

You Need to Love Your Customers or Someone Else Will!

*By Judith Filek—President
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Remember the old song by the Beatles, “All We Need Is Love?” Well, that’s the tune your customers are singing. If you don’t show you “love” them, someone else surely will. In fact, your competitors are eager to do just that.

In today’s day and age, there are a lot of products that are very similar and do virtually the same thing. Josh Gordon, in his book, *Presentations That Change Minds*, says the more similar in price and features your product is to the competition, the more likely the differentiator will be relationships and service. Demonstrating you “love” your customers as you respond to your customer’s needs insures their loyalty. The question is how to do it.

#1 Know your customers by name.

When a customer hears you recognize them by their name, they automatically feel special. The caller feels you will take care of them over others. While developing a relationship takes time, it is worth the effort. It requires that you get to know your customer on a more personal level and that you share information about your self, such as watching a sporting event, celebrating a holiday or dealing with a weather issue. The more they know about you and the more you know about them, the more secure they feel.

#2 Go the extra mile.

It means a lot to a customer to say that you will personally deliver an order to shipping so that there will be no mix up in delivery. People love when you call them to update them on the status of their request. Even if you have no new information, they appreciate your diligence and conclude that you value their

business. When Service Centers of car dealerships started calling their customers to inquire about the service they received on their automobile, the reaction from customers was extraordinarily positive and when it came time to replacing the vehicle, people remembered the great service they received, all because people went the extra mile.

#3 Do the unexpected.

Recently, I called United Airlines to confirm a reservation for a trip to Italy. I had overlooked that the reservation was on-hold for two days, and it had expired. The new fare was \$100 higher. At the same time, my husband was holding some frequent flyer miles to accompany me. His hold was accidentally erased at the end of the day they were made. Because of the error with my husband, the agent talked to her supervisor while I was on-hold. She not only re-instated my husband’s reservation, but she processed my ticket at the original fee. I had not asked, nor expected her to do anything special. I hung up feeling it pays to fly United.

#4 Be there for them when they need it.

Customers assess how they feel about you and your company when things go wrong. If there is a big problem, they want to feel that you will personally take care of them, even if that means working all night or coming back to work in the middle of the night. How you treat them in tough times really makes them feel valued.

#5 If you screw up, take ownership of the problem and fix it.

Finally, if you or your organization has caused a problem, apologize for it and fix it in a timely manner. Do not blame the customer or try to de-

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fend yourself. Customers do not like being inconvenienced. The more you focus on solving the problem, the happier they will be.

Question: *We're interested in your reaction to this article. Click [here](#) – to comment on this article, share your concerns or ask questions. Judy will respond to all questions.*

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