

[Module 5 Customer Centricity]

Lecture 3 – Assertive Communication

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**Undergraduate Certificate in Notarial Law
Fundamentals for Office Assistants**

Objectives

To adopt an assertive, mutually benefit attitude when communicating with customers.

To avoid submissive or aggressive behaviours.

To achieve customer excellence through providing quality service.



Organisational Life Today!

Powered by
people skills and
communication
processes



Assertiveness

...can help us communicate more effectively
with colleagues and customers.

...can help us achieve both personal and
team goals.





**IS THE CAPACITY TO EXPRESS
OUR IDEAS, OPINIONS OR
FEELINGS OPENLY AND
DIRECTLY WITHOUT PUTTING
DOWN OURSELVES OR OTHERS.**

What are typical personal
characteristics of:

Non-Assertive

and

Assertive persons?



Non Assertive

Complacency, self doubt, low involvement, low self esteem, indirect, closed body language

Assertive

Accountable, ability to say 'No',
Decisiveness, goal oriented, positive,
confident, adaptable, values oriented



Zero Sum Game

From Adversarial Thinking... Win - Lose



To Mutual Benefit ... WIN - WIN



WHY DEVELOP ASSERTIVE SKILLS?

- TO CHOOSE YOUR OWN VALUES, BELIEFS AND OPINIONS
- TO JUDGE YOUR OWN BEHAVIOUR, THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS
- TO TELL OTHERS WHAT YOUR WANTS AND NEEDS ARE
- TO CHANGE YOUR MIND
- TO DISAGREE WITHOUT BEING DISAGREEABLE



TO SAY 'NO' WITHOUT FEELING GUILTY

TO SAY WHAT YOU WANT DIRECTLY, SPECIFICALLY AND IMMEDIATELY

TO AVOID BEING PERCEIVED AS AGGRESSIVE

TO STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS, MAKE COMPLAINTS, REFUSE REQUESTS AND EXPRESS PERSONAL OPINIONS

