



What's Your Service Mentality IQ?

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Most of us in the customer service arena are very good. And the reason is simple...we always carry a certain amount of a service mentality with us to do the job well.

People often ask me: "Nancy, what is the KEY to good customer service?" My answer is simple. There is no one key. There are many keys...and they all need to be on your customer service key ring.

So, come along with us and learn the 7 service mentalities that will raise the bar for you and your company. See how many of these attributes you own.

Empathy - Some call it sympathy. Whichever you call it, it needs to be there. When someone has a problem, we need to empathize with them and show we understand the frustration they're going through. What we don't want to do, however, is tell a customer, "I know exactly how you feel." Because you aren't able to know exactly how anyone else feels. But you can empathize, and that's why empathy is KEY for a service mentality.

Here's a better way to explain it. I had my wallet stolen a while back, at Disneyland no less. Everything was in it...and the money was the least of my problems. Credit cards, check book, social security card, drivers license...all of it GONE.

Over the years, I have learned to be a "good" customer, so I called the first credit card company and told them of my plight. I said, "Hi, my name is Nancy Friedman and I'm at Disney and my wallet was stolen. Everything's gone." And I told her what was in the wallet. She said without skipping a beat, "NAME?" I said, "It's still Nancy Friedman."

Where was her empathy, her sympathy? It wasn't there! All I needed to hear was a simple, "Gee, that's got to be so frustrating. Let me get the ball rolling to help you."

Enthusiasm - We need enthusiasm whenever we help a customer. They need to know you are truly excited to help. (Of course, we need to do this without going over the top and giggling our way through the conversation.) Enthusiastic customer service people get the job done faster, simpler, and with a touch of class. How much enthusiasm do you show in your job?

Responsibility - This is one of the most important keys to a great service mentality. Be responsible for your job, your position and the company. Being responsible means it **is** your job.

If you have answered the call on behalf of your company, you have indeed accepted 100% responsibility for the call. "I wasn't here," "I don't know anything about that," "It's not my department," or all those other lines are not in the responsibility key of customer service.

Take responsibility for the call. You answered it. It's yours! This is important in a face-to-face situations as well. It's the old "don't point...go show."

Resiliency - This key is a little trickier to use. To be resilient, we need to have a mentality to bounce back from unfortunate events, setbacks or other negative incidents. It's really an attitude adjustment.

One situation with a customer may be more difficult than the other...and when you get to the next customer...your resiliency needs to kick in and bounce you right back to where it was before that negative event. Be resilient!

Ownership - A cousin of responsibility. So many times we hear and see people in the customer service arena who don't want to take ownership of the problem. When you own the problem, you'll handle it far better than if you don't want anything to do with it.

And don't forget...never take those barbs from the customer personally. They're not attacking YOU. They're attacking the problem. You're just the lightning rod, not the target. So own the customer you're working with - on the phone or in person!!! Take Ownership! Be proud!

Balance - This is the fine line between 'the customer is always right' and knowing what to do about the problem. At Telephone Doctor, we don't believe the customer necessarily is always right. We do, however, know customers always think they're right. And that is the perception we need to deal with at the time.

Many times the customer is in error...had the wrong date, the wrong receipt, the wrong information or whatever. And yet, they're hell bent on proving that they are right. So you see, they think they're right. We often times know they are not. And that's the secret key...not letting on that we know they're wrong.

It's the balance in the key ring of success. Balance is the art of creating a 'win-win' situation. Once you have the key of balance, you'll be able to handle situations to make everyone happy.

Adaptability - Most of us learn at a very early age that everything doesn't happen the way we want it to all the time. So often we need to adapt to a certain situation. Learning how to adapt to all these situations can make you a top customer service individual. It's related to your attitude. Why do some folks adapt very easily and some are not able to adapt at all? It's mainly because of attitude. It shapes how they handle a situation and react to it.

How'd you do? If you have some of these 'secret' ingredients of customer service, you're well on your way to success. And even if you're missing one or two, here's your opportunity to learn more about them.

Good luck to you! And may your service mentality be with you today and always

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