

# The Ten Principles of Brilliant Customer Service

“Ignore my wants and I will be increasingly more difficult to deal with or will simply cease to exist.

Satisfy those wants and I will be increasingly helpful, supportive and loyal.

Add to this satisfaction any **personal touches** you can dream up - and I will become a walking advertisement to your services.”

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# HOW TO MAKE EVERY CUSTOMER A SPECIAL CUSTOMER

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**S - Speed**

**P - Personalise**

**E - Exceed Expectations**

**C - Competence & Courtesy**

**I - Informed; information**

**A - Attitude - "Can Do"**

**L - Long Term Relationship;  
follow-up**

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# 1. WHATEVER IT IS YOU DO - DO IT FAST

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## THE NEED FOR SPEED

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- ★ Speed is competitive advantage
- ★ Everything is time-based
- ★ Time is the scarcest commodity in the world
- ★ When a customer says "time is not important" - ignore them
- ★ FAST = **F**ast **A**ction - **S**ecures **T**rust

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## SPEEDY FOLLOW-UP AND FAST SERVICE

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- ★ Fast service adds value
- ★ Speedy follow-up shows you care
- ★ The more time-sensitive your product, the greater the potential competitive advantage
- ★ Speed costs nothing, but has to be built-in

People would rather buy from a friendly and enthusiastic trainee than an indifferent expert.

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## 2. POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

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### TALK THE CUSTOMER'S LANGUAGE

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- ★ Cut out jargon, or explain well
- ★ Aim to be understood
- ★ Take responsibility for your communication - the purpose of your communication is the response you get
- ★ Make written communications short, specific and simple
- ★ If in doubt, simplify
- ★ Talk benefits not just features

Treat others as they wish to be treated.

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### USE SIDE BY SIDE LANGUAGE

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- ★ "I see what you mean"
- ★ "Let's see what we can do about this"  
"I would be as concerned as you are"
- ★ "I'm sure we'll be able to find a solution"  
"Do you see any possibilities that I haven't considered?"

Always say what you can do, or will do, not what you can't do or won't do.

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## POSITIVE PHRASES GET POSITIVE RESULTS

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- ★ I can...
- ★ You can..
- ★ I will...
- ★ Will you please...
- ★ Could I ask you to...
- ★ So that...
- ★ Here's what it means to you...
- ★ Which means that...

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## 3. THE PERSONAL TOUCH

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### PERSONALISED SERVICE

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- ★ People like to buy from people
- ★ You build a business one customer at a time; one purchase at a time
- ★ Use the customer's name in all written communication
- ★ Courtesy, manners and politeness are keys to building trust, respect and loyalty
- ★ Use names regularly in conversation
- ★ Accommodate the customers special requests wherever possible (impossible is not the same as difficult!)
- ★ The first sale you make is yourself
- ★ Rapport is a skill that can be learnt
- ★ Non-verbal communication is the most important and quickest route to reaching people
- ★ Get to know your customers - ALL of them
- ★ 100% attention at all times
- ★ Make every customer feel like your most special customer (not your only customer!)

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## 4. KEEPING CUSTOMERS

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### CUSTOMERS ARE FOR LIFE...NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS!

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#### Lost Customers...

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- ★ 1% die
- ★ 3% move away
- ★ 4% just naturally float
- ★ 5% change on friends' advice
- ★ 9% can buy cheaper elsewhere
- ★ 10% chronic complainers
- ★ 68% go elsewhere because the people they deal with are **indifferent** to their needs.
- ★ The cost of attracting a new customer is FIVE times as much as keeping a new one.

Every year most businesses lose between 10% to 30% of their customers - and they don't even know who these customers are.

- ★ Make the extra-ordinary - ordinary!

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## 5. TURN COMPLAINTS INTO OPPORTUNITIES

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### WELCOME COMPLAINTS!

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- ★ Complaints are opportunities in work clothes
- ★ Problems are wake-up calls for creativity and commitment
- ★ People complaining are people to value - they want to stay customers and are simply telling you how to achieve it and keep their custom
- ★ Get rid of nice customers - ask them to be critical!
- ★ Be pro-active, not re-active to customer service issues

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### PAINFUL STATISTICS...

