

Samford University

Customer Service Training

Why is Good Customer Service Important?

- › It is the right thing to do.
- › Students have other choices.
- › Students have siblings, friends, etc..
- › Could affect current/future alumni giving.
- › Every person is a potential supporter of Samford.
- › Customer feels better about you and Samford.
- › You feel better about yourself and Samford.
- › Your boss feels better about you.

Components of Service

- › Attentiveness
- › Friendliness
- › Competence
- › Reliability
- › Customers are not interruptions to our work; they are the reason we have work.

Traits of Good Service

- › Developing rapport
- › Accepting responsibility and ownership
- › Completing the transaction
- › Handling angry customers effectively

Why Customers Get Angry

Most customer problems fall into these areas:

- › Didn't get what was promised.
- › Got something and it wasn't right.
- › Service was slow or sloppy.
- › Were treated rudely or with indifference.

Managing the Angry Customer

- › Apologize – even if you did not do it
- › Sympathize
- › Accept responsibility
- › Prepare to help

Roles to Use with Customers

- › Friend
- › Detective
- › Teacher

Role of Friend

- › Acts as host and makes caller feel comfortable and important.
- › Does not make promises that cannot be kept.
- › Share names.
- › Reassure the customer.

Role of Detective

- ▶ Solves problems
- ▶ Is persistent
- ▶ Use when the customer has a problem
- ▶ Obtain specific facts
- ▶ Clear up misunderstandings

Role of Teacher

- ▶ Gently educates but is never condescending.
- ▶ Use when the customer is unsure or misguided in what they need.
- ▶ Paraphrase and restate to confirm understanding.
- ▶ Suggest a course of action.

Active Listening is Critical

- ▶ Eliminate distractions
- ▶ Suspend judgment
- ▶ Don't interrupt
- ▶ Tolerate silence
- ▶ Take notes
- ▶ Ask closed-ended questions to obtain specific facts and information.
- ▶ Avoid questions that begin with "why" or "who" which can sound accusatory or questions that put the customer on the spot.
- ▶ Are the benefits to the customer clear?

Saying "No" Positively

- | | |
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| Don't say: | ▶ "I'll find out." |
| ▶ "I don't know." | ▶ "Here's what we can do." |
| ▶ "No." | ▶ "_____ can help you." |
| ▶ "That's not my job." | ▶ "Fran in Purchasing can help you." |
| ▶ "You need to talk to Purchasing." | ▶ "I can tell you're upset." |
| ▶ "Calm down." | |

Use instead:

Saying "No" Positively

- | | |
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| Don't Say | Use instead: |
| ‣ "Call back tomorrow." | ‣ "I'll call you back tomorrow." |
| ‣ "It's not ready." | ‣ "It will be ready on -----" |
| ‣ "You should have called sooner." | ‣ "I understand why you called." |
| ‣ "That's not our fault." | ‣ "Let's see what we can do." |

Saying "No" Positively

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| Don't say: | Use instead: |
| ‣ "That's against our policy." | ‣ "Here's the way we handle that." |
| ‣ "The only thing we can do is ..." | ‣ "The best option for handling this is ..." |
| ‣ "You're wrong." | ‣ "Let me give you the information you need." |

Customer Service Via Email

- Respond in a timely manner.
- Be mindful of your tone.
- Don't reply in anger.
- Don't use email to criticize others.
- Don't overuse "reply to all".
- Email is not necessarily private.
- Use your spell-checker.

Customer Service Via Email

- Don't "copy up" as a means of coercion.
- Don't use colored/textured backgrounds that make your message difficult to read.
- Don't write in all caps.
- Use a signature with your contact information.
- Re-read your email before you send it.

Staying motivated to deliver excellent customer service

Avoid/relieve stress

- › Take a few deep breaths.
- › Take a brief walk.
- › Eat healthy snacks.

Maintain a positive attitude

- › Use positive self-talk.
- › Remember to have a sense of humor.
- › How does the customer feel about their experience with you? (How would I want to be treated if I was in his/her shoes?)
- › Remember your successes.

