
Making customers your employee's priority

Contributed by Jenni Juhaz

Customers that receive good service will tell a couple, while customers that receive bad service will tell at least seven people.

Studies indicate a customer who has received good service will only tell a couple of people, but a customer who has received poor service will tell at least eleven others. Moreover, it costs more to attract a new customer than retain the current customers.

Whether your business provides a product or service, customers should be an employee priority. If you have not given thought to your customer service policies recently, perhaps it is time for a review.

Your employees are often the first point of customer contact. Whether they are part of your sales team, or installing your customer's new shower, employees must be aware that their customer service reflects on your business.

Develop a Performance Standard, or Credo, for your business outlining to all staff the high level of service they are expected to provide. This can be as detailed as, "Staff shall not use the words 'yeah' or 'nah'" or simply to be courteous and helpful at all times. Employees should know and implement your company's Credo.

Employees should also have knowledge about the business, products and services provided. Offer regular training in all facets of the business. These will contribute in assisting with your staff's optimal service provision.

Consider... You go to a restaurant where the food is fabulous but the service poor. Would you return to a restaurant that has dirty cutlery, an employee who does not know whether the satay contains peanuts, or you are treated abruptly by rude waiters?

Encourage staff to actively listen to customers and, if they arise, deal with complaints swiftly. Often customers will leave a business not simply because they have a complaint but because they perceive the service-provider is indifferent to their needs. Develop a customer complaints procedure for staff and monitor whether it is being followed.

We all seek loyal, A-class clients; however retaining such clients often relies on our service performance. Implementing your company's Performance Standard is integral in establishing a strong service performance and maintaining good customer relations.