

## How can I help you?



They say, "The customer is always right." That may not be completely true, but a smart business treats customers as though they are. Whether you work for a business or have your own, remember this secret: customers don't really buy services and products; they buy solutions and relationships. Here's how to keep them coming back:

**Don't procrastinate!** Make sure you get things done on time. Don't waste your customers' valuable time by making them wait for service. Giving customers what they want now is key to your success, and it should be at the top of your to-do list. The business that gets the job done efficiently and fast is the one that customers will come back to.

**Be really reliable.** If you say you are going to do something, do it. If a problem keeps you from doing it, apologize and promise to find a solution. However, avoid making promises you won't be able to keep. Treat customers right by being honest, and they will recommend you to their colleagues, friends, and family.

**Stand by your products and services.** The good workmanship and attention that go into your high quality product, excellent service, or reasonable prices will be appreciated. No one wants a product that falls apart or doesn't work. If that happens, take responsibility and arrange to repair it or replace it.

**Be extremely friendly and courteous, as well as a good listener.** Be sure your customers feel respected and heard. Pay attention to complaints as well as praise.

**Always try to be helpful.** Sometimes it's difficult to answer a customer's question or fulfill a request. Instead of "I don't know," say, "I may not have the answer right now, but I'll find out." Instead of "I don't have time right now," say, "I'll make time." A "can-do" attitude, even under stress, assures customers that you will treat them professionally and that you are ready and willing to help. Above all, make your customers feel important and valued, and always thank them for their business.



**A INFER POINT OF VIEW** Complete each statement, according to the point of view expressed in the Reading.

- If you waste your customers' time, they ..... come back.  
a will                      b won't
- If you don't do what you say you will do, your customers ..... think you are reliable.  
a will                      b won't
- If you aren't courteous to your customers, they ..... complain.  
a will                      b won't
- If your customers don't feel valued, they ..... feel important.  
a will                      b won't
- If you don't have a "can-do" attitude, your customers ..... think you're willing to help.  
a will                      b won't

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**B ACTIVATE LANGUAGE FROM A TEXT**  
Find and underline these words in the Reading on page 32. Complete the descriptions, using the words.

reliable    reasonable    workmanship    helpful    professional

- I find Portello's prices really ..... compared to other places. I've shopped around, and I can't find another service with such low prices.
- What I like about Link Copy Services is that they're so ..... Even if the job is a bit unusual, they're willing to try.
- Jamco Design is extremely ..... You never have to worry about their doing anything less than an excellent job.
- Dom's Auto Repair is incredibly ..... If they promise to have a job ready in an hour, you can be sure that they will.
- The ..... at J&N is amazing. Their products are all hand-made, and they last for years.