



Tool #12 - Part A

Customer Service that Makes Them Say, “Wow!”

Part A Includes:

Lesson

Quiz

Goal Setting

(Each tool is presented in a 2 part lesson format.
Part B will follow in two weeks)

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“Wow!” your customers and keep them coming back. Surveys show that if customers feel they have been treated well by customer service personnel, they will return time and again.

Service Is Important

It is important for employees to have the right attitude, but the most important thing is that management fosters a service environment.

“Every supervisor should teach employees the importance of keeping customers, how to manage contact with a customer and, in addition, they should create a reward system that rewards employees for taking care of the customer,” says Michael LeBoeuf, author of *How to Win Customers and Keep Them for Life*.

However, many companies experiencing budget difficulties shortchange their customer service training. So, what is an employee to do? Lots! Below you will find ways to improve your customer service skills and create your own positive reward system.

Be a Believer

To give outstanding customer service, first you must believe that the customer will be better off using your company’s product or service. Learn as much as you can about the benefits of your company’s product or service, and keep congratulatory letters in front of you to constantly reinforce your belief.

Be Service Oriented

Without customers your company would not be in business, and you would not have a paycheck. Your salary comes to you from the customers, but is distributed to you through your company as a paycheck. If you visualize your customer adding to your salary each time you interact with a customer, you will be more likely to thank them with outstanding service.

You Represent the Company

“You may think you work for your company, but whenever you come in contact with a customer, to that customer you are the company. Your customers are going to come away either feeling better or worse about the company because of how you handle them, and that is going to determine the very success of the company,” says LeBoeuf.

Think about it—when you get a rude clerk at the store, don’t you blame the store? My husband’s cleaners damaged his shirt. Instead of asking the owner how to handle it, the clerk said that the shirt was that way when my husband brought it in. My husband didn’t think, “Well, that particular clerk is either incompetent or having a bad day. I’ll ask to speak to the owner.” NO! He did what most people in the same circumstance do. My husband changed

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cleaners without giving them a second chance.

Be Friendly

Customers stay loyal to people they like and trust. So, take time to listen to your customers, and you will learn about their families, their hobbies, and whatever is important to them. You can use this information to find something you have in common.

That builds the bonds of friendship and trust. Make notes of your customers' interests and you will be able to say something personal the next time you speak to them— *“how is your son, Brad’s, baseball team doing this year?” “Tell me about your vacation to Alaska.”*

Being friendly also includes helping your customers make wise decisions. Making a decision is stressful for most people, because they do not want to make a mistake. You can help by becoming a source of information to help your customers buy the product or service that is right for them.

Perception is Important

The single greatest key to improving customer service is really to improve the perception of the quality of service. You may think you are giving great service because of your knowledge of the product, but it's not what you know, it's what the customer perceives that determines the quality of the business. The customer is the scoreboard keeper. In the final analysis, customers vote with their dollars.

Exceed Expectations

One of the best ways to increase customer perception is to exceed their expectations. We all go into a business with a little scale in the back of our minds; consciously or subconsciously we have a certain expectation, and when you're pleasantly surprised, that is when you perceive that the quality is very good.

What can you do to pleasantly surprise the customer? One woman who had surgery was very excited because her doctor sent her flowers.

“People who live in southern Louisiana know about the Lagniappe principle (pronounced lan-yap) – it means something extra-- and was originated many years ago with Creole shopkeepers. With a bag of groceries the shopkeeper would throw in a pound of bacon. It's a way of telling customers, *‘I’m giving you your money’s worth and a whole lot more.’* “It's a way of fostering customer loyalty. Try to exceed their expectations,” say LeBoeuf.

This reminded me of a trip to Shreveport, Louisiana I took with a group of friends years ago. As the twelve of us were seated at a restaurant for dinner, the owner came with a bouquet of roses for my friend who had booked the dinner reservation. As if that wasn't

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enough, he then ordered complimentary wine for everyone. Although many years have passed, I have never forgotten that experience.

