve them and grow your business. If you were a Doctor, would you prescribe medication without first making a true diagnosis of the problem? The answer is no, and the same rings true with your business.

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