



Customer Service: What's Your Point?

Chuck Swinden

Keystone Consulting

There's a saying that first impressions are the most important ones...they can make or break a business relationship. We often forget this and miss a golden opportunity to make that perfect first impression because we are busy, busy, busy. We are so busy that we forget the purpose and reason we are in business...the Client. If we work at making our Client's first impression of us strong and positive, we can expect repeat business and client-confidence in what we do and what we offer. All this comes from simply making a good first impression every time.

Top Five Customer Service Pitfalls

1. Waiting

When a client walks in don't keep fussing over paperwork, or coffee machines, or personal calls while leaving them standing awkwardly, trying to catch someone's attention. Walk up to them and greet them, welcome them, make them feel appreciated. After all, they're coming to *your* place of business and *not* the competition across the road. You need to make sure the first impression you give counts or you may not get a second chance.

2. It's not my job:

Make it your job! How often do we hear "that's not my department"? If you work for the same company, then it's your responsibility to help make that perfect first impression. This, again, is often a *golden opportunity lost*; one there is no reason for. Why not jump to the chance to impress your Client with what makes your business and your staff so different from the competition, and, so much better.

3. It's just a job:

This seems to be *the excuse* heard again and again. As business owners, accepting this type of behaviour from ourselves or our employees is one place where many of us fall dangerously short. Too many people in the Customer Service industry have become complacent. They are putting in time until something "better" comes along, taking very little pride in the job they currently hold.

4. Eyes Wide Shut.

Open your eyes. Employees and business owners need to be walking with ears and eyes open at all times. Listen, look, and watch for those subtle cues Clients will use to get your attention. When you start the day in your place of work be sure that everyone is on-line with the same mental savvy and awakened state. Take the ball and run with it. Lead your staff, coach your staff, and be very sincere with your approach. We need to be on our toes at all times, we need to look, observe, and jump to the opportunity to satisfy our clients, whomever they are. Most importantly, we must be consistent with service we offer at all times.

5. Lack of Training:

There's so much more to Customer Service than learning how to run the cash register or stock the shelves. And, unfortunately, this is where most training plans fall short. We all assume that the "people part" of Customer Service should be second nature, and, in this day and age it's *not*. It needs to be made part of a comprehensive training plan.

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