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- ★ Only 4% of dissatisfied customers tell us, 96% tell other people.
- ★ Each unhappy customer tells an average of 10 or more people (13% tell 20 or more)
- ★ Resolving a problem quickly will turn 95% of unhappy customers into return customers.
- ★ 40% of your perceived customer service is how well you solve problems

It is vital that to achieve customer satisfaction quickly...if you get the opportunity to fix a problem...do it quickly!

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## CUSTOMERS COMPLAINTS ARE GREAT FUN

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- ★ Here is how to deal with any complaint and turn it around:
- ★ G - Get the facts
- ★ R - Responsibility
- ★ E - Empathy
- ★ A - Agree a solution
- ★ T- Thank the customer for complaining
- ★ **F U N** - Follow Up Now!

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## 6. CREATE "MOMENT'S OF TRUTH"

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### MANAGE THE CUSTOMER'S EXPERIENCE

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- ★ Pay attention to small details - they are THE most important ones
- ★ Pay attention to the peripheral functions - reception areas, phones, staff manners, parking, customer areas, stock, presentation, letterheads, invoices, packing, etc.
- ★ EVERYTHING counts - each time you meet or contact (or don't contact!) the customer, your status in the mind of that customer is either improving or diminishing.

Customers want two things:



Made to feel good,



Solutions to problems.

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### TREAT EVERY CUSTOMER AS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT

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- ★ When you are talking to that customer - they are your most **important** customer
- ★ You only have one customer - the one you are dealing with now
- ★ Think of the value of a ten year customer
- ★ You might have hundreds of customers - but they might have only one supplier or a one-off purchase.

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## THE CUSTOMER ALWAYS COMES 1ST

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- ★ C = *Clear messages*
- ★ O = OK Attitude
- ★ M = Making people feel special
- ★ E = Energy
- ★ S = Standards of performance
- ★ 1<sup>st</sup> = 1st four minutes and last two minutes

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## 7. EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

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### THE EXTRA MILE IS NEVER CROWDED

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- ★ The world is full of mediocrity
- ★ Any idiot can make something a little cheaper, it takes vision and commitment to make or do something better
- ★ Don't do anything if you can't do it excellently
- ★ Set or establish clear expectations - and then exceed them
- ★ Explain terms, prices and conditions clearly, early and honestly

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### UNDER PROMISE, OVER DELIVER

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- ★ Suggestion: Build a 10% cushion into all your promises, quotes and statements of performance, and ...
- ★ THEN deliver faster, sooner, better, cheaper, 10% **more** that you promised. Don't ever be tempted to relax or pocket the 10% difference. There is an old farming saying: "You can shear a sheep many times, but skin it only once."
- ★ Whatever the customer asks for...the answer is YES!
- ★ Do something EXTRA...as standard

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### BUILDING CHAMPIONS

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- ★ Someone WHO might be a potential customer is a SUSPECT
- ★ A SUSPECT who "QUALIFIES" and expresses specific INTEREST becomes a PROSPECT

- ★ A PROSPECT who transacts ONCE becomes a minor CLIENT, or customer.
- ★ A CLIENT who comes back for a second or third time becomes a real CLIENT
- ★ A CLIENT that leads to other contacts becomes a CHAMPION
- ★ Every CHAMPION can lead you to AT LEAST three other customers
- ★ Think of the value of customers as LIFETIME customer and a GOLDEN CHAIN of other prospects, and treat EVERYBODY as a £100,000 customer!
- ★ Your customers are your best sales people
- ★ You already deal with your best customers
- ★ Customer satisfaction is not the objective - customer ranting, raving, ecstatic delight is!!
- ★ How often do your customers go WOW!

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## 8. SYSTEMS ARE AS IMPORTANT AS SMILES

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### MAKE QUALITY PRIORITY NO.1

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- ★ Customer service and quality is part of EVERYBODY'S' job
- ★ Lead by example
- ★ Set quality and customer service objectives and goals
- ★ Review progress regularly
- ★ Make quality and excellent customer service the most important thing by measuring and rewarding them
- ★ Define specifics for quality and service

Nobody is ever motivated to do an average job.

