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**Make An Action Plan To Improve Customer Service**

**By Kevin Dervin**

Make An Action Plan To Improve Customer Service

Customer Service is a critical factor for keeping your clients coming back and ensuring they'll refer you to others. Growing your business will be a difficult task at best if you don't perform, meet and exceed your client's expectations, and provide service that creates customers for life.

Customer service is all about the customer's perception. You have to do more than just get the job done. You must deliver on all the things (big and small) that affect the relationship with your client. Consider opportunities for improvement in the following areas.

1. **Setting/Reviewing Expectations.** Do you work with your client to set clear, appropriate, realistic expectations that you can always meet or exceed? Are you clear about the responsibilities (both yours' and the client's), timelines, and expectations of results? Are you then willing to go back and review these expectations with the client at key points along the way?
2. **Communication.** Do you have mechanisms in place to ensure you're communicating with clients at every stage of the engagement, from the sales process through to completion of the project? Being clear about where you're at, what's been completed, what's coming up next, who's responsible, what results you can expect, etc.? Has the client ever had to ask you for these things?
3. **Organization.** Are you organized? Punctual? Reliable? When you show up to work with your clients, have you done the work and are you prepared to make them feel comfortable and taken care of? Even though you've done it hundreds, maybe thousands of times before, do you take the time to organize and prepare to make it the best client experience possible?
4. **Committing to the Little Things.** Don't ever dismiss the power of all the little things. Together they can make all the difference and really separate you from the competition. Returning calls and emails in a timely manner. Providing useful information to folks on a regular basis. Showing appreciation for your clients through things like thank you notes, exclusive client-only briefings, and open house, etc.

## Make An Action Plan To Improve Customer Service

Clearly these are not the only relevant areas for creating great customer service. I'm sure you can think of more. But, pick just one of these areas and create an action plan to improve it in your business today. Make a commitment to continuously improve the level of service you're providing and see how it pays off. When you've done it, pick another area and work on it.

(c) – Kevin Dervin, KPD Marketing

Kevin is focused on helping businesses that are ready to grow, but struggle with how to consistently attract more clients. Visit

<http://www.proven-small-business-marketing-solutions.com>

for more

information you can use to grow your business. Find Kevin's Kansas City based KPD Marketing practice at

<http://www.ABCDgrowth.com>

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### **Customer Service – A Lost Art?**

**By Craig Binkley**

Is customer service a lost art? Before you answer that question, take a moment and think about the last few times you have gone shopping or out to dinner. Okay, now that you have really thought about it, is your answer any different?

Why is it that when we actually DO receive excellent customer service that it makes such an impression on us that we usually choose to go back? Why – because the occurrences are so few and far between!!!

As a home business owner, it is imperative to my business that customer service is ALWAYS a top priority. Remember the saying: "If you don't take care of your customer, somebody else will". I'm sure you have read or heard it somewhere before.....and how true it is.

Here are a few ways to improve customer service at your business:

1) SMILE – Sounds too simple, right? As a customer, would you prefer to be serviced by a smiling face, or a scowl that would befit a guard dog?

2) LISTEN – Always be slow to speak and quick to listen. Let customers express themselves without you trying to do it for them. Nobody likes being interrupted.

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3) DON'T BE TOO PUSHY – Yeah, I know – the bottom line is sales, right? There is a fine line between suggesting products/services and pushing them down a customer's throat. If you are too pushy, your customer will probably walk away and take their business elsewhere.

4) PHONE ETTIQUETTE – Whether you are answering or initiating a call, always remember who the customer is. Be polite. Try "Yes sir/ma'am" instead of "yeah" and "nope". If you don't have an answer for your customer – offer to do some research to find what they are inquiring about.

5) THANK YOU – ALWAYS thank your customers. Even if you could not help them or they decided not to purchase from you. Leave them with a positive impression of your business before they leave.

6) TRAINING – Train your employees. Don't let an untrained employee ruin your track record of excellent customer service. Train your employees on-the-job for as long as necessary to teach them good customer service.

"And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise"  
Luke 6:31

In conclusion: Customer service may be THE most important aspect of your business plan. I know of many people who are willing to pay a little more for a product or service in order receive excellent customer care. Price, advertising, and location are all vital to a business----- but whatever you do, don't

overlook the all-important "Good Customer Service".

Craig Binkley - husband, father and home business owner assisting in the restoration of the "traditional" family through home business ownership.

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Customer Service – A Lost Art?

What Happened? Troubleshooting Poor Response from Ad Campaigns

Why Providing Excellence in Customer Service is Essential to Every Business

Ten Ways To Improve Your Customer Service

Keeping Clients Happy Keeps them Coming Back

Disaster Preparedness and Crime Protection Manual

How to Gain and Retain More Customers

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