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What your customers dislike!

Surveys Show What Your Customers Dislike

Surveys of customers can be very revealing even indicating danger areas for your organisation. This article summarises findings from some recent surveys that show just what it is that customers dislike the most about their interactions with businesses.

When they're on the premises

There's one thing that customers dislike more than anything else – employees who are busily conversing with each other and just ignore them. This is unforgivable and also very likely to cost the business a sale because the customer usually leaves and takes their business elsewhere.

Whether the business is a retailer or a restaurant, customers intensely dislike being confronted by a salesperson who's having a bad day and showing it. The customer's perception of the business plummets and most never return, even after just one such experience.

Another real dislike is to be served by someone who's chewing gum or eating something. It's unattractive at best and reflects poorly on the business. Even breath mints should be sucked only while out of view of customers.

The use of industry jargon is viewed as being condescending and a means of trying to make the customer look stupid or uninformed. It intimidates all but the most knowledgeable of customers and should be avoided unless the customer has already asked a question using a particular 'buzz phrase'.

Telephone troubles

Customers really dislike being put on hold during a call without being asked first – just telling them *"Hold a minute please"* and then transferring to the on-hold music is not the right way to handle it. The best way to deal with this situation is to ask the customer if they mind waiting for a few seconds while the other call is answered, then promise them that you'll be back quickly. It's also very much disliked when the person they have reached goes away to take another call and doesn't return for several minutes.

Regardless of how polite the employee is when putting a customer on hold, it should only happen once. Going away repeatedly to take other calls is seen as rude and a sign that the customer is not valued by the business. Asking the customer to call back later "*when we're not so busy*" is another definite turn-off. Instead, ask when it would be convenient for *you* to call the *customer* back, and then take down their contact details.

Even customers who start by telling you they have rung to complain about something, or who are obviously irate and aggressive, don't deserve to be hung up on – they are only going to be twice as irate when they call back to complain about that as well!

One of the important things a team member, particularly those who deal with customers on a regular basis, should be trained in is a telephone technique for how to handle difficult customers.

Customers also dislike the feeling that they're being 'screened'. If they ask to speak with the CEO and that person's not available then they should be advised that the CEO is out of the office and then asked by the person taking the call if he/she can be of assistance. The worst thing to do is to launch into a series of questions that sounds like the customer's being evaluated to see if they're worthy of being put through to the person they've asked for.

No reply

And finally, a customer dislike that's right out of the electronic age. So many people use the Internet for gathering information that it's become a highly valuable sales support channel. Many websites offer a facility for submitting requests for information and are thereby making a promise to supply it. According to one study, nearly half of online companies either don't reply at all or respond with incorrect or inappropriate information.

It's up to you and your managers to be sure none of these customer-killers are happening in your place of business. Remember that only about ten percent of dissatisfied customers will ever complain to you – but they'll tell everyone they know about why they're unhappy with your business.



Want to find out more? We'll work with you to ensure you delight your customers every time!

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