Staying motivated to deliver excellent customer service

Show competence and integrity as well as knowledge

- › Know your job and how things work.
- › Be honest and straight-forward.

Develop a buddy system

- › Allows only limited venting.
- › Ask for coaching and encouragement to stay motivated.

Remember we are all on the same team!!

Attributes for Being Positive

- › Empathy - not apathy - to have the capacity for understanding, being aware of and being sensitive to the feelings, thoughts, experiences of your customers.

Attributes for Being Positive

- › Enthusiasm - to have a observable high level of energy or interest to a project or situation.

Attributes for Being Positive

- › Ownership - to possess the commitment to solve problems or steer the problem to someone who can.

Attributes for Being Positive

- › Responsibility - to live up to previously agreed upon commitments. Being considerate and responsible to co-workers.

Attributes for Being Positive

- › Adaptability - to have the flexibility to effectively deal with different types of customers and different situations.

Attributes for Being Positive

- › Balance - to have the capacity to successfully satisfy the customer while taking into account the resources and needs of your department and Samford University.

Attributes for Being Positive

- › Resiliency - to have the ability to bounce back from adversity, to recover quickly and not let things snowball.

Essential Telephone Skills

Answering a Business Call

Use the three-part greeting.

- › Begin with a pleasant buffer. Example: "Thank you for calling..."
- › Follow with the name of the company or group. Example: "...Mollner Industries..."
- › End with your name. Example: "...this is Kine."
- › Substitute your department or group for organization name. Example: "Thank you for holding. Parts department, this is Jeremy."

Putting a Caller on Hold

Effective replacement phrases for "Hang on a second."

- › Let callers know why you need to put them on hold.
- › Ask, "Are you able to hold?" Wait for a response.
- › When callers are not able to hold, handle their needs by offering options.

Thanking the Caller for Holding

Effectively reconnect with callers after placing them on hold.

- ▶ Reduce frustration of being placed on hold.
- ▶ Ease the conversation back on a positive path.
- ▶ Put Samford University head and shoulders above average by acknowledging the hold.

Monogramming the call

Use your caller's name to build rapport.

- ▶ If you know your caller's name, use it!
- ▶ Spell and pronounce each caller's name correctly; ask if you need help.
- ▶ Reintroduce yourself to the caller and build a relationship.

Avoiding Excuses

Excuses annoy callers.

- ▶ Callers want solutions, not excuses.
- ▶ Let the caller know how you CAN help, not how you CAN'T help.
- ▶ Take responsibility for the call and express desire to assist.

Giving Spoken Feedback Signals

Let your callers know you are listening.

- ▶ Give spoken feedback.
- ▶ Mix responses to avoid sounding mechanical or insincere.
- ▶ Mirror back or rephrase the caller's words to confirm understanding.

Being Prepared

Take notes!

- › Keep a pen or pencil and a supply of writing paper near the telephone at all times.
- › Take telephone messages word-for-word if possible; read message back to caller.
- › Be sure message includes caller's name, message, date, time and your name or initials.

Controlling the conversation

Redirect callers that wander.

- › If a caller gets off the subject, take control of the conversation.
- › Use the "Back-on-Track" approach. Ask a question related to the purpose of the call.
- › Use a subtle buffer to soften your approach to getting the call back-on-track.

Avoiding Mouth Noises

Mouth noises annoy and alienate callers.

- › The telephone mouthpiece or headset is a microphone that amplifies sound to the caller.
- › While on a call, don't eat, drink, hum or chew gum.
- › Don't distract or annoy callers with unpleasant mouth noises.

Leaving a Positive Last Impression

Leave your customers feeling great about Samford University.

- › A positive last impression counts every bit as much as a good first impression.
- › Make every caller feel important to you and Samford.
- › End your conversation on a positive note. Let callers know you are glad they called and are looking forward to hearing from them again.

Practice your customer
service skills and,
Thank you for attending!