TO EXPRESS POSITIVE FEELINGS, APPRECIATION AND COMPLIMENTS

TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE, MAKE REQUESTS, ASK FOR HELP AND INITIATE CONVERSATIONS



AGGRESSIVE

I BELIEVE I CAN WIN

I AM SUPERIOR

YOU ARE NO GOOD



PASSIVE

I FEEL I WILL LOSE

I AM INFERIOR

I AM NO GOOD



ASSERTIVE

WE CAN FIND A WAY

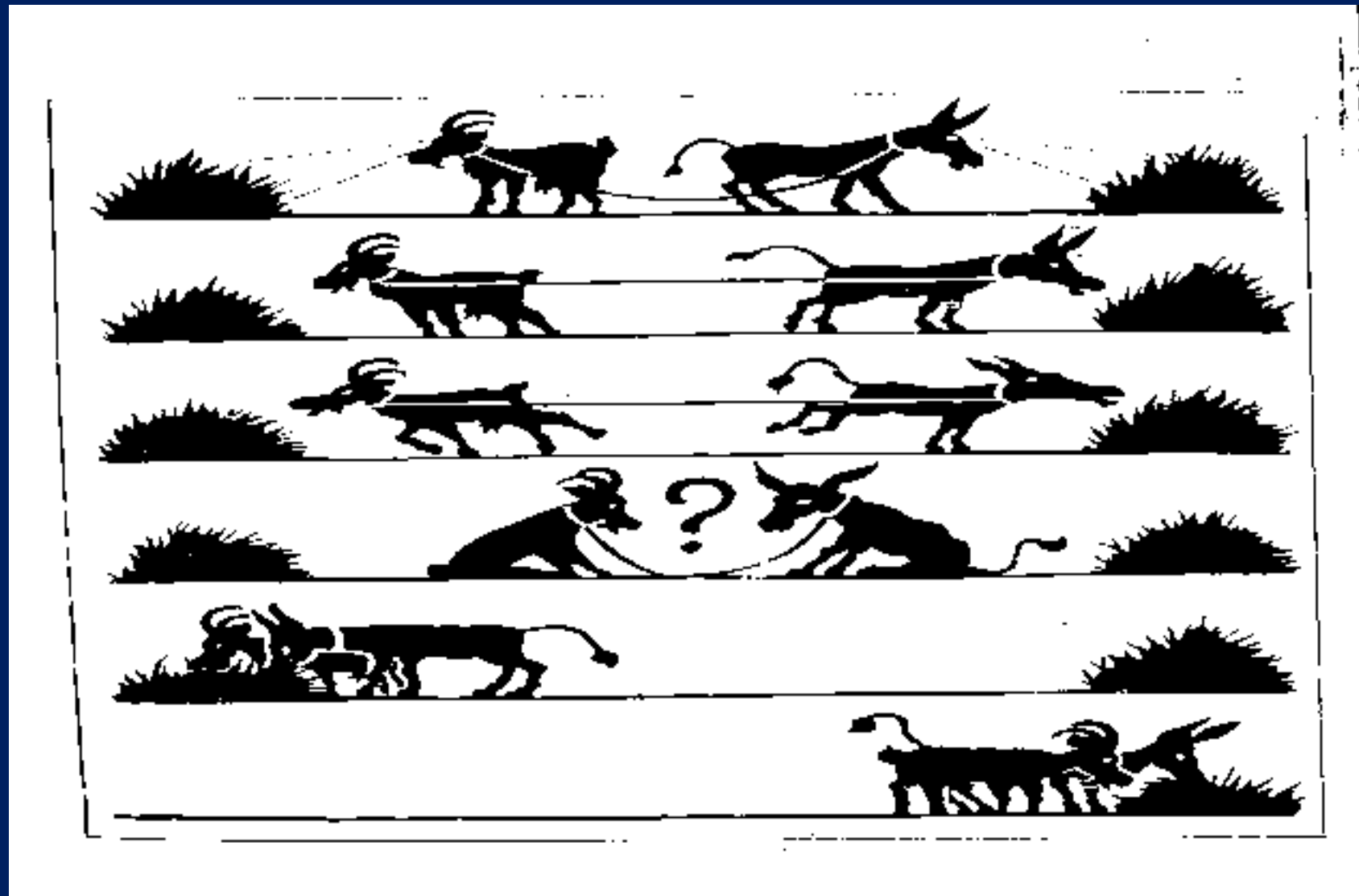
TOGETHER

WE ARE BOTH FINE

NO ONE NEED LOSE







BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS

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AGGRESSIVE

POINT OF VIEW

**OTHERS DO NOT
MATTER WHEN I
STAND UP FOR MY
RIGHTS.**

**I AM THE ONE WHO
COUNTS.**

MESSAGES

**THIS IS WHAT I AM
THINKING. IF YOU
DON'T AGREE, YOU
ARE STUPID.**

**MY NEEDS AND WANTS
ARE BIGGER THAN
YOURS.**

PASSIVE

POINT OF VIEW

**MY THOUGHTS, IDEAS, AND
FEELINGS ARE NOT SO
IMPORTANT THAT OTHERS
SHOULD KNOW ABOUT
THEM.**

**I CAN HIDE AND IGNORE
THEM.**

MESSAGES

**I AM NOT IMPORTANT
YOU ARE MORE
IMPORTANT THAN I AM.**

**I AM READY FOR YOU TO
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ME.**

ASSERTIVE

POINT OF VIEW

**I AM WORTH STANDING
UP FOR MY PERSONAL
RIGHTS. I HAVE A RIGHT
TO EXPRESS MY MIND,
SAYING WHAT I THINK
AND FEEL -**

**AS LONG AS I ACCEPT
THAT OTHERS HAVE THE
RIGHT TO DO THE SAME.**

MESSAGES

**I HAVE RESPECT FOR
YOU AND EXPECT IT TO
BE MUTUAL.**

**IN ANY SITUATION,
THERE ARE MY
THOUGHTS, FEELINGS,
AND PERCEPTIONS.**



AGGRESSIVE

PASSIVE

ASSERTIVE

CRISIS

ARGUES. ATTACKS.

