

# CUSTOMER SERVICE



Listen to a woman talking on a radio show about a customer service and answer the following questions.

1. What was the woman's problem and was it resolved?
2. Do you think she will visit the shop again?
3. Did the shop assistant make the right decision? Why or why not?

- 1 I suppose you could support the assistants' 'go by the rules' attitude. But, as a store owner myself, I think it's wrong to quibble about a couple of minutes; staff are there to be **courteous** and **responsive**, and I wouldn't be happy if that happened in my store. It's so much easier and more cost-effective to keep an **existing** customer than to find a new one. My personal rule of thumb is: a **satisfied** customer might tell a friend, a **dissatisfied** customer will complain to everyone they know.
- 2 Of course you want to meet the customer's needs and you don't want to lose **loyal** customers by appearing **uncaring**, but the customer must also understand that
  - a) hours are posted for a reason
  - b) employees have lives outside the shop, and
  - c) for security reasons, once the tills are closed, no one is allowed in the shop.
- 3 I work in a bank where we've introduced an unpublicized rule which really helps to foster customer loyalty. The doors officially close at 5.00, but they let anyone in until 5.10. The feedback we get from the cashiers is very positive; by letting people in, we exceed the expectations of customers who arrive just a little late, and no one really expects to be let in if they arrive after 5.10.
- 4 This is actually a management failure, though everyone seems to be blaming the shop assistants. If I were the owner, I'd tell the staff that in a situation like this, they should try and find a solution. I'd point out the importance of customer satisfaction and I'd give them the power to make decisions – with examples of what they can and can't do. And I'd make sure they understood the effect of **attentive** and **efficient** service as well as **discourteous** and **sub-standard** service on potential customers – and their regular ones.
- 5 I agree with the last post. Management need to regularly measure customer satisfaction and make sure service quality is part of everyone's work experience. **High-quality** customer service is all about bringing customers back. And about sending them away satisfied so they give positive feedback about your business to others, who may then try the product or service you offer for themselves and in their turn become **repeat** customers.

Look at the following words and say what they mean.

Courteous; responsive; existing; satisfied; dissatisfied; loyal; uncaring; attentive; efficient; discourteous; sub-standard; high-quality; repeat customers

| Customer service | Customers |
|------------------|-----------|
|                  |           |

**4 Match the adjectives in bold in the posts to these definitions.**

- |                                          |                                    |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 not sympathetic: _____                 | 7 happy with something: _____      |
| 2 polite / impolite: _____ / _____       | 8 of a very good standard: _____   |
| 3 helpful: _____                         | 9 faithful and supportive: _____   |
| 4 not as good as normal: _____           | 10 returning: _____                |
| 5 well organized: _____                  | 11 not happy with something: _____ |
| 6 reacting quickly and positively: _____ | 12 present: _____                  |

### Customer service questionnaire

- |                                                         |                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 What do you do to meet ... _____                      | a feedback about service from your customers?              |
| 2 What new procedure might help you to exceed ... _____ | b customer satisfaction and service quality?               |
| 3 In what ways do you measure ... _____                 | c existing customers or to win new ones?                   |
| 4 Have you introduced ... _____                         | d your customers' expectations of the service you provide? |
| 5 Do you think it is easier to keep ... _____           | e customers to your competitors?                           |
| 6 How do you try and get ... _____                      | f your customers' needs and keep them satisfied?           |
| 7 How do you avoid losing ... _____                     | g any unpublicized rules to improve customer service?      |

to meet your needs

**2 Choose the best word to complete these sentences.**

- 1 We'll look at how we can use the Internet to \_\_\_\_\_ feedback from customers.  
**a** receive    **b** get    **c** acquire
- 2 We try to provide excellent service and \_\_\_\_\_ all our customers' needs.  
**a** meet    **b** fill    **c** answer
- 3 It's a lot easier to \_\_\_\_\_ an existing customer than to find a new one.  
**a** stay    **b** hold    **c** keep
- 4 We are continually improving our service with the goal of \_\_\_\_\_ our clients' expectations.  
**a** passing    **b** exceeding    **c** beating
- 5 We have recently \_\_\_\_\_ customers to our main competitor so we need to attract them back.  
**a** left    **b** lost    **c** dropped
- 6 We regularly have surveys to \_\_\_\_\_ customer satisfaction.  
**a** judge    **b** grade    **c** measure
- 7 The manager plans to \_\_\_\_\_ an unpublicized rule – let customers in up to 6.10.  
**a** introduce    **b** create    **c** begin

- 1** A customer is calling TNC about a banking problem.  
Complete the dialogue with the phrases from the list.

by tomorrow  
in time for the  
you mean  
how can I help you  
could you give me  
once I've looked into it I'll call you back  
let me get this straight  
could you explain exactly what the problem is

- A TNC, Customer Service. <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_?
- B Hello. I'm calling about my online bank account. I'm having problems completing a transaction.
- A <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_?
- B Well, I've entered the payment details to pay an invoice for my holiday and the computer won't let me send it.
- A Hmm. <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ – you want to transfer some money but you can't?
- B That's right. I'm trying to pay an invoice. I've left it a bit late and need to pay it <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_
- A <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ your user number and the name of the account. <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_
- B Thanks.
- (5 minutes later)*
- A Hello. This is TNC. The account you're trying to access is a savings account and you can't use your online facility with that.
- B <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ I can't pay my invoice online with that account?
- A That's correct. You can transfer money into your current account and then pay the invoice.
- B If I do that, will the invoice be paid <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ deadline tomorrow?
- A I'm afraid you need to allow three working days for ...