Customer
Service
"The Customer Isn't Always Right But..."
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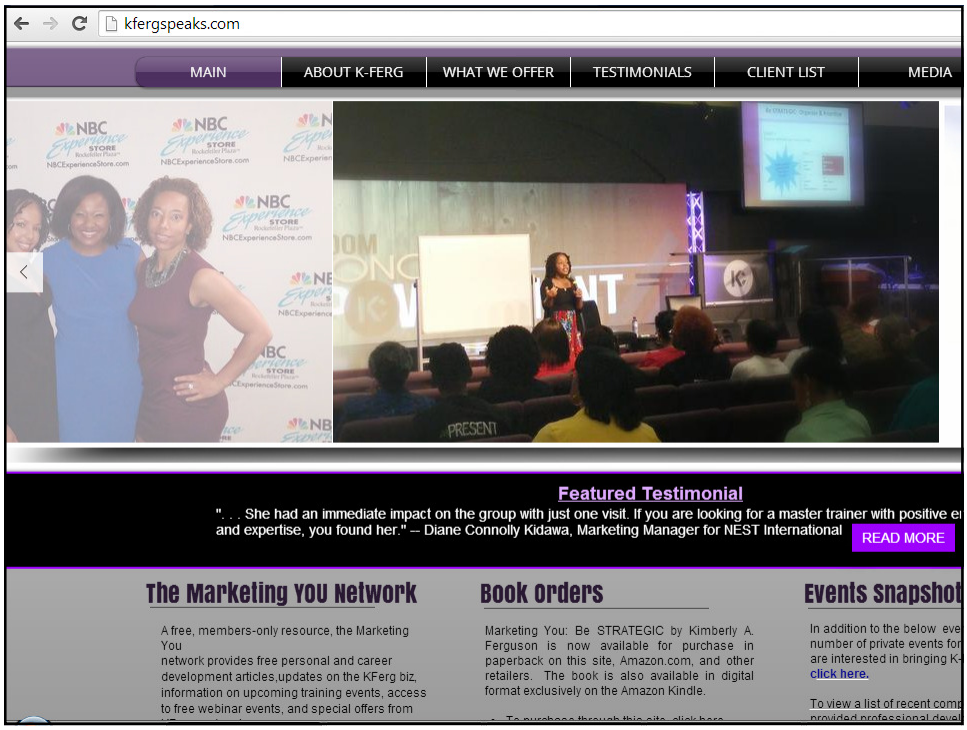
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Discussion point

"It's not what you do, nor the way that you do it, but how your customers perceive what you do and how you do it that determines the quality of your customer service".

❖To what extent do you think that the above statement is true or false? Why?

What is Customer Service?

- Define Customer Service
- Discuss Experiences
- Who are your customers?
- List Characteristics of Service Excellence

Typical factors you might have listed

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

- Knowledgeable and friendly staff
- Professional manner of staff
- Staff listened to me
- They did what they said they would do
- They seemed to care
- They responded to me promptly
- They seemed genuinely concerned
- They smiled
- They treated me as a real human being; not a distraction
- They seemed proud of what they did and of the organization
- Courteous, friendly and efficient service

Typical factors you might have listed

POOR SERVICE ☹

- Nobody seemed to have a clue what they were doing
- Nobody explained
- I was kept waiting
- They ignored me
- They treated me as though it was my fault
- They never got back to me; I had to chase them
- They blamed it on the system, the managers, the computers, their suppliers,
- They fobbed me off
- They were busy doing something else and I was an interruption and a distraction from their main work

❖Attitudes/Behaviors Associated With Poor Service

- Seem depressed or angry
- Would rather work alone
- Need to be the center of attention
- Work at own relaxed pace
- Consider technical aspects of job more satisfying
- Need things to happen in a predictable way
- Need others to know that they're right

IMPACT

How long did your reactions to poor customer service last?

❖Hours
❖Days
❖Weeks
❖Months
❖Years
❖A lifetime
❖Did you tell others?

The Service Journey

- Expectations
- Experience
- Evaluation

KEYS TO CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

You Hold the Key !

1. Your Attitude
2. Your Actions

Through your attitude and actions:
How do you make a customer glad he/she talked to you?

Actions For Service Excellence

In Groups of 3, come up with 10 actions your team can take to provide excellent service

10 Actions For Service Excellence

1. Know who is boss
2. Listen
3. Identify & anticipate needs
4. Make the customer feel important

10 Actions For Service Excellence

5. Train the customer
6. Use the power of “YES”
7. Know how to apologize
8. Go above and beyond

10 Actions For Service Excellence

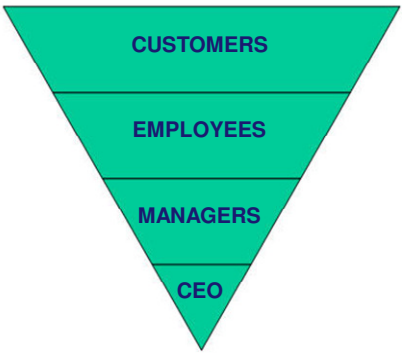
9. Encourage feedback
10. Treat your team with respect

Why Quality Service Is Important

- Service is where the jobs are
- Increased competition
- Greater understanding of consumers
- Makes economic sense

Adopting a Customer Service Perspective

- The Customer
  - Is king.
  - Is the reason we exist.
  - Without them, we have nothing.
  - Defines what quality service is.