RESPONSE

DEFENSIVE

HUMILIATION

EGO CRUSHED

OBJECTIVE

**I WILL OVERPOWER
OTHERS TO WIN.**

**I WILL HUMILIATE
THEM IF
NECESSARY SO
THEY ARE LESS
ABLE TO STAND UP
FOR THEMSELVES.**

CRISIS

**GIVES IN TO OTHERS
EASILY. RUNS AWAY.**

RESPONSE

FRUSTRATION,

ANGER, IRRITATION,

DISRESPECT

OBJECTIVE

TO AVOID CONFLICT

**TO KEEP A LOW
PROFILE**

TO APPEASE

CRISIS

**ONLY TAKES ACTION AFTER
EVALUATION**

RESPONSE

MUTUAL RESPECT

OBJECTIVE

**TO MAKE SURE I
UNDERSTAND OTHERS
AND THEY
UNDERSTAND ME;**

**THAT HONESTY AND
INTEGRITY REIGN ON
BOTH SIDES; THAT I
CAN NEGOTIATE
WIN / WIN SOLUTIONS**

How you treat customers...

behaviour breeds behaviour



Key Elements of Assertiveness

- Self-confidence
- Clarity in communication
- Respect for self and others
- Balancing empathy and assertiveness



Techniques to Develop Assertiveness

- Using "I" statements
- Maintaining eye contact
- Managing body language and tone



The Role of Assertiveness in Customer Care

- How assertiveness improves customer interactions
- Building trust and rapport with customers
- Resolving conflicts effectively



Customer interaction that went badly...?

***“IF YOU ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE POSITIVE
WHEN THINGS GO WRONG, YOU’LL
ALWAYS FIND IT!”***

Brian Tracy



CHANGE

“IF ONLY”

TO

“NEXT TIME”



POSITIVE THINGS HAPPEN TO POSITIVE PEOPLE

Express your
feelings

Ask for what
you want

Say no to
what you
don't want



Negative Attitudes

I CAN'T POSSIBLY TRY IT, BECAUSE...

... IT MIGHT NOT WORK

... I'VE ALWAYS DONE SOMETHING ELSE

... SOME OTHER PEOPLE DON'T DO IT

... IT FEELS VERY STRANGE

... I HAVE TO PUT THAT FIRE OUT

... YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM

... IT'S "THEIR" FAULT, NOT MINE.

... IT'LL JUST MAKE THINGS HARDER FOR ME.



Assertiveness in customer service management

isn't about being aggressive;

it's about being confident and clear in your communication while remaining respectful and empathetic towards customers.

This balance ensures that you uphold the company's standards and satisfy customer needs effectively.



Assertiveness Self Assessment

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/tests/personality/assertiveness-test>



Tips for Saying “No”

Saying “No” can be difficult if you are usually more passive.

When saying “No”, remember to use assertive body language (e.g. standing straight, eye contact, speaking loudly enough that the other person can hear).





Why do we sometimes act aggressively?

Why act aggressively?

Quite often because we are cornered...

- So avoid acting/talking immediately
- Remove the emotion from the situation
- Think through your reply/action
- Then act rationally

Fail to plan...plan to fail

Plan your response, don't act hastily



ATTITUDE

IS A LITTLE THING

THAT MAKES A

BIG

DIFFERENCE



ATTITUDE



*"A Pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity;
an Optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."*

~Winston Churchill

"



***“I WONDERED WHY SOMEBODY DIDN’T DO
SOMETHING, THEN I REALISED THAT I WAS
SOMEBODY.”***

Anonymous

***“EACH OF US IS RESPONSIBLE FOR
EVERYTHING TO EVERYONE ELSE.”***

Fyodor Dostoyersky



INFLUENCING OTHERS

***“ I WILL ACT AS IF WHAT I DO MAKES A
DIFFERENCE.”***

William James



***“DO WHAT YOU CAN,
WITH WHAT YOU HAVE,
WHERE YOU ARE.”***

Theodore Roosevelt



**IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?
IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO?**



ASSERTIVENESS
IS
ABOUT
BEING
PROACTIVE
NOT
REACTIVE



SELF - IMAGE

SETTING GOALS

FIRST BASIC RULE:

**YOU ARE
WHAT YOU THINK YOU ARE**

SECOND BASIC RULE:

**YOU CAN DO WHAT
YOU THINK YOU CAN DO**



**“YOU BECOME SUCCESSFUL
THE MOMENT YOU START
MOVING TOWARD A
WORTHWHILE GOAL.”**



Common Challenges and Solutions

- Handling difficult customers
- Overcoming fear and anxiety
- Strategies to stay assertive under pressure



- **Case Study: Resolving a Billing Issue**

- Scenario:

A customer contacts the customer service team regarding an incorrect charge on their bill.

