

## Customer, "Do You Care About Me?"

Written by Doug Kruhm

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From the customer's point of view, there's one question that will drive customer satisfaction.

I remember overhearing a conversation at a restaurant many years ago. The customer was upset that the fish that they ordered wasn't as fresh as usual. The manager in return started to explain his experience in the restaurant industry and how difficult it is to get fresh fish. He further offered to take the item off the bill.

The problem was, he did it all in a monotone voice.

When he walked away, the party at the table started to complain. "I can't believe it!" "How dare he take that attitude!" "This is the last time I'm coming here!"

Now here's the question... why? Why did the customer complain? Why was the customer upset? Didn't the company remove the item from the bill? What else could they have done?

So while the right action was to take the item off the bill, the question in the customer's mind is this, "Do you care about me?" And that is the key question, "Do you care about me?"

Unfortunately, answering in a monotone voice doesn't communicate "I care about you." It communicates "I couldn't care less about you."

I understand. It's difficult. The daily grind. The day in and day out schedule. You already know what's going to happen. Especially if you are in any type of leadership role as the complaints all fall back to you. After many years, it becomes routine. A certain number of customers are going to complain. It's the facts. That's just the way it is. If you're involved in any type of wealthy industry, like a country club, all the members will complain. Seemingly.

Remind yourself today that you should care about your client and communicate that. One way

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to communicate that it to listen empathetically. Always agree with them. And go up and above the call.

In the scenario above, what if the manager was listening empathetically. What if he said, "Oh my gosh! I can't believe it! This is not our standard. I don't know what happened." The whole time shaking his head with his hands.

And then what if the manager went up and above the call. What if he said, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to take this item off the bill and I'm going to give you a coupon for a free item for you next visit."

What would be the complaint then? What could the customer complain about?

You see if you are caring about the customer, the customer not only can't complain, the customer can only talk about you caring about them.

Here's the best part. You can actually orchestrate that you care about your customer. How is up to you. It might be personal written letter in the mail. It might be a personal phone call. Maybe it's something else. But it's personal.

If you show you care about your customer, the satisfaction level goes through the roof. Imagine what it would be like to have raving fans who knew that you cared about them. What kind of referrals would they give?

Is going above the call costly? Yes it is. But so is not going above the call. As one of my colleagues used to say, "The most money you'll lose is the money you'll never make." Meaning that you'll lose the opportunity for future happenings.

So get out there and communicate to your customers that you care about them.

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