Two Dimensions of Service

Procedural

Personal

S3

Two Dimensions of Service

- THE PROCEDURAL SIDE of service: consists of the established systems and procedures to deliver products and/or service.
  - Product/Service
  - Equipment
  - Supply

Two Dimensions of Service

- THE PERSONAL SIDE of service: consists of how team members use their attitudes, behaviors and verbal skills to interact with customers.
  - Communication style
  - Telephone manner
  - Friendliness

the freezer

Message to customers:
"We don't care."

Service characteristics:

Procedural	Personal
slow	insensitive
inconsistent	cold or impersonal
disorganised	apathetic
chaotic	aloof
inconvenient	uninterested

the factory

Message to customers:
"You are a number. We are here to process you."

Service characteristics:

Procedural	Personal
timely	insensitive
efficient	apathetic
uniform	aloof
	uninterested

the friendly zoo

Message to customers:
"We are trying hard, but we don't really know what we're doing"

Service characteristics:

Procedural	Personal
slow	friendly
inconsistent	personable
disorganised	interested
chaotic	tactful

quality member service

Message to customers:
"We care, and we deliver!"

Service characteristics:

Procedural	Personal
timely	friendly
efficient	personable
uniform	interested
	tactful

Importance of Service Excellence

Three Reasons Service Excellence is Important

1. Service is where the jobs are
2. Greater understanding of consumers
3. Quality customer service makes economic sense

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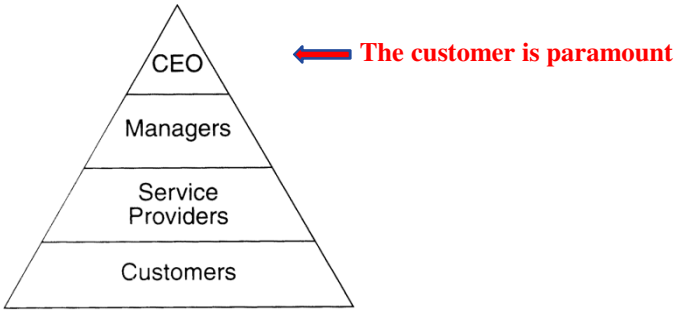
When is the Moment of Truth?

- Defined as "Any episode in which a customer comes into contact with any aspect of the organization and gets an impression of the quality of service" (Albrecht 1988).
- Service Excellence is all about **improving the moment of truth**

The Customer Service Perspective

The Traditional Perspective



Be A Problem Solver

PROACT TECHNIQUE

PR -- Problem
O -- Objectives
A -- Alternatives
C -- Consequences
T -- Trade-offs

Four Steps to Quality Service

- **Step 1**: Transmit a positive attitude.

S7

Four Steps to Quality Service

- **Step 2**: Identify customer needs.

Four Steps to Quality Service

- **Step 3**: Provide for the needs of your customers.

Four Steps to Quality Service

- **Step 4**: Make sure your customers are satisfied

S7

Customer Service Realities

- Requires the exertion of emotional labor.
- Providing it on a regular basis can be very challenging.
- Serving customers over an extended period of time can be very tiring.

Attitude Metamorphosis

- Contact-Overload Syndrome
  - When you've exhausted your reservoir of emotional energy
- Signs of Contact Overload
  - Tired
  - Listless
  - Dejected
  - Grouchy
  - Impatient
  - Clumsy

Transmit a Positive Attitude

"Most of us know that our attitude affects the experiences and interactions we have."

S8

Why a Positive Attitude is Important

- Attitude Is:
  - A state of mind influenced by feelings, thought, and actions.
- Your Attitude Shows:
  - The attitude you send out is usually the attitude you get back.
  - Most customer service providers who fail, do so because of attitude.

Positive Attitude: Voice

- Monitor the sound of your voice
  - Energy
    - Reflects attitude/enthusiasm
  - Rate of Speech
  - Pitch
  - Quality (the above three!)

S8

Positive Attitude: **Telephone & Email**

Skill on the telephone & email is important because:

- You have only your voice and words to rely on.
- You *are* your organization.

S9

Service Excellence Questions

- What are some things you currently do to identify the customers' needs?
- What are some things you currently do to provide for those needs?