The customer is understandably upset and demands a refund.



Assertive Approach:

- The customer service representative listens to the customer's concerns without interrupting, acknowledges the mistake, and calmly explains the steps that will be taken to resolve the issue.
- They confidently state, "I understand this is frustrating for you. I will investigate this matter immediately and ensure that the incorrect charge is refunded within the next 24 hours."
- The representative maintains a professional and respectful tone while providing clear information about the resolution process.
- This approach helps to defuse the customer's anger and builds trust in the company's ability to handle issues effectively.



**Here's how you can assertively
maintain professionalism as a customer service officer.**



1. Stay Calm

- When faced with challenging situations, it's essential to stay calm and composed. Your ability to remain unflustered under pressure reflects your professionalism and can often defuse tense interactions.
- Take deep breaths, listen actively, and speak in a steady, even tone.
- By maintaining your composure, you not only set a positive example for your team but also reassure customers that their concerns are being handled by someone competent and in control.



2. Listen Actively

- Active listening is a cornerstone of effective communication and is especially important in customer service management.
- Pay close attention to what the customer is saying, acknowledge their feelings, and confirm your understanding by paraphrasing their points.
- This shows respect for the customer's perspective and helps to clarify the issue, making it easier to find a resolution that satisfies all parties involved.



3 Set Boundaries

- Assertiveness also involves setting clear boundaries. Be transparent about what you can and cannot do within company policies.
- If a customer's request is unreasonable or cannot be fulfilled, explain the reasons calmly and offer alternative solutions.
- This approach demonstrates respect for both the customer and the company's operational limits while still striving to accommodate the customer's needs as much as possible.



4. Communicate Clearly

- Clear communication is vital in preventing misunderstandings and ensuring that customers feel heard and understood.
- Use simple language, avoid jargon, and make sure your instructions or explanations are easy to follow.
- Being concise and direct reduces confusion and shows that you value the customer's time while providing them with the information they need.



5. Resolve Issues

- Finally, focus on resolving issues efficiently and effectively.
- Take ownership of problems, apologize when appropriate, and work towards a solution that leaves the customer feeling satisfied.
- By doing so, you not only solve the immediate problem but also build trust and loyalty, which are key to long-term customer relationships.



A TRANSITION...

FROM...
VALUE FOR MONEY
TO
ADDED VALUE



“Always deliver more in perceived value, than you take in actual cash value.”

JEFF BLACKMAN



ASSERTIVENESS IS VALUABLE

- ENERGY IS RELEASED AND THE PERSON FEELS STRONGER
- GOOD IDEAS GET THE HEARING THEY DESERVE
- RELATIONSHIPS IMPROVE
- DIFFICULTIES ARE RESOLVED RATHER THAN LEFT FESTERING
- IMPROVES COMMUNICATION ABILITIES e.g. Listening, Empathy

PEOPLE NOTICE ASSERTIVENESS



Mastering the Art of Assertiveness: Winning Over Angry Customers with Confidence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lBslaL51cY>



Communicating your Personal Brand

Assertively!



What is Personal Branding



What is Personal Branding

“Branding demands commitment; commitment to continual re-invention; striking chords with people to stir their emotions; and commitment to imagination. It is easy to be cynical about such things, much harder to be successful.”

- Sir Richard Branson



Authenticity



Authenticity

"Authenticity is the alignment of head, mouth, heart, and feet — thinking, saying, feeling, and doing the same thing consistently. This builds trust, and followers love leaders they can trust."

- Lance Secretan



Authenticity (continued)



QUALITIES OF AUTHENTIC BRANDING

- Purpose
- Solid Values
- Self Discipline
- Passion

Authenticity (continued)

Passion



"You have to be authentic, you have to be true, and you have to believe in your heart that this is going to work."

- Howard Schultz (Founder of Starbucks)

Consistency



Consistency

There are no short -cuts to achieving a personal brand.

Those that 'appear' overnight are actually the products of many years of persistence.



