

# D♥A♥T♥I♥N♥G Your Customer

Today we are in a deep depression and deterioration when it comes to the way we treat our customers. I applaud you for taking this step to develop a WOW Customer Return Policy. Regardless of the industry with few exceptions the creation and retention of a customer is a lost art.

Think your customers are satisfied? They very well may be. Unfortunately, customer satisfaction doesn't always lead to customer loyalty.

These days even if your customers are completely satisfied with your product or service, 40% of them will leave you and start doing business with your competition. On the surface, 40% may not seem like that much. After all, over half of your satisfied customers are coming back. But in dollars and cents, 40% is costing you more than you may think, because. According to the Wall Street Journal, attracting new customers can cost nearly double the amount it takes to attract repeat business from your existing customer base.

What's the solution? Quite simply, in order to retain all your customers and increase your sales, you need to go beyond customer satisfaction and develop the rapport that will make your customers adore you. Only then will you achieve true customer loyalty.

So let's create a WOW CUSTOMER RETURN POLICY.

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I am going to help you with some fun, easy to remember, simple to implement was to supplement your skills and assist you in becoming better at what you do and enjoying the process. For instance, you can't send a duck to eagle school. An eagle needs a little push. The duck won't allow it.

You can't teach someone to serve. You can't teach someone to smile. You cant' teach personality. You can't teach ATTITUDE. It's caught. Customer service is not a department...it's an ATTITUDE. Procrastination is ATTITUDES natural assassin.

Like many of you I have been called many names...you know perfectionist, demanding, obsessive. I think it takes obsession, takes searching for the details for anybody to be good. In our time today, I want to ensure that each of you continue to possess unsurpassed dedication to customer CARE. This discipline must be a habit, so ingrained that is stronger than the excitement of success or the fear of failure.

I am a high maintenance kind of guy. I understand that sometime in my life there's a peak and a crest for me so I am going to enjoy it all levels. I'm going to enjoy this ride that I am on, and it slows down, that when it will be time for another phase of my life.

However in the meantime, I wake up asking myself four questions.

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1. What If?
2. What's Next?
3. What's Possible?
4. Why Not?

And even with those questions I am conscious of my inability to grasp, in all its details, both positive and negative, of what each of you face each day. I applaud you for what you do. Each of you makes the connection with your customer to ensure that the perception of YOUR COMPANY remains first class and glean valuable insights on how to improve your products. Today every successful company

Southwest Airlines is successful because the company understands it's a customer service company that happens to be an airline.

The details are details. YOUR COMPANY makes the product. You make the connections. Your connections are what gives assists your customer in obtaining the 'product of the product.' You help to create the harmony of the diverse parts, their application, and their balance. You introduce order to the process, which provides unity that permits your customers to see and comprehend how to benefit their business using YOUR COMPANY as a valuable resource.

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One thing is very clear to me: YOUR COMPANY is growing. You grow because you take on new challenges, and you face even more new challenges because you're growing. Customer CARE needs to keep pace with your growth.

I know it can also feel risky, stressful, and confusing at times. You are the experts at growing YOUR COMPANY, because as YOUR COMPANY grows CUSTOMER CARE becomes even more important. Yet it is a skill that can be developed through awareness, commitment, and education. **I recognize that handling complaints is the most misunderstood, overlooked, and undervalued part of customer service.**

After working with hundreds of organizations, from front line employees to CEOs, I have observed that the ability and willingness to turn customer 'complaints' into 'complements' is an endless cycle, and it's a good thing: it's the only way for a company, in today's global economy to survive. CEOs hate variance. It's the enemy. Variance in customer service is bad. Stamping out variance makes a complex job less complex. So let's get everyone to provide 'meaningful memories' to their customers. Let's create better relationship. Let's be passionate.

**KUDOS to each of you.**

The ability and willingness to satisfy complaints is not only vital to YOUR COMPANY but it ensures longevity and success. At YOUR COMPANY you call it Customer CARE.