How do you reward your customers? Remember that behavior that gets rewarded gets repeated.

Ask for Feedback

Make the customer feel important after the sale by asking for feedback. Was the customer satisfied? If not, why not? Be proactive in asking about customer satisfaction. Many people do not like to complain. Make it easy for them to tell you how they feel. In doing this you will earn their trust.

React to Complaints

“One of the greatest opportunities to improve service perception is how you handle a complaint. There’s an old saying, ‘*A customer who complains is my best friend.*’ They tell you their problem and they are giving you a second chance. The other, dissatisfied, customers just walk away and do not come back,” says LeBoeuf.

Do Not Be Defensive

Whenever a customer complains, it may feel like an attack on you, and your immediate reaction may be to act defensively. Stop! Do not take the customer’s behavior personally. Impatient or angry customers can act annoyed, critical, or even enraged. To calm the customer down, listen to him with empathy. You can create some empathy if you imagine that he is very ill or is experiencing a personal crises of some kind.

Instead of reacting with defensiveness say, “Tell me what went wrong so I can make this right for you.” Ask the customer to propose a solution. If you can, try to handle it on the spot. Customers are usually impatient. The faster you handle a customer complaint, the greater the chance you have of keeping that customer.

Give Yourself a Reward

Even if your company rewards its customer service employees, you can add to that motivation with your own rewards.

First, keep a detailed daily journal of your customer service work. Next, give yourself a point for every time you do something to either get a new customer, or do something extra for an existing customer. You can even give yourself extra points for handling difficult problems. In this way, you set up your own reward system, and give yourself prizes for your points.

There are two more benefits to keeping a journal -

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1. It will help you keep track of how well you are serving each customer.
2. When it is time for your employee review, you will have your journal to speak for your outstanding work.

Customer retention is the best business strategy of all, and the way you increase customer retention is to give the customer service that makes them say, “Wow!”

Expert quoted:

Michael LeBoeuf, author of the book, *How to Win Customers and Keep Them for Life*,
(revised edition 2000)

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Tool #12 - Quiz
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Complete the quiz, and give the answers to your supervisor.

Name _____ Date _____

1. How can you be service oriented?

2. Why is it important to be friendly to customers?

3. What is the single greatest key to improving customer service?

4. Why should you ask for customer feedback about your customer service?

5. Name 3 benefits of keeping a customer service journal.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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Tool #12 - Your Goals to Give
Customer Service that Makes Them Say, “Wow!”

Name _____ Date _____

What are your 3 main goals for this month to improve your customer service?
Make a copy of this to give to your supervisor, and keep one for yourself.
Post your goals in your workplace where you can easily see them.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Signature _____

In two weeks you will receive Part B of this lesson. It will contain:

- The 7 key points from this lesson to refresh your memory, and
- A place for you to record your progress toward your goals.

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Additional Resources

All are available on The Confidence Center Web at
www.ConfidenceCenter.com

Free Resources

Email Newsletter:

Employee Morale and Confidence Tips

It has creative ideas you can use every week to keep up morale.

Sign up for Free at www.ConfidenceCenter.com

Assessments:

Are you happy at work? Take the [Employee Morale Assessment](#)

How confident are you? Take the [Confidence Quiz](#)

Articles and Past Newsletters

Calendar of Special Days:

Special days you can celebrate for every month of the year.

Fun Zone:

Jokes, cartoons, and more - when you just need a break.

Coaching:

Telephone coaching by our certified professional coach. To get one *free* coaching session.

Details at <http://www.confidencecenter.com/serv06.htm>

Low Cost Resources

Products:

Books, eBooks, videos, and other products to make you more successful at work.

Seminars:

We offer in-house seminars, customized for your company or organization.

Tele-seminars:

Telephone seminars on employee morale and employee performance. These will be announced in our newsletter and on our web.