Consistency

QUALITIES OF A CONSISTENT BRAND

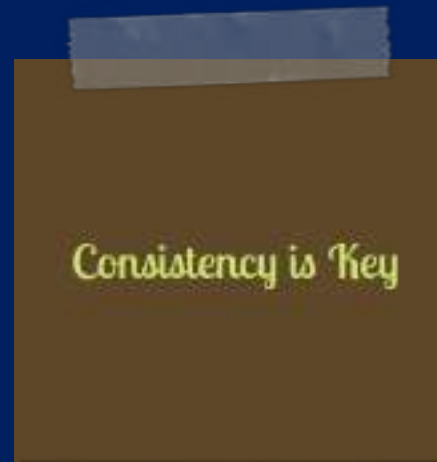
- Trustworthiness
- Defined Expectations
- Establish Rules



Consistency (continued)

Consistency is key when it comes to branding.

Consistency builds trust between the brand and the followers.



Consistency (continued)

A consistent image can help avoid confusion.



Consistency

Trustworthiness



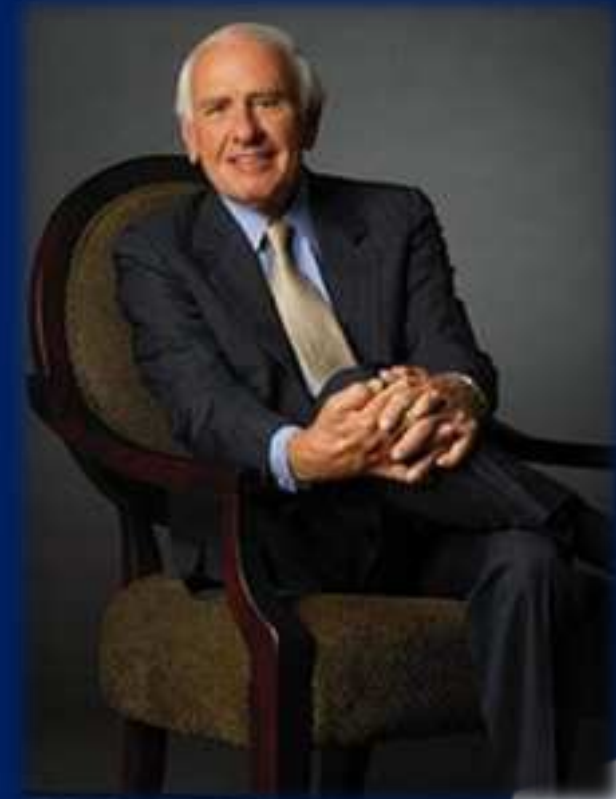
“Trust is the glue of life. It’s the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It’s the foundational principle that holds all relationships.”

– Stephen R. Covey

Consistency (continued)

“Success is neither magical nor mysterious. Success is the natural consequence of consistently applying basic fundamentals.”

- E. James Rohn



Enthusiasm



Enthusiasm

QUALITIES OF AN ENTHUSIASTIC INDIVIDUAL

- Focused
- Promote a positive environment
- Passion



Enthusiasm (continued)

“Enthusiasm releases the drive to carry you over obstacles and adds significance to all you do.”

–
Norman Vincent Peale



Visibility



Visibility

“Lead from the back and let others believe they are in front”.

Mandela



Visibility (continued)

QUALITIES OF VISIBLE LEADERS

- Aligning purpose & vision
- Being Present
- Honesty



Visibility (continued)

“Visibility is not just about being present physically”.



Visibility (continued)

“Great things in business are never done by one person. They’re done by a team of people”.

- Steve Jobs



Confidence



Confidence

QUALITIES OF A CONFIDENT INDIVIDUAL

- Believe in yourself
- Assertive
- Optimist
- Love oneself
- Responsible
- Complements others



Confidence (continued)



Confidence (continued)



Confidence (continued)



Confidence is NOT
"They will like me"

Confidence IS
"I'll be ok if they Don't"

- Christine Grimmie

Quality Service



“We can no longer afford to merely satisfy the customers. To win today, you have to delight and astound your customers with products and services that exceed their expectations”.

Tom Peters



“Quality in a service or product is not what you put into it. It is what the client or customer gets out of it.”

Peter Drucker



ACHIEVING QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE



QUALITY SERVICE

IS THE SERVICE
WHICH SATISFIES A
CUSTOMER'S
NEEDS BEYOND
HIS OR HER
EXPECTATIONS.



not only
meets

but
exceeds



The difference between
ordinary and extraordinary –
is that little *extra*.



