



Customer Service Tips

By Mike Bryson, June 2007

In any business our customers are one of our most important assets. Unfortunately there are days when not all customers want to be friendly or pleasant. On days like this, try these effective tips to help you handle those difficult customers.

Don't take it personally – remember when a customer complains they are unhappy with the product or your company – not you.

Remember you are good at your job – remind yourself of the skills you have and why you are working there. Don't allow customers to make you feel inadequate.

Write down their complaint or concern – show the customer you are listening by recording their problem and if you are on the phone, tell the customer you are writing down all the details.

Ask a supervisor to join you and be part of the transaction – if the customer is becoming more difficult, invite a supervisor to join you and the customer will notice you are treating them as important by seeking additional help.

Debrief the situation with someone else when the customer leaves – sometimes you may need to talk to someone about your difficult customer to debrief and get rid of any negative thoughts and emotions you may have – this is a very important step.

Learn stress management techniques – this may help you stay calm if a customer raises their voice or becomes emotional. By learning to breath deeply, focus on the positives and also ensure your body doesn't carry stress you will be able to handle these difficult customers easily.

Recognize and accept you will work with customers who have bad days – understand when you are working with the public some people take their bad days out on you – it is not personal.

Consider what you could do differently next time – if the customer is complaining about a company system or process, take some time to review this and determine if this might need to be changed. Think about the way you handled the customer and note anything you would do differently next time.