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For me I believe C.A.R.E means the

## **Customer-Always-Remember-Everything**

Sometimes, it may seem that new problems crop up as fast as you solve the old ones (sometimes faster!), but that just means that you're moving -- that you're getting better and stronger. Anyone who wants to compete with us has to learn the same things, so problems are just mile markers. Each one you pass means you've gotten better. You didn't get to be the biggest by not being the best.

Yet no matter how much better you get, you'll always have hard work to do, you'll never be done. Competition demands you stay alert and attuned to your customer. Shift Happens and we all have to deal with it.

That may seem negative, but it's not: you'll do your best to "get it right," and then do it again when you find out that things have changed. That is the cycle of growth, and like it or not, that cycle won't stop.

It's hard... but if you weren't doing something hard, then you'd have no business and more importantly you would not have a job. The only reason you aren't swamped by your competition is because what you do is hard, and you do it better than anyone else. If it ever gets too easy, then start looking for a tidal wave of competition to wash you away.

Sure, people have done parts of what you've done before, but what you've learned over the years at YOUR COMPANY is that it's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen. And that's where you are breaking new ground.

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This is what customers pay you for...to sweat all these details so it's easy and pleasant for them to use your products.

Developing complaint-resolution skills is a partnership, and I for one applaud you for stepping up and taking on this very important responsibility.

Customer CARE is just like D-A-T-I-N-G.

The objective of both is to get the second date.

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## **DAZZLE Customers with service that keeps them loyal**

The first thing for any Date is to DAZZLE them. DAZZLE is such a short, simple word, but it really encompasses a lot of things. To DAZZLE, you must differentiate yourself, which means doing something a little unconventional and innovative. You must do something that's above and beyond what's expected. And whatever you do must have an emotional impact on the receiver. YOUR COMPANY is not an average company, your service is not average, and you don't want your people to be average. At YOUR COMPANY I believe you expect every employee to DAZZLE your Customers. Whether internally, with co-workers, or externally with our customers and partners, delivering DAZZLING results is word of mouth. Sound bites.

DAZZLE with service and experience, not with anything that relates directly to monetary compensation (for example, we don't offer blanket discounts or promotions to customers). At YOUR COMPANY let's seek to DAZZLE our customers, our co-workers, our vendors, our partners, and in the long run, our investors.

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## **ANTICIPATE the needs of your Customers**

For some people, especially those in bigger companies, the constant change can be somewhat unsettling at first. If you are not prepared to deal with Shift Happening, then you probably are not a good fit for the company. Customer service is not a department, it's an ATTITUDE.

## **ATTITUDE GAME-ATTITUDES ARE CAUGHT NOT TAUGHT**

We must all learn to not fear change, but to also embrace it enthusiastically, and perhaps even more importantly, to encourage and drive it. We must always plan for and be prepared for constant change.

Although change can and will come from all directions, it's important that most of the changes in the company are driven from the bottom up -- from the people who are on the front lines and closest to the customers and/or issues. It's the center of gravity. It's where the

Never accept or be too comfortable with the status quo because, historically, the companies that get into trouble are the ones that aren't able to respond quickly enough and adapt to change.

We are ever evolving. If we want to continue to stay ahead of our competition, we must continually change and keep them guessing. They can copy our images, our shipping, and the overall look of our web site, but they cannot copy our people, our culture, or our service. As long as embracing constant change is a part of our culture, they will not be able to evolve as fast as we can.

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## **TREAT each Customer Uniquely**

One of the things that makes YOUR COMPANY different from a lot of other companies is that we treat each customize our experience with each customer. We fit their needs to a "T" by recognizing one size does not fit all.

You should value having fun. You want to be able to laugh at yourselves. You want look for both fun and humor in our daily work.

This means that many things you do might be a little unconventional. I just want to make life more interesting and fun for everyone. I want YOUR COMPANY to have a unique and memorable personality.