S8

2. Identifying Customer Needs

Create Customer Profile

- Describe your customers
- What is important to them?
- What do they like?
- What do they expect from you?
- How do they view you?

Activity

Identifying Customer Needs

- Understand basic needs
- Practice skillful listening
- Be aware of timing requirements
- Stay one step ahead of your customers
- Remain attentive
- Obtain feedback

Basic Needs

A fundamental priority in providing customer service involves understanding the basic needs of customers.

1. Customers need to feel *welcome.*
2. Customers need to be *understood.*
3. Customers need to feel *valuable.*
4. Customers need to feel *comfortable.*

Basic Needs

Basic Customer Needs	Strategies for Meeting the Basic Customer Needs
Welcome	Be friendly. Greet customers. Use a positive tone of voice. Show positive body language.
Understood	Be an active listener. Repeat/rephrase for clarity.
Valuable	Refer to customer by name. Answer customer's questions. Thank participant for experience.
Comfortable	Explain what to expect during the experience. Use open body language. Show concern/empathy.

Basic Needs

Break into groups to discuss ways that this done:

1. **Customers need to feel *welcome*.**
2. **Customers need to be *understood*.**
3. **Customers need to feel *valuable*.**
4. **Customers need to feel *comfortable*.**

Identifying Customer's Needs

- Understand basic needs
- Be aware of timing requirements
- Stay one step ahead of your customers
- Remain attentive
- Practice skillful listening
- Obtain feedback

3. Provide for Customer Needs

- Meet basic needs
- Perform important back-up duties
- Send clear messages
- Say the right thing
- Sell your organization's uniqueness
- Meet the computer challenge
- Prepare for the unexpected

S14

Provide for Customer Needs

Create Caring Communication:

- Break the Understanding Barrier
- Build Rapport, Not Resistance
- Use appropriate verbals/non-verbals
- **Assert Yourself**

S14

Provide for Customer Needs

Assert Yourself

- Shelf your feelings/ judgments
- Gather information and focus on facts
- Acknowledge the feelings of client
- Be Accountable

S14

"Sell" Your Services

You sell your services by:

- Expanding awareness of your available services
- Explaining the features of these services
- Describing the benefits of these services

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Activity: *Sell* Your Services

- Break into groups
- Choose one client you serve
- Brainstorm together the benefits of the service you provide.
- You will have about 5 minutes to complete the activity.
- You will share your discussions with the group.

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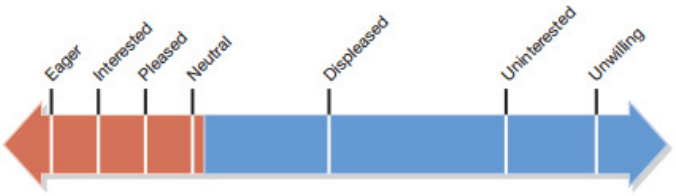
Essentials Of Communication

- Watch your use of technical terms and terminologies not understood by majority of people – Consider your audience
- Pace yourself
- Do not interrupt the speaker.

Direct vs. Indirect Approach



	Direct approach	Indirect approach	
Audience Reaction	Eager/interested/ pleased/neutral	Displeased	Uninterested/unwilling
Message Opening	Start with the main idea, the request, or the good news.	Start with a neutral statement that acts as a transition to the reasons for the bad news.	Start with a statement or question that captures attention.
Message Body	Provide necessary details.	Give reasons to justify a negative answer. State or imply the bad news, and make a positive suggestion.	Arouse the audience's interest in the subject. Build the audience's desire to comply.
Message Close	Close with a cordial comment, a reference to the good news, or a statement about the specific action desired.	Close cordially.	Request action.

Source: Prentice Hall, Behind the Book, Chapter 3

Managing Complaints

1. **Listen** carefully to the complaint.
2. **Repeat** the complaint back and get acknowledgment that you heard it correctly.
3. **Apologize**.
4. **Acknowledge** the customer's feelings.
5. **Explain** what action you'll take to correct the problem.
6. **Thank** the customer for bringing the problem to your attention.

Activity

Dealing with Difficult People

- Difficult people are often insecure.
- Like all of us, they, too, have a need:
  - To Be **Understood**
  - To Feel **Welcome**
  - For **Comfort**
  - To Feel **Important**

Getting Difficult Customers on Your Side

- Don't take it personally.
- Remain calm. Listen carefully.
- Focus on the problem, not the person.
- Reward yourself for turning a difficult customer into a happy one.
- When all else fails, ask for help.

Taking That One Extra Service Step

- Your level of quality customer service will increase if you:
  - Learn how to treat all your customers as guests.
  - Exceed their expectations.

RECAP

Today, we covered:

- ❖What is customer service?
- ❖The challenges of customer service
- ❖Problem Solving – PROACT Technique
- ❖Empowerment – Accountability & Autonomy
- ❖Coping with customer challenges
- ❖Tools for Service Excellence