The Challenge

- *Service standards keep rising. As competitors render better and better service, customers become more demanding. Their expectations grow.*

William H. Davido



Two primary dimensions make up quality customer service: the *PROCEDURAL* dimension and the *PERSONAL* dimension.

Each is critical to the delivery of QUALITY service.



The PROCEDURAL side:

systems and procedures to deliver products and/or services.

The PERSONAL side:

how service personnel, using attitudes, behaviours and verbal skills, interact with customers.



SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS GAP

Quality is defined as the GAP between

what a customer expects

and

what a customer perceives



- *Which organisational structure is most conducive to customer centricity?*
- *A rigid hierarchical structure with silos based on product lines.*
- *or*
- *A cross-functional structure organized around customer segments or journeys.*



Quality Improvement Process

GOAL:

What are we trying to accomplish?

IDEAS FOR CHANGE:

What changes can we make that will result in improvement?

MEASURE:

How will we know if a change is an improvement?



Quality is never an accident; It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skilled execution.

It represents the wise choice of many alternatives.





Competition can copy
everything but people.

QUALITY

THE ENDLESS PURSUIT OF
EXCELLENCE

GOOD ENOUGH

IS NEVER

GOOD ENOUGH



MANY COMPANIES OFFER THE SAME OR
RELATED PRODUCTS/SERVICES

HENCE IT IS OUR

‘QUALITY OF SERVICE’

WHICH MAKES THE DIFFERENCE !



Deliver Great Value



- Take advantage of every encounter

..... by radiating energy and enthusiasm, smiling and treating every passing trade as a valued customer.

QUALITY

IS A FRAME OF MIND

AN ATTITUDE THAT NEEDS
COMMITMENT TO DEVELOP

BUT

A VITAL INGREDIENT FOR SUCCESS IN
CUSTOMER SERVICE



“Quality is not an act, it is a habit”

Aristotle





“Quality means doing it right also
when no one is looking.”

Henry Ford

PEOPLE VALUE QUALITY SERVICE
AND THEY WILL REWARD YOU TIME
AND TIME AGAIN IF YOU CAN
PROVIDE IT TO THEM.

IT'S NOT DIFFICULT, IT
JUST TAKES CARING AND
EFFORT.



Quality does have a price...
but the bitterness of poor
quality remains long after
the sweetness of low price
is forgotten.



QUALITY

The race for quality has no finish line...



THE MOST VALUABLE SELLING TOOL

IS:

YOURSELF !



With service excellence, there are
no losers.

Customers win

Employees win

The Organisation wins

Delivering first-class service is a
successful strategy for everyone



Delivering service excellence

Everyone wins from service excellence – your customers, your organisation and you

Aim high – make excellent service your goal, not just good service

Don't just meet customer expectations – exceed them

Set and maintain standards that are based on customer requests rather than organisational needs

Be prepared to make the first move – be pro-active rather than reactive

Make sure you create a favourable first impression

Exercise:

- Give an example from your workplace of how to exceed (not only meet) customer expectations.



Mission

**Be committed to service excellence ...
through assisting customers find the
best solutions to their needs.**



- The fundamental shift from a *'product-centric'* to a *'customer-centric'* organizational model.
- *Moving from maximizing the value of individual products to maximizing the lifetime value of individual customers.*



- *The primary risk of 'Product Centricity' in a rapidly evolving digital market....*
- *The company may fail to notice shifting customer needs that move away from their specific product category.*



- *In a truly customer-centric organisation, how is 'Customer Lifetime Value' (CLV) primarily utilised?*
- *To identify and prioritise resources toward the most profitable customer segments.*



Be aware

- *A key 'Internal' barrier to becoming customer-centric....*
-
- *Incentive systems that reward short-term sales volume over customer retention.*



'Customer Equity' in the context of customer centricity

*The sum of the discounted lifetime values
of all the firm's customers.*



What are you going to do?

- Someone, somewhere has to be the best at this job
– why not you?
- Decide to be outstanding
- Don't be ordinary !



Quality, is job one.

Ford Company



I Was Seduced By Exceptional Customer Service | John Boccuzzi, Jr. | TEDxBryantU

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GH1TXfQSwUQ&t=95s>





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