

Is Customer Service A Thing of The Past?

The other day I walked into a local business-my first visit to this particular established-and upon my arrival I was greeted with a pleasant “Hello.” I looked around for “instructions” on what my next step should be and I observed none-written or otherwise.

As I took a seat I felt somewhat foolish asking for instructions when everyone else appeared to know what was taking place. As I sat there I became frustrated that no one asked if I needed any assistance, nor did anyone take a moment to explain the policies of the establishment. I finally took a proactive stance and asked what the policies were. I received good treatment, however, I left feeling confused and somewhat out of sorts.

One of the concerns I often hear from consumers is that good customer service is now considered the exception whereas in the past it was the norm.

Businesses be placed on notice; there are at least seven other businesses in your area that provide the same service or product you do. Of those seven there are at least two that do it better or cheaper than you. So what’s going to make you stand out above your competition? The type of relationship you establish with that client/customer is the defining factor in customers doing repeat business with you.

This reminded me of an incident that took place a few summers ago at a McDonald’s restaurant in my hometown. I was training for a race and would run three mornings a week at 6 a.m. Upon completion of my morning run I would stop by the local McDonald’s for a glass of orange juice. The same sweet lady-who appeared to be a retiree-usually served me. We exchanged names and enjoyed our weekly interaction.

One day when I arrived at McDonald's I observed two school buses in the parking lot and there were grade school children as far as the eye could see. I decided I could forego my daily glass of orange juice and was about to leave when I heard someone yell above the chatter, "Mr. Lewis your order is ready!" Much to my surprise my very special customer service representative was holding my juice as high in the air as she could. I made a path through the screaming children and made it to the counter where she handed me the juice and mouthed the words "pay me on the next visit."

I don't know what type of training McDonalds provides its employees, however, I do know that special lady made me a customer for life. Listed below are the McDonald's Ten Commandments for customer service. Keep this in mind for your business and remember, "It's not what you know or who you know; it's how you treat the people who know you."

McDonald's Ten Commandments for Customer Treatment

- The customer is the most important person in our business.
- The customer is not dependant on us; we are dependent on the customer.
- The customer is not an interruption of our work; but the purpose of it.
- The customer does us an honor when calling on us. We are not doing the customer a favor by serving him/her.
- The customer is part of or business not an outsider. The customer is our guest.
- The customer is not a cold statistic, but flesh and blood: a human with feelings and emotions like our own.
- The customer is not someone to argue with or match wits with.

- The customer is deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment we can provide.
- The customer has the right to expect an employee to present a neat, clean appearance.