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### TEAM-WORK; QUALITY CIRCLES AND IMPROVEMENT GROUPS

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- ★ Cross-functional groups focused on:-
  - what do you do really well
  - what could you do better
- ★ Meet regularly
- ★ Implement ideas fast and unaltered
- ★ Learn as you progress

- ★ Reward customer focused innovation

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## GET A PLAN AND WORK THE PLAN

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- ★ Measure everything - you're customers do!
- ★ Ask "What can be simplified, automated, standardised and streamlined?"
- ★ Have a 'Plan B'; know what could go wrong and know exactly what to do when/if it does
- ★ Let front-line staff fix their own mistakes, and learn from them
- ★ Delegate accountability with activity
- ★ Brain-storm regularly

A company's greatest asset isn't on the balance sheet. It's the number of satisfied customers it has.

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## SERVE INTERNAL CUSTOMERS AS WELL AS EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS

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- ★ Everybody has a customer
- ★ Everybody is a customer
- ★ Build teamwork into your organisation

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## 9. FOLLOW-UP AND FOLLOW THROUGH

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### WHO CARES WINS...

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- ★ Follow-up... just for the sake of it
- ★ Surprise the customer - show you're interested
- ★ It's not sold until it's providing value
- ★ Sell products and services that don't come back to customers who do

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### ASK "HOW WELL ARE WE DOING?"

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- ★ It directs attention to the quality of your service
- ★ It gives you directional feedback
- ★ It motivates you!
- ★ It draws your customers attention to just how good you really are

You can't know how well you are doing unless you ask.

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### STAY CLOSE TO YOUR CUSTOMERS

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- ★ Listen, listen, listen...and learn
- ★ Ask your customer how your doing - regularly
- ★ Know your strengths and weaknesses
- ★ Know why people are satisfied - and why some people aren't

★ Why are your customers YOUR customers

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## **ASK CUSTOMERS FOR FEED-BACK**

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★ Telephone surveys

★ Follow-up after a transaction to check how things went

★ Questionnaires and surveys

★ Market research

★ Look at your sales statistics – especially repeat business, referrals, word of mouth, and increased or additional purchases

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## 10. DELIVER!

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### COMPETENCE WINS EVERY TIME

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- ★ Training is not a cost, it's an investment
- ★ Define what competent behaviour really means
- ★ Establish customer-focused standards of performance

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### GET IT RIGHT FIRST TIME

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- ★ Simplify procedures to reduce errors – KISS!
- ★ Standardise systems to ensure consistency – make every customer contact as good as the best
- ★ Think through processes and methods to pre-empt all situations – aim for success and plan for failure

When you are in contact with the customer, you are the whole organisation

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### DEFINE YOUR JOB IN TERMS OF ADDING VALUE TO CUSTOMERS

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- ★ Traditionally - this sets limits not goals
- ★ To have real effect define or job in terms of customer satisfaction and an opportunity to add value
- ★ Define it on the basis on the principle that people love to buy, but hate to be sold.

- ★ So that you don't sell things...you sell benefits
- ★ To customers it sometimes seems that people are friendly, polite, enthusiastic, creative, positive, intelligent and committed - EXCEPT for the eight hours a day they spend at work!!
- ★ Empower people to create excellence for the customer through personal example, training, standards and respect

When you define your job in terms of adding customer satisfaction and value you will do it quite differently.

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## GIVE CUSTOMERS WHAT THEY WANT...

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*Customers want to deal with people who...*

- ★ Are easy to do business with
- ★ Treat them as individuals
- ★ Know their business
- ★ Are willing to do something extra
- ★ Inspire confidence

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## WHAT YOUR ORGANISATION MUST UNDERSTAND

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- ★ High levels of customer satisfaction equals survival
- ★ Outstanding customer service is not a "nice-to-have" it is a "must-have"
- ★ Customers expect high quality service, and can go elsewhere if they don't get it
- ★ It is too expensive to replace customers, even if it were possible

★ Managing and creating "moments of truth" is the key

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### THREE FINAL THOUGHTS...

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Outstanding customer service means creating good feelings and solving problems in a ways that exceeds expectations

People make the difference; if the customer hasn't got a smile - give them one of yours!

It's not what you do...it's the way that you do it!