

19 Customer Service Skills You Absolutely Need



Mountain Education Charter
High School

Customer Service Skills Matter

When business people talk about customer service skills, things like “being a people person” tends to be said.



It's not that this trait is wrong, but it's so vague and generic that it doesn't help those looking for support positions within a company and certainly doesn't help entrepreneurs who are looking for the right set of skills when hiring that all-important person who will be taking care of their customers.

With that said.....

Let's get into some SPECIFIC skills that every support employee can master to “WOW” the customers that they interact with on a daily basis...

Be a Great Listener

- The ability to *really* listen to customers is very crucial for providing great service for a number of reasons.
- Listening intently and truly showing that you care to make your customer happy will surely show your professionalism.

Great Communication Skills

- Knowing how to effectively communicate with your clients will help build your credibility and reputation in the work place.
- Learn when to listen and when to speak. It will make the communication process much simpler when talking with a customer.

Great Communications Skills continued...

- It is okay to find out more about your customers, but make sure you're getting to the problem at hand quickly; customers don't need your life story or to hear about how your day is going.
- More importantly, you need to be cautious about how some of your communication habits translate to customers.

Be a Calming Presence

- Strive to be the person that can handle their own emotions, stay calm, and even influence others when things get a little hectic.
- The best customer service reps know that they **cannot** let a heated customer force them to lose their cool; in fact it is their *job* to try to be the “rock” for a customer who thinks the world is falling down due to their current problem.

Keep Your Promises

- Keeping your promises that you have made to customers is essential in building your reputation and being taken seriously as a professional in your company.
- Learn how to manage expectations of customer complaints and what you can offer.
- Always keep up with company policies to ensure that any promise you make can be delivered.

Be Honest

- Being honest and transparent with your customers proves that you truly care about their happiness and satisfaction when it comes to the products or services you provide.
- Honesty is also necessary and important even when the message you are sharing is not positive.

Friendly and Compassionate

- The more friendly and caring you are to your customers, the easier it is to build a better reputation of your overall sale-making or problem solving capabilities.
- Ask questions about your customer's everyday life, their family and why the services or products you represent fit them and their current lifestyle.

Is the Customer Happy with the Offered Solution?

- Ensuring your customer's happiness should always be a priority.
- Knowing what it is that your client needs will help you to feel more confident with any offered solution you are providing.
- Double-checking with your customer after the solution sill ensure complete satisfaction.

Know Your Product/Organization

Know the ins and outs of how your product works, just like a customer who uses it everyday would. Without knowing your product from front-to-back, you won't know how to help customers when they run into problems.



Know Your Product/Organization continued...



Being capable of answering any questions you are asked about your company will prove that you are a professional and aware of the items or services you are representing.

Persuasion Skills

- To truly take your customer service skills to the next level, you need to have some mastery of **persuasion** so that you can convince interested customers that your product is right for them. (if it truly is).
- It's not about making a sales pitch, but about not letting potential customers *slip-away* because you couldn't convince a client your company's product is worth purchasing!

Use Positive Language

- Language is a very important part of persuasion, and people (especially customers) create perceptions about you and your company based off of the language that you use.
- Your ability to make minor changes in your conversational patterns can truly go a long way in how your customers receive what you are saying.

Positive Language continued...

Suppose a customer wants to purchase an item that is on backorder until next month.

- **Without positive language:** “I can’t get you that product until next month; it is back-ordered and unavailable at this time.”
- **With positive language:** “That product will be available next month. I can place the order for you right now and make sure that it is sent to you as soon as it reaches our warehouse.”

What If It Were You?

- Perspective is a quality you may want to improve.
- Thinking “what if it were me?” when you are talking with a customer could help you to find solutions at a much quicker rate, especially if you are unfamiliar with how to traditionally solve the issue with your company’s guide.

Have Computer Skills

- When you have computer skills, it is much easier to quickly communicate with customers and co-workers.
- Learning how to type quickly can save time when you are searching for solutions to the customers problems allowing more time to talk and listen to what the customer is saying.