Your company culture is what makes you successful, and in your culture, I hope you celebrate and embrace your diversity and each person's individuality. It is my wish that you express your personality in their work.

The consistency is in your belief that you function best when you can be yourselves. I want your personality to be expressed in your interactions with each other and in your work.

When you make sure everyone is also having fun at work, it ends up being a win-win for everyone: Employees are more engaged in the work that they do, and the company as a whole becomes more innovative.

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## **INNOVATE and Be Bold And Daring (But Not Reckless).**

I do not want people to be afraid to take risks and make mistakes. I believe if people aren't making mistakes, then that means they're not taking enough risks. Over time, I want everyone to develop his/her gut about business decisions. I want people to develop and improve their decision-making skills. I encourage people to make mistakes as long as they learn from them. Innovation is the product of discomfort. It's how we make money from creativity.

I always remind my clients to never become complacent and accept the status quo just because that's the way things have always been done. You should always be seeking adventure and having fun exploring new possibilities. By having the freedom to be creative in our solutions, you end up making our own luck. Approach situations and challenges with an open mind.

Sometimes our sense of adventure and creativity causes us to be unconventional in our solutions (because we have the freedom to think inside the box), but that's what allows us to rise above and stay ahead of the competition.

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## **NURTURE Your Employees To Grow Both Personally & Professionally.**

In any relationship, it's important to be a good listener as well as a good communicator. Open, honest communication is the best foundation for any relationship, but remember that at the end of the day it's not what you say or what you do, but how you make people feel that matters the most. People don't remember what you said. They don't remember what you did. They do remember how you made them feel.

In order for someone to feel good about a relationship, he/she must know that the other person truly cares about him or her, both personally and professionally.

At YOUR COMPANY, you embrace diversity in thoughts, opinions, and backgrounds. The more widespread and diverse your relationships are, the bigger the positive impact you can make on the company, and the more valuable you will be to the company. It is critical for relationship building to have effective, open, and honest communication. No matter who you are, what department you work in, what responsibilities you have, each of you has the opportunity to reinforce our 'customer care' pillars. **LISTEN-ANTICIPATE-BE CONSISTENT-Make it EASY**

It's important to constantly challenge and stretch yourself you don't feel like you are growing or learning. I believe that inside every employee is more potential than even the employee himself/herself realizes.

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**GUARANTEE A Work Place That Has A Lot Of Emphasis On Your Culture Because You Are Both A Team And A Family.**

Let's ensure that we continue to create an environment that is friendly, warm, and exciting. Let's encourage diversity in ideas, opinions, and points of view.

The best leaders are those who lead by example and are both team followers as well as team leaders. I believe that, in general, the best ideas and decisions are made from the bottom up, meaning by those who are on the front lines and closest to the issues and/or the customers. The role of a manager is to remove obstacles and enable his/her direct reports to succeed. This means the best leaders are servant-leaders. They serve those they lead.

The best team members take initiative when they notice issues so that the team and the company can succeed. The best team members take ownership of issues and collaborate with other team members whenever challenges arise.

The best team members have a positive influence on one another and everyone they encounter. They strive to eliminate any kind of cynicism and negative interactions. They strive to create harmony with each other and with everyone else they come in contact with.

I believe that the best teams are those that not only work with each other but also interact with each other outside the office environment.

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Many of the company's best ideas have been the direct result of informal interactions outside of the office. For example, the idea for our culture book came about from a casual discussion outside the office.

You are more than just a team though -- you are a family. You watch out for each other, care for each other, and go above and beyond for each other because you believe in each other and you trust each other. Not only do I think you should work together, but also play together. I have observed that the bonds go far beyond the typical "co-worker" relationships found at most other companies.

## **Do More With Less.**

While we may be casual in our interactions with each other, we are focused and serious about the operations of our business. We believe in working hard and putting in the extra effort to get things done.

