

3 Keys of Customer Service



Whether you're a B2B or B2C, large Fortune 500 Company or a small startup, one thing remains the same – good customer service is key and can ultimately make or break your business. In today's digital age, sites like Yelp, Angie's List and Google Reviews, make it easy for customers to share their experiences. And because people [remember negative events](#) more than positive ones, they are more likely to share bad experiences – making positive reviews even more valuable.

So how do you deliver experiences that are so great, your customers want to shout from the mountain tops that they're in love with your company? By delivering a fantastic customer experience through customer service. And what's the recipe for fantastic customer service, you ask? Read on.

For the sake of length and time, let's focus on three core pillars.

1. Under Promise, Over Deliver

Sounds easy enough. Set expectations at a reasonable level, and then over deliver on your promise. For example, I'm a customer at a clothing retailer, and a suit I need for a speech I'm giving at a big conference in a few days isn't in stock in my size. The retailer tells me they can ship it to my house – overnight. I opt for

the overnight, but know that if something goes wrong I'll have no time to find an alternative. You can image my surprise when a salesperson shows up at my door and hand delivers the suit (that she personally picked up from their other location) that very same evening. You think I want to share that experience? You bet I do.

On a non-retail front, under promising, over delivering can mean setting easily attainable goals for a client – set realistic goals when a higher outcome is readily achievable. Once you surpass the goals originally promised for your client, they are going to remember you as the (insert: lawyer, contractor, consultant...) that helped their company achieve 125% of their quota or beat their deadline by 2 weeks. Other ways to over deliver? Give your customers access to special features or previews of new features, go above and beyond to deliver an unforgettable customer experience.

The key to this pillar is to be realistic – *never promise something you know you can't achieve* – it will only end it let down and you may lose a good customer or client.

2. Communicate. Communicate. Communicate.

I cannot stress the importance of communication in business relationships. Whether you're a customer wanting to know the status of a project, or a client of a lawyer in a legal case, getting a constant information flow is imperative. It is important that you establish guidelines with your clients/customers from the beginning and then *follow through*. Some clients will require more attention than others. I suggest that even if a client says that they only want updates once a week, update them at least twice a week – they will ultimately be grateful.

Good communication also means following up with your customers. Respond to emails and texts. Don't brush them aside – even if you don't have any new updates on the status of their project, tell them that. It shows that you care about your client and the outcome of the business transaction and that you are professional and reliable. They want to feel important. Make sure you are always leading and in control of the transaction, your client/customer should never be doing more work than you to see it through.

3. And lastly, say thank you.

Always show your appreciation. This is quite simple, folks. After a deal or transaction is done, *say thank you*. Make it personal. Send them a note, an email, pick up the phone and call them, or better yet, take them out to coffee. Show the

customer you value their business and relationship – even if the outcome of the deal/trial/etc. wasn't what you had wanted. This little gesture goes a long way and will earn you repeat business and potential valuable word of mouth referrals. You want to make a lasting impression that will make someone a customer or client for life – and even earn you a coveted positive online review.

What does your firm do to deliver great customer service? Or share an experience you've had where you received great customer service.