Learn From Mistakes

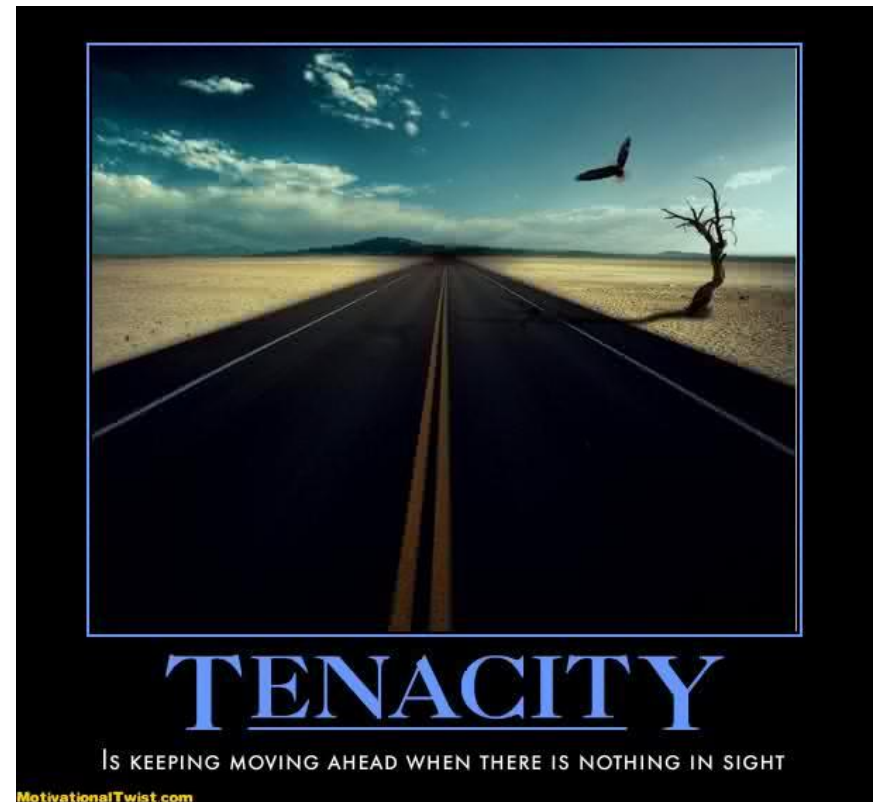
- Taking time to reflect on any mistakes you have made in customer service is a way for you to gain insight in to how to handle things more effectively in a similar situation in the future.
- Take a close look at yourself. The more you understand your own weak areas in customer service, the easier it is to make the changes necessary to improve your skills.

Good Body Language

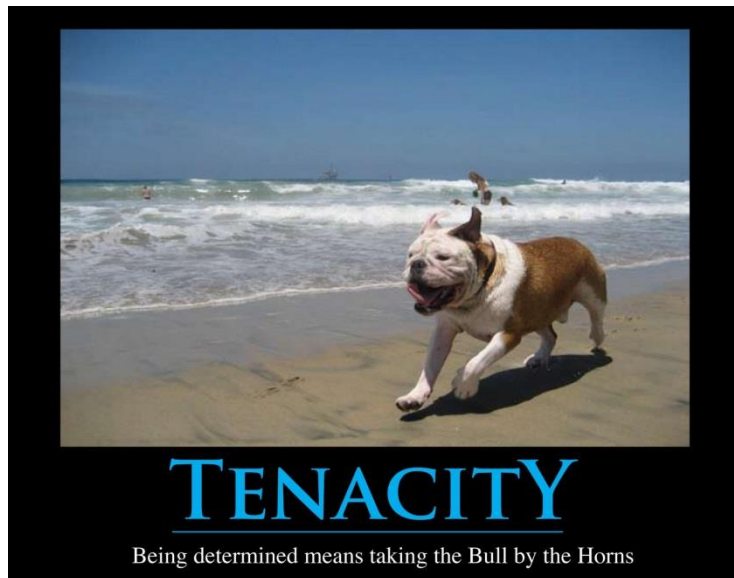
- Smile
- Maintain eye contact when listening to client
- Maintain eye contact when speaking to client
- Do not cross your arms across your chest
- Keep a friendly tone to your voice
- Be mindful of your facial expressions

Tenacity

Remembering that your customers are people too, and knowing that putting in the extra effort will come back to you ten-fold should be your driving motivation to never “cheat” your customers with lazy service.