We believe in operational excellence and realize that there is always room for improvement in everything we do. This means that our work is never done. In order to stay ahead of the competition (or would-be competition), we need to continuously innovate as well as make incremental improvements to our operations, always striving to make ourselves more efficient, always trying to figure out how to do something better. We use mistakes as learning opportunities.

We must never lose our sense of urgency in making improvements. We must never settle for "good enough" because good is the enemy of great.

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While our goal is to remain a great company, we also want to become the greatest service company in the world. We set and exceed our own high standards, constantly raising the bar for competitors and for ourselves.

## **We Recognize That There Are Always Challenges Ahead To Tackle.**

We believe that no matter what happens we should always be respectful of everyone.

While we celebrate our individual and team successes, we are not arrogant nor do we treat others differently from how we would want to be treated. Instead, we carry ourselves with a quiet confidence because we believe that, in the long run, our character will speak for itself.

1. Be Genuinely Helpful
2. Don't take anything personally
3. Aim High
4. Don't make assumptions
5. Reinforce Values
6. Do What's Right
7. Own It
8. Be Impeccable with your word
9. Improve It
10. Constantly Do Your Best
11. Develop Great Relationships
12. Create Meaningful Memories

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Customers do not expect perfection. They do however expect their needs to be met and their expectations realized whenever they are investing in your products.

I have provided a small accordion reminder so that you can have a quick reference to DATING Your Customer. One side is a concise explanation of what I have presented here today, and the backside is ready to use tool that offers.

## **3-Steps in solving a complaint**

1. Focus on Discovery
2. Reaffirm Your Discovery
3. Create A Joint Resolution

## **5- Customer Rapport Building Tips**

1. Establish A Common Ground
2. Listen and Show Concern
3. Use Humor
4. Keep A Positive Attitude
5. Treat Customers Like Family

## **DATING Words of Wisdom**

5-Important questions to ask yourself

20 ROSES in all. Because you deserve it.

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My goal in writing this article is to help you unlock more of your potential. But it has to be a joint effort: you have to want to challenge and stretch yourself in order for it to happen.

And for anyone you bring on board, the best expertise they can bring is expertise at learning and adapting and figuring new things out -- helping the company grow, and in the process, they will also be growing themselves.

From what I have observed at YOUR COMPANY, you value strong relationships in all areas: with managers, direct reports, customers (internal and external), vendors, business partners, team members, and co-workers.

Strong, positive relationships that are open and honest are a big part of what differentiates YOUR COMPANY from most other companies. Strong relationships allow us to accomplish much more than we would be able to otherwise. A key ingredient in strong relationships is to develop emotional connections. It's important to always act with integrity in your relationships, to be compassionate, friendly, loyal, and to make sure that you do the right thing and treat your relationships well.

The hardest thing to do is to build trust, but if the trust exists, you can accomplish so much more. People buy from people they trust.

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As YOUR COMPANY grows, communication becomes more and more important because everyone needs to understand how his/her team connects to the big picture of what we're trying to accomplish. Customer Service is not a department...it's everyone's job.

Communication is always one of the weakest spots in any large organization, no matter how good the communication is. We want everyone to always try to go the extra mile in encouraging thorough, complete, and effective communication.

I want you to repeat after me the words of Don Miguel Ruiz

## **I WILL BE IMPECCABLE WITH MY WORD**

Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against a customer or to gossip. Use the power of your word in the direction of building trust.

## **I DON'T TAKE ANYTHING PERSONALLY**

Nothing customers do or say is because of you. It is a projection of their own reality, their own concerns, and issues. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering.

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## **I DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS**

Find the courage to ask questions and find out what they really want. Communicate with customers as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, arguments, and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely build trust in you and YOUR COMPANY.

## **I WILL ALWAYS DO MY BEST**

Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are tired as opposed to well rested. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse, and regret.

Turning complaints into compliments is our goal. CARE about complaints and you will turn concerns in to compliments.

Now..... **Who wants to go on a DATE?**