



CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDE

Improving the quality of service for the benefit of all

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INTRODUCTION

Disney, Apple, Ritz-Carlton, Publix, Chick Fil A are companies that are known for their customer experience. Interestingly, universities never come to mind do they? While there may be several institutions across the nation that might be doing it well and acting as unsung heroes in this arena, there is no time like the present to gauge where Bethel's customer experience lies.

Merely being nice is not the answer to improving the customer experience. Consider how a customer may feel if someone assisting them were nice, yet under-informed.

This guide will assist in evaluating current practices, learning fundamental ways to approach customer service, enhancing communication skills, handling more difficult customers with care, and understanding the barriers that could hinder Bethel from excelling in this area.

It is recommended to complete this within your department alongside a supervisor or a honest colleague for best results.



PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

Like anything else, the first step to improve anything is analyzing the current state. In other words, let's own up to any challenge we may be facing. This series of personal assessments require discussion with a supervisor or an honest peer. It consists of written and verbal exercises to assist in identifying communication and problem-solving skills. In addition, this will highlight what is assumed as customer needs and company expectations.



Scenario #1

Mr. Thorton is a current student that has twice attempted contacting someone by phone regarding his need to request his transcript. The first time he called the main line to be put on hold for a considerable amount of time. On the second call, he was transferred to someone that never answered. Unfortunately, you are the third person to encounter this student. Detail the steps you would take to assist this student.

Scenario #2

Below is an email from an alumnae of the university that mistakenly came to you. Please provide your written email response.

Update Information & Inquiry



Inbox

2:34 PM (38 minutes ago)



Marilyn Schnopps <schnopps.marilyn@gmail.com>

to You

Good Afternoon:

I am a former student, member of the class of '84, that would like to update my contact information in order to receive the latest university information and learn the best way to provide a substantial donation.

Additionally, I have a very talented niece who sings beautiful. Despite the scholarship deadline, I would love to make arrangements for her to learn more about Renaissance and how she can become involved.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Marilyn

CEO & Founder of S & S Technologies



Nursing Program

Scenario #3

Study the sample information provided about our Nursing Program. Once done, respond to the below inquiry, regardless of your department or background.

Please note the program information is only being used for the purposes of this exercise and may not be factual in reality.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am looking to enroll in a RN to BSN program to be completed in 10 months. Is this possible with your program? Also, additional clinical experience would be great!

Thanks in advance,

Charlotte Lancaster

About the Program:

At Bethel University, our intent is to provide students with the opportunities, education, experiences, environment, mentoring, and leadership necessary for them to achieve their fullest potential as licensed Registered Nurses. Our program prides itself on its:

- intimate class sizes.
- strong student-teacher relationships.
- modern technology.
- innovative classroom and health care facility experiences.
- pleasant, small town atmosphere.
- caring, Christian environment.

The four year nursing program course of study includes two years to complete foundational liberal arts courses and two years to complete nursing courses. Each nursing course encompasses a variety of clinical experiences which require the student nurse to give competent care in area hospitals, nursing homes, and other community health care agencies.

Nursing Program Options At A Glance

| | Traditional BSN | RN to BSN |
|----------------|--|------------------------|
| Format | Face-to-Face | Online w/ one clinical |
| Program Hours | 129 cr hrs | 128 cr hrs |
| Program Length | 4 years | 18 - 24 months |
| Cost | \$103k + other standard fees (on-campus) | \$20,000 |

DEFINING OUR CUSTOMERS

In order to know how to best cater to our customers (students, alumni, and donors), we need to understand who they are and their needs. Discuss the following questions with your department and create a customer profile. A sample profile is provided below. (It is recommended that each college creates their own profile.)

SAMPLE STUDENT PROFILE

Adult Learner (Non-traditional Student)

26-50 yrs. | Female | African-American

Avg. Household Income: \$40,000 +

Interested in Business/Human Resources

Works full-time

Entry to mid-level seeking advancement or pay increase

Needs convenient learning format

Accessibility : Noon or 5-9pm weekdays & weekends

Semi-tech savvy (Believes information and help should be easily accessible)

Fears substantive debt (Uses student loans or company tuition reimbursement)

Uses Instagram, Twitter, Facebook & LinkedIn

- Who are our customers?
- What are our customers' attributes and demographics?
- What are our customers' perceptions and expectations?

Additional Items to Consider:

Gender

Ethnicity

Household Income

Employment Status

How they will pay for college

Types/amount of financial aid

Primary motivators

Fears /reservations

Anticipated benefits/outcomes

Majors of most interest

Program length

Program delivery

Who influences them

Social media trends

Traditional media trends

BASIC PRINCIPLES

There are reoccurring themes among companies who achieve success - a great product, quality customer service, and sometimes both. Aside from a product that is in demand, thriving companies realize the importance of mastering the basic principles of customer service. Devoting time to study and honing each of these principles proves to be the foundation for a good customer experience and an energizing workplace.