Tenacity Continued...



Call it what you want,
but a great work ethic
and a willingness to do
what needs to be done
(and not take shortcuts)
is a key skill when
providing the kind of
service that people talk
about.

Acting Skills

- Let's get real honest here...sometimes you're going to come across people that you'll **never** be able to make happy and seem to want nothing else but to pull you down.
- Every great customer service rep will have those basic acting skills necessary to maintain their usual cheery persona in spite of dealing with people who may be just plain grumpy.

Ability to Handle Surprises

Sometimes the customer support world is going to throw you a curveball!

- Maybe the problem isn't covered in the company guidelines, or maybe the customer isn't reacting how you thought they would.
- Whatever the case, it's best to be able to think on your feet...but it's even better to create guidelines for yourself in these sorts of situations.

Ability to Handle Surprises continued...

Here's a quick system for when you come across a customer who has a problem you've never seen before...

- **Who?** *Who* should you consider your “go-to” person when you don't know what to do.
- **What?** When the problem is out of your league, *what* information are you going to send to the people above you?
- **How?** When it comes time to get someone else involved, how are you going to contact them?

Closing Ability

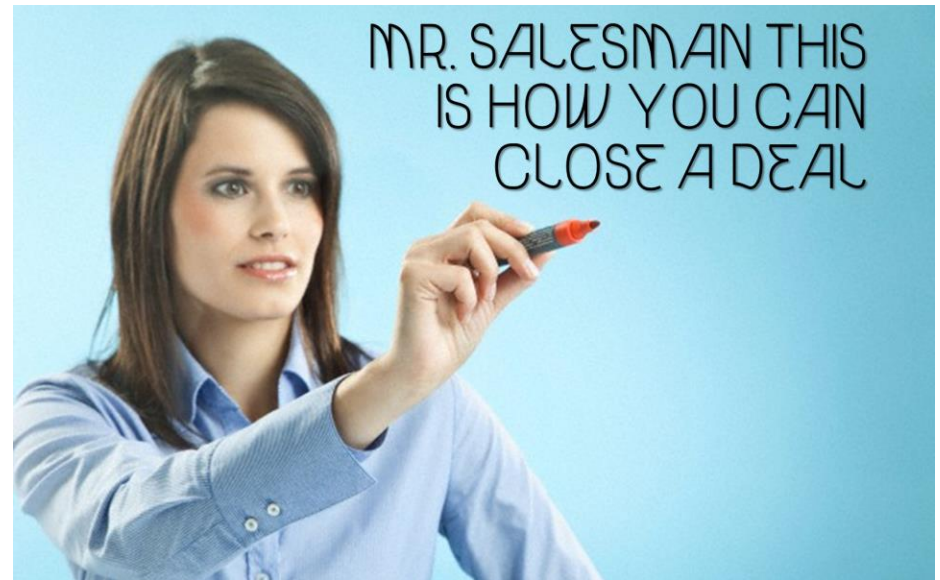


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Being able to ***close*** with a customer means being able to end the conversation with confirmed satisfaction and with the customer feeling that everything has been taken care of (or will be).

Closing Ability continued...

Getting booted after a customer service call or before all of their problems have been addressed is the last thing that customers want., so be sure to take the time to confirm that each and every issue they had has been entirely resolved.



Closing Ability continued...

Your willingness to close effectively will show the customer 3 very important things:

- That you care about getting it right.
- That you're willing to keep going until you get it right.
- That the customer is the one who determines what "right" is.

Willingness to Learn!

- If you have read all of the slides in this presentation, you likely already have this skill (nice!)
- Those who don't seek to improve what they do, no matter what they do, will get left behind by the people who are willing to learn and invest in their skills and future.

References

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