

THE ULTIMATE CUSTOMER SERVICE CHECKLIST

Wow Your Customer &
Increase Retention



Welcome!

When it comes to customer service it's actually quite easy to make a huge difference. It's often down to attitude and skill. The

attitude bit is harder and that's why making sure you appoint the right people is so crucial. (we can help with that too!).

What is actually quite simple though is to enable your staff and managers to get their hands on the skills, tools and techniques that will transform the interaction when they communicate with customers.

Mastery of both what you say and how you say it makes all the difference. There's a certain psychology behind it.

Here's an example: Whenever we undertake call recordings or mystery shopping for our clients we invariably hear a selection of words and phrases used by staff that can cause a tricky situation or escalate it.

They are what we call 'red rags' or accelerators because if your staff use these words and phrases with your customers, it's going to fast track their aggression and even cause a complaint.

Escalated behaviour requires a high level of skill to diffuse it and can end up costing you



“There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody from the chairman down simply by spending his money somewhere else”

SAM WALTON



time, money and possibly loss of a customer too.

So if you want to improve customer service and complaints handing, face to face and over the phone here's just one of our many tips:

A selection of expressions to avoid include:

“You must”

“You should”

“I’ll try”

“I’m going to put you on hold”

“OK”

“If you could just calm down”

“Not much I can do...”

“I hear what you’re saying but...”

Poor customer service and escalated situations and complaints take a huge amount of skill to sort out and can end up costing you time, money and inevitably loss of customers too. Practical tips, techniques and skills however can have a magic wand effect.



So, to help you further, see our **A – Z of Customer Service and Complaints Management**.

Good luck, and by all means drop me a line to let me know how you get on. You can email me personally at: alison@leadinglightlearning.com

If you are looking for customer experience or complaints handling training in your organisation, either for managers or staff, then give us a call on 0845 165 6269 or email enquiries@leadinglightlearning.com and we'd be delighted to show you how we can help.

Kind regards

Alison

Alison Miles-Jenkins BA (Hons) FCIPD

Chief Executive

Get the most from our A –Z on the next few pages!

A-Z Customer Service and Complaints Management

Acknowledge – view, feelings, emotions. This is one of the most essential skills but never ever say “I hear what you’re saying”

Assumptions – avoid at all costs

Attitudes – the most important aspect to check out when recruiting/promoting customer service staff

Body Language – consider yours and theirs. Physiology is really important

Bridge – a useful model when handling complaints and moving towards a resolution

Broken Record – an assertive technique which can work wonders if used properly (which it often isn’t)

Clarify – skillful use of questions and listening to check out understanding and needs

Cultural differences – be aware, appreciate, listen and avoid assumptions

Debrief – particularly after a stressful dialogue with a customer or when ideas/points raised may be transformational for the customer experience or at least improve it

Diffusion – use techniques to avoid further escalation and move towards resolution



Dissatisfaction – may or may not be voiced as a complaint. Watch customer's physiology and tone for indicators along with their pace and choice of words. Pick up signals early on

Empathy – a key skill showing genuine understanding of perspective and great for helping to quickly develop rapport

Expectations – what it is all about. Anticipate, discover, do everything possible to meet or exceed

Explanation – delivered in a consistent but flexible way. Use positive power words

Feedback and Follow through – keep your promises and no weak links in communication channels

Forced Choice – two options always work better than one

Gift – feedback for the business and great from an organisational development, learning and development and change perspective

Greeting – get off to a good start. Just a couple of seconds to form a lasting impression

Helpful – at all times. Regardless

Improve – continuous learning and use customer feedback to tweak, test and tailor

Joined up thinking – across the business – for consistency, standards, sharing

Keep calm – but never tell the customer to calm down

Listening – actively



Log – look for consistent patterns

Magic wand – used well many of our techniques have this effect

Neutral – neutral or factual questions work well but only after emotions expressed and acknowledged

Outcome – provides the right focus

Perspective – yours and theirs

Questions – open

Red Rags – avoid at all cost

Resolution – think Resolution rather than complaint

Respond – don't react

Signs and Signals – watch for escalation

Speed – often of the essence in service issues, responding to requests, returning calls and when resolving complaints

Summarising – aids clarity, demonstrates listening, buys time and slows down the 'transaction'

Timescales – ensure clarity here

Tone – essential face to face and crucial over the phone



Understand – listen, empathise, stand their side of the bridge first

Vexacious – complainants will need to be handled at the most senior level

Win/win – whenever possible

Wow the customer – you really can

Xtra mile – every time

Yes – you can handle customers brilliantly even if you handle complaints!

Zeal and passion for excellence in customer service – always

This Eguide gives you an A-Z checklist that you may like to share with your teams.

As you'll know there's nothing better to help people learn than some practice.

So if your organisation is serious about and committed to providing great service then the next best step would be to get more information about our "Customer Service Training".

If you need the support to develop your staff and managers so they can deliver amazing customer service and deal with even the trickiest of situations with complaining staff, then it's the perfect solution.



We'll come and deliver an impressive workshop that is completely tailored to your goals and your needs. Your staff will be able to develop the must have customer service skills and practise these, so you'll see a rapid return on your investment.

Call 0845 165 6269 or email: enquiries@leadinglightlearning.com

Kindest regards

Alison

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Chief Executive

CONTACT US

