

The Mathis Group's Messenger

Vol. 6 No. 1

January, 2008

10 Commandments for Superior Customer Value

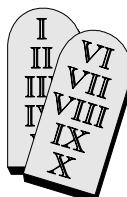
Good customer service is quite possibly the single most important trait an organization needs to achieve. When your customers are happy, they will come back with more business. Upset customers too many times and not only will they look elsewhere for what is needed, but may also take other customers with them. Occasionally, you will have a customer complain, and you may be able to work at correcting the problem and making amends. However, more often than not, the customer will simply leave without any warning. When this happens, you will be left wondering what went wrong!

Customers will stop doing business with a company for many different reasons. It was found that when customers leave a company it is because:

- 1% Died
- 2% Moved away
- 4% Bought from other sales people
- 11% Changed to competitor's brand
- 14% Did not like product or service
- 68% Sales professionals were apathetic or indifferent to the customer

Ford, L., CareerTrack Publication, 1994, p. 54

With statistics like this, you can see how customer service is very important! That is why we have developed the **10 Commandments for Superior Customer Service**.



1. Thou shalt research the customer base thoroughly.

Knowing your customers will help you understand their needs and wants. This will assist you as you determine

how to reach out through marketing, promotions, or improved service.

2. Thou shalt trust the research.

Do not second guess yourself. If you have done the research correctly, you will be able to know what the customer wants and strive to achieve his or her expectations.

3. Thou shalt detail what the customer needs and wants.

Knowing your customer's needs and wants will allow you to adjust your customer service tactics. Once you get into the customer's head, you will be able to comprehend their driving factors.

4. Thou shalt benchmark the present level of service and raise its standards.

Never be satisfied with where your customer service standards are now. Working in the competitive environment that we do, companies are always trying to out do each other. When your customers are happy they will usually stay loyal to you, but they will not hesitate to go somewhere else if their needs are not being met. Continue to reach for higher standards.

(continued on page 2 **10 Commandments of Customer Service**)

*There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everyone in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else.
Sam Walton (1918-1992)*

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(continued from page 1 *10 Commandments of Customer Service*)

*Treat each customer as if he were the endorser
for your paycheck... he is you know!
Bits & Pieces Winter 2004 Special Edition*

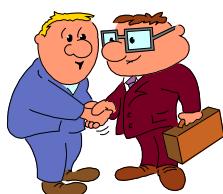
5. Thou shalt create action plans to correct flaws rapidly.

Know how to correct problems quickly and efficiently. Have action plans in place so that everyone will know the steps to take in rectifying problems.

6. Thou shalt measure the organization against the competition.

Find out how your competition handles customer service and then become better. Customers will leave and go to the competition if their expectations are not being met.

7. Thou shalt allow customers to make decisions and feel special.



Ask your customers how you can improve. Once they see that you are listening to their suggestions, they will feel more valued.

8. Thou shalt be accountable to solve the customer's problem and not blame.

We know that occasionally customers will experience some type of problem. When this happens, work to solve the problem immediately. At times, the customer will be extremely irate during the call, but do not pass the buck--even if it is not directly your fault. The customer really does not care who is to blame, they just want the problem fixed. Do not be afraid to apologize to the customer and take action to help. Give the customer options to choose from when fixing a problem. Verify what you are hearing with what the customer is saying.

9. Thou shalt involve workers at all levels of the organizational structure.

Empower your employees to make decisions and resolve problems without approval from upper management. Customers hate it when they are told that

you cannot help them, and they must speak with someone else. They do not want to spend all their time on the telephone. Help them resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

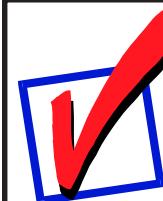
10. Thou shalt deliver strong support from top management.

Top management should be the instigator of support and encouragement to their employees. If your employees feel valued and respected, they will be more likely to treat customers in the same manner.

Customer service can make or break your organization. Keeping your customers happy will create a positive word of mouth rapport, give customers value beyond preconceived expectations, create higher customer satisfaction, and, ultimately, increase sales.

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- Creating Superior Customer Value*
- Retaining Customers for Life*

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