Seeing and experiencing the customer's concern and expectations to better serve them

EMPATHY

A continuous learner in pursuit of being an accurate resource of information that is consistent and timely for the customer

KNOWLEDGE

PROFESSIONAL

Extending respect, kindness, and courtesy to the customer at all times

PROMISE KEEPER

Delivering on whatever promised

COMMUNICATION

Conveying information to the customer in a clear and easy to understand manner

SOLUTION - ORIENTED

Engaging critical thinking skills to identify a creative solution in the most efficient way possible

PROBLEM SOLVING MODEL

Step 1:

Identify the problem and understand its unique characteristics and possible outcomes

Step 2:

Define solution requirements and additional possible solutions

Step 3:

Select the best solution

Step 4:

Implement the solution

Step 5:

Observe and evaluate the solution's impact

APPROACHING A PROBLEM



Empathize

Acknowledge the problem



Clarify

Identify the true need



Take Action

Partner for a solution



Follow Up

Provide goodwill

PROBLEM SOLVING EXERCISE



INSTRUCTIONS: Think of a current problem in your department or organization. It can be a process, document, or something being miscommunicated. Once a problem has been identified, try coming to the best solution using the questions below. Discuss your results with a supervisor, team member, or colleague to further explore ways of resolving the problem. Keep in mind how your solution could impact your customer.

- What are the problem's unique characteristics?
- What are some possible solutions?
- What are the pros and cons of each solution?
- What are the possible outcomes?
- How might you evaluate the solution's impact?

EXPLORING & IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

By far, one of the most important customer service skills to obtain is the ability to effectively communicate. Communication isn't merely about talking. The act of clearly sending and receiving information affects so much in our daily activities -

professional (internal/external) relationships, personal relationships, online orders to online communities, viewing television, and even signs/signals we see as we drive down the roads every day. Imagine how we could vastly impact our customers if we were intentional about our communication. First, let's identify the main methods of how we communicate. Take a moment to fill in the blanks.

After making an attempt, review the answers at the bottom of the page.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



When looking to improve communication, there are a few pointers that can be applied to improve almost any customer service scenario. Take a look at each one below and discuss how each can be used to enhance the customer experience. In subsequent material we will explore specific tips for the three primary modes of communication used to interface with our students, alumni, donors, and one another.

GO-TO COMMUNICATION POINTERS



Listening

Learning to listen is essential to understanding how to serve.



Effective Questioning

It is good to ask a question but asking the right question is even better.



Power Words

Choosing word wisely can make the difference in a good and bad customer experience.



LISTENING

Before discussing the dos and don'ts of listening, take a listening assessment here: <https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/listening>

A good listener...

conveys sincerity

focuses on the speaker and what they are saying

does not interrupt

listens with their eyes and their mind

Things to Avoid

Formulating what you want to say while the customer is still talking

Thinking about other things while the customer is talking

Jumping to conclusions

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

There may be no such thing as a bad question, but there is a such thing as a "good" question - effective questioning. Knowing what types of questions to ask in order to get the necessary information from a customer is instrumental in a positive customer service experience. Effective questioning helps with clarifying the issue or need , saves time, and can demonstrate your ability to engage active listening. Essentially, we can divide these questions into two categories : 1) Open-ended & 2) Close-ended. Review the information provided in order to complete the worksheet on the next page.

Open-ended

- Used for general information
- Requires more than a "yes" or "no" or one-word response
- Common lead-ins: what, how, and why

Close-ended

- Used for specific information, to limit talking, or to control direction of conversation
- Requires a "yes" or "no" or other one-word response
- Common lead-ins: who, when, did, which, would, are, can, have, do is, will, and may

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING WORKSHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Using what you learned from the previous page, answer to the best of your ability.

1. You receive a call from a student having difficulty logging into their email account, but have a limited amount of time to assist them. What type of questions should you ask?

2. Your supervisor asks you to take the lead on a presentation to their boss. Write one open and one close-ended question to help determine your next steps.

OPEN-ENDED

CLOSE-ENDED

3. Take the provided closed-ended questions and make them open-ended to garner the information you need to assist the customer.

- Did you do well on your ACT? _____
- Have you considered not dropping this course? _____
- Do you have any questions? _____

4. Circle the close-ended questions.

What is it like to live in Knoxville?

Why can't I come along?

Did you take their name and number?

Is he faculty?

What is the quickest program to complete?

How did you hear about Bethel?

Are you feeling better today?

How do you plan to use your training budget?

May I transfer you to the Billing Department?

THE POWER OF WORDS

"My pleasure!" We are all familiar with this phrase. How does it make you feel when you hear these words spoken to you? Study the list of words to omit or add to your word usage.

Words to use:

May I

How can I help

Would you like

Consider this

Opportunity

I'll be happy to



Words to avoid:

You have to

Not our policy

Not my job

We'll try

I don't know

I have no idea

That's not my department

Fill-in the blank



PRIMARY TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

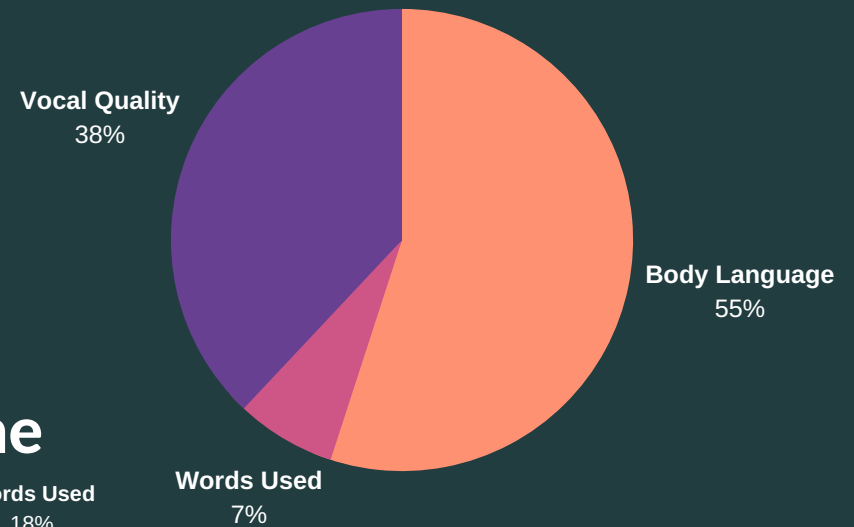
There are three primary types of communication used to interact with our customers. Within each type, interpretation can depend upon the use of words, body language, or vocal quality. With heightened awareness, use the tips provided in the sections to come to enhance how you communicate using each type.

Electronic

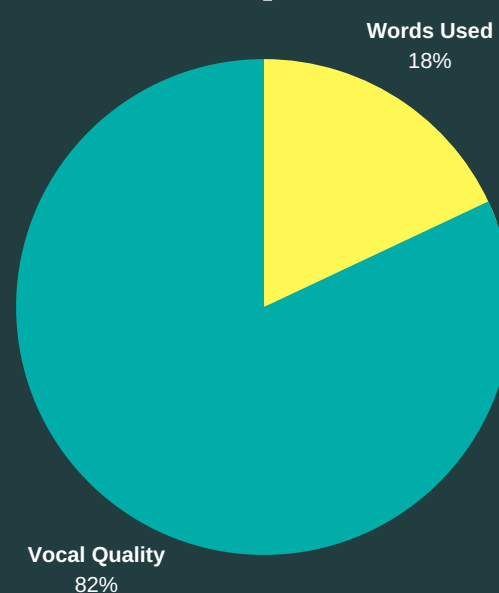
E-mail/ Text / Chat



Face-to-Face



Telephone



Source: The Big Book of Customer Service Training Games, 1999

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION



Type e-mail like you would a formal letter



Proofread before sending



Respond/answer promptly



Never type in all uppercase



Avoid industry jargon and acronyms



Be careful with sensitive information



Be clear and concise



Understand that e-mail can be permanent and forwarded to anyone



Which is better? Why?

1

Subject: tomorrow

As you know, tomorrow afternoon we'll be meeting to discuss the status of all of our current projects. Donuts will be provided. Be sure to arrive on time and bring along teh materials you have been working on this week—bring enough copies for everyone. Some of these material might include your calendars, reports, and any important e-mails you have sent. Also, I wanted to remind you that your parking permit requests are due later this week; you should turn those in to Ms. Jones, and if she is not at her desk when you stop by, you can e-mail them to her.

2

Subject: materials for Wed. staff meeting

Hi, everyone—

For tomorrow's 3 p.m. staff meeting in the conference room, please bring 15 copies of the following materials:

Your project calendar

-A one-page report describing your progress so far

-A list of goals for the next month

-Copies of any progress report messages you have sent to clients this past month

See you tomorrow—

Jane



TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION

- Smile!
- Answer with a professional greeting
- Give answers and assistance as efficiently as possible
- Thank the caller
- Conclude the call in a positive way
- Be aware of vocal quality
 - Tone or Pitch
 - Inflection
 - Rate
 - Volume

*Thank you for calling Bethel
University! This is Cindy.
How may I help you?*

Telephone Etiquette



- 1 Familiarize yourself with the phone features
- 2 Answer in as few rings as possible
- 3 Avoid side conversations and reduce background noise
- 4 Never eat or drink while on the phone
- 5 Ask permission before placing someone on hold
- 6 Thank the customer for holding once he/she is off hold



TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION

Using Voicemail Effectively

