

National Customer Service Week 2009

We all respond to the way we are treated; whether good or bad, the way a company deals with us will determine how we perceive the business, whether we'll buy from them again and whether we'll recommend them to people we know or tell everyone how awful they were.

Excell has put together some very simple dos and don'ts, relevant to both internal and external customers, to help you achieve and maintain good levels of customer service:

do...

greet your customers in a friendly way

- try to build an immediate rapport
- people will buy from and recommend people they like

listen to what your customers want

- take time to listen to what they have to say
- identify their needs

be open and honest

- don't make promises you can't keep
- if you can't solve the problem immediately, say so and explain the process – customers will tend to be more forgiving if you're honest

know your product and services

- the more you know the more professional you and the company will be
- give the customer the best advice and the options available

get to know your customers better

- demonstrate that you are interested in helping them
- feed back any relevant information to other departments, which may help identify other areas of opportunity to improve the company's product / service

check your understanding

- clarify the exact nature of the enquiry .
- go through the points one by one and offer solutions there and then
- ensure the customer can get back to you at a later date if necessary

don't...

pass customers around

- when there is a problem, deal with it first time with the minimum amount of hassle
- if you have to pass the enquiry on to another person explain why and ensure the customer is kept advised

be elusive

- instead, make it easy for customers to get in touch with you – ensure they have all your contact details
- find out what ways your customers prefer to get in touch with you – also how and when they would like to be contacted by you

be unclear

- explain simply what's happening in plain, clear language; avoiding use of jargon
- be careful not to appear patronising or talking down to individuals

avoid dealing with complaints

- instead, concentrate on the resolution; state what you can do, not what you can't
- never lose your cool
- apologise when necessary
- don't blame others

To find out how Excell can help recruit the right people for you please visit www.excellgroup.com.