

Customer Service

Who is a customer?

A customer is a person or company that buys products and services from your store. The money that customers spend at your store pay your wage and make your job possible. For a clothing store, customers are those who buy clothes. For an automotive repair shop, customers are those who need a car repaired. For an insurance company, customers are those who buy auto insurance. For a city recreation department, customers are those who live in the city.

How does good service make a customer feel?

- 1) **Special** because the customer is greeted promptly and warmly.
- 2) **Pleased** because the customer gets help, information, or problem solved with no stress.
- 3) **Educated** because customer learns about products or services that are available to help.
- 4) **Happy** because the customer feels emotionally better leaving the store than before entering.



How do you greet a customer?

The moment a customer enters a store, workers need to lay down the welcome mat by: a) making eye contact; b) smiling; and c) greeting the customer with a cheery “Good morning” or “Good afternoon,” or “Hello!” so that the customer feels right at home. Customers love to get attention. If you know customer's name, add that to the greeting such as “Good morning Mr. Smith.” Customers feel special when you remember their name and use it. Every customer who enters the store needs to feel that they have arrived in a warm and friendly place. Follow the greeting with an additional helpful comment such as “Can I take your order?” or “How can I help you today?” or “What can I find for you?” If you are busy with another customer, be sure to say, “I’ll be with you in a minute after I help this customer.”

How do you sell something to a customer?

Are stores in business to sell products and services? No, stores are in business to sell the **FEATURES AND BENEFITS of products and services** so that customers want to buy, and do buy. A salesperson's job is to know and explain the **features and benefits** of the products so that customers can be convinced to buy. Therefore, study, know, and be able to explain every feature and benefit of the products and services you sell. The **features of the product** are the physical size, color, design, operation, and material from which it is made. The **benefits of the product** are what the product will do for the customer (such as a hands-free cell phone device will improve driver safety). Remember, **features tell . . . benefits sell.**

What do you do to close the sale?

When you see that the customer is excited about the features and benefits of the product, close the sale by taking the **direct approach**. You may say, “May I take this up to the cashier for you?” or “Do you like the walnut or oak wood for this entertainment center?” or “Do you want the computer chair delivered or will you take it today?” or “I understand that you have decided on this Chevy truck. You may arrange financing now, and we will detail the truck and have it ready for you within the hour.”

What else should be done?

The close of a sale allows you the opportunity to sell **add-on** products or services. Add-on sales are important: a) The store makes more money from add-on sales; b) You may earn a higher sales commission (money); and c) You provide good customer service since the customers may need these add-on products and will not have to make another trip to the store. To ask for add-on sales, say “Do you need Wood Oil to keep the beauty of this entertainment center wood?” or “Do need a chair for your new computer?”

How are customer problems handled?

A problem is the difference between what a customer wants to happen and what really happened. To solve a problem: **First:** Get the facts and write facts down on paper. **Second:** Listen carefully to the problem without getting stress. **Third:** Repeat the problem back to the customer and ask if you got it right. When you repeat the problem back to the customer: a) you show understanding and b) you will soften any anger that the customer may have. If you can solve the problem, do so immediately. If you cannot, find a supervisor, explain the situation, and let the supervisor solve the problem.

Remember: **The real issue is not** what the customer’s problem is. **The real issue is** the money the store will lose in the future if the customer leaves the store forever. Over 80% of unhappy customers never purchase from the store again. If the complaint is solved, over 90% will return to the store to spend money again. It costs 5 times more in advertising to get a new customer than it costs in advertising to keep a regular customer.



What do you say when the customer leaves the store?

“Thank you for shopping at Target” or “Please return soon. We have a new sale starting next Thursday” or “Would you like to sign up for our mailing list to receive coupons to know about future sales?” Make the customer feel happy as they leave your store.

QUICK CHECK:

1. a) Who is a customer? b) Who is the customer of a: 1) clothing store? 2) auto repair shop?
2. Describe 4 ways good service makes a customer feel.
3. List 3 ways employees lay down the welcome mat for customers entering the store.
4. When do customers feel special?
5. List examples of 2 additional comments you may add after greeting the customer.
6. a) What are stores in business to sell?
b) What is a salesperson's job?
7. a) Explain what "features" of a product are.
b) Explain what "benefits" of a product are.
c) What should you remember?
8. a) When should you close the sale? b) Give 2 examples of what to say to close the sale.
9. For what 3 reasons are add-on sales important?
10. Give one example of what you would say to ask for add-on sales.
11. a) What is a problem? b) List the 3 steps to use to understand and solve a customer's problem.
12. What 2 things happen when you repeat the problem back to the customer?
13. If you cannot solve a problem, what should you do?
14. What is: a) Not the real issue? b) The real issue?
15. What percent of unhappy customers never return to the store?
16. If it costs \$100 per year in advertising to keep a regular customer, how much does it cost per year in advertising to attract a new customer?
17. Give an example of what you can say when the customer leaves the store.
18. How should you make the customer feel when leaving your store?