

10 TIPS

FOR REIMAGINING YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE



The Los Angeles Regional
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Development Center
Network

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Good customer service today is not only meeting the needs and expectations of your customer, but also meeting those needs in a more personal way.

Providing flexibility and friendly service goes a long way, but are you meeting your customers where they are? Do your customer policies benefit you or the customer? What are your customer service objectives? Check out these ten tips to begin reimagining your business' customer service experience.

- 1** Create a Customer Service Plan and Objectives. Before you begin, ask your customers, vendors, and your employees for their feedback on customer service. Allow the players to provide feedback and take it with open arms. Once you know customer expectations and perceptions, create customer standards for your business, document it, train your employees on that standard, and make a commitment to operating the business with exceptional service as its standard. To execute the standard flawlessly, assure your customer service standards are always implemented with each customer, not just the best clients or the biggest accounts. More on creating a customer service plan from the [Edward Lowe Foundation](#).
- 2** Review Your Customer Policies. Collect all of your policies and cross check them with complaints as well as compliments. Assess the role of the "problem policies" and either institute a better approach or remove the policy from your standards. For your most complimented policies, find ways to promote them through your employees or on your marketing materials. For returns, is your policy clear and easily found? Is your return policy on your website or on the receipt? Do your employees remind customers of your policies for sale items? More customer policy tips from [QuickBooks](#).
- 3** Ask, Listen, Be, And Follow Up. Repeat. When it comes to interacting with your customers, ask the right questions. Ask open ended questions that provide you with information that will help you better assist the customer, ask what the customer is shopping for - is it a special occasion? Could you suggest other complimentary products/services? Listen and provide solutions or alternatives if you cannot assist the customer. Be respectful and mindful of the first impression your business conveys across all areas (phone, in-store, employees, online etc.). Be the expert - your team should be able to provide the client with the most information about your product/service, uses, and alternatives. Last, follow up with your customers, personalize the experience and repeat the process.
- 4** Hire a Good Mix. First, assess what is important to you and your business? Then, refer back to your newly created/reviewed standards and determine the right mix of employee strengths, personality, skills, and experience appropriate for your business. Don't forget to include your customer service standards in your job descriptions and performance reviews, then enforce and measure those standards. Great hiring tips from [BusinessBeware](#).
- 5** Train. Offer your employees training on providing your customers and vendors great service, and consider making it part of your company culture. Train your employees to keep an eye out for experiences that help customers, encourage a culture of sharing that information with you and with other employees. Once trained, confide in your employees to make customer service decisions to provide a positive experience for your customers. Reward your employees for providing brilliant service with incentives like: other training opportunities, side projects, flexible hours or just say "thank you." [More tips from American Express >](#)
- 6** Evaluate Your Reach. Are you making it difficult for your customers to find you? Does your website have your operating hours, phone numbers, store location(s), and links to social? Is your site mobile friendly? If you Google your business and related products/services, does your search return results for your business? Can someone click to call? If not, correct it. Are you meeting your customers "where they are?" Go to your customers and meet them where they're searching, looking, reading and the like. Remember sales are made one interaction at a time; pair your goals with your channels. Last, assure someone is not only always answering the phone, but providing quality service. Consider giving your best customers a dedicated customer service hotline. [Check now on Google My Business>](#)
- 7** Publish your Expertise. As often as you can, try publishing your team's expertise in your industry and products/services via newsletters, blogs, or videos. This could include self help guides, weekly or monthly tips and tricks, dialogues or interviews with other customers using your offerings, or even publishing information on your site when new offerings are available. This could help boost positive content related to your business; focus on creating quality content.
- 8** Manage your Reputation. The reputation of your business relies heavily on the service your team provides. Provide the best possible experience for all of your customers both in store and online. Although it may be tough to put your business on review sites, consider the opportunity to create awareness for your business, understand the customer experience with your business, respond to appropriate feedback positive and negative, and address customer related areas in your business. Try using tools like [Google Alert](#) to monitor when your business name is used or resources like [Help a Reporter Out](#) to help create positive publicity for your business.
- 9** Celebrate your Customers. Why not feature your happy customers on your site with a short testimonial? Consider promoting special in store events before or after hours to make your customers feel special and/or celebrate their life occasions. Thank your customers in person, send a note, or make a shout out via social. Reward future customers by creating introductory promotions or free downloadable content. [Here's a 100 more tips.](#)
- 10** Check Out the Resources.
 - a. Training: [Service Essentials](#), [Service Skills](#), [Universal Class](#).
 - b. Applications: [ZenDesk](#), [Desk.Com](#), [more >](#)
 - c. [Local SBDC](#) - Don't forget your local SBDC can help you create your own customer service plan and review your operations to help you provide your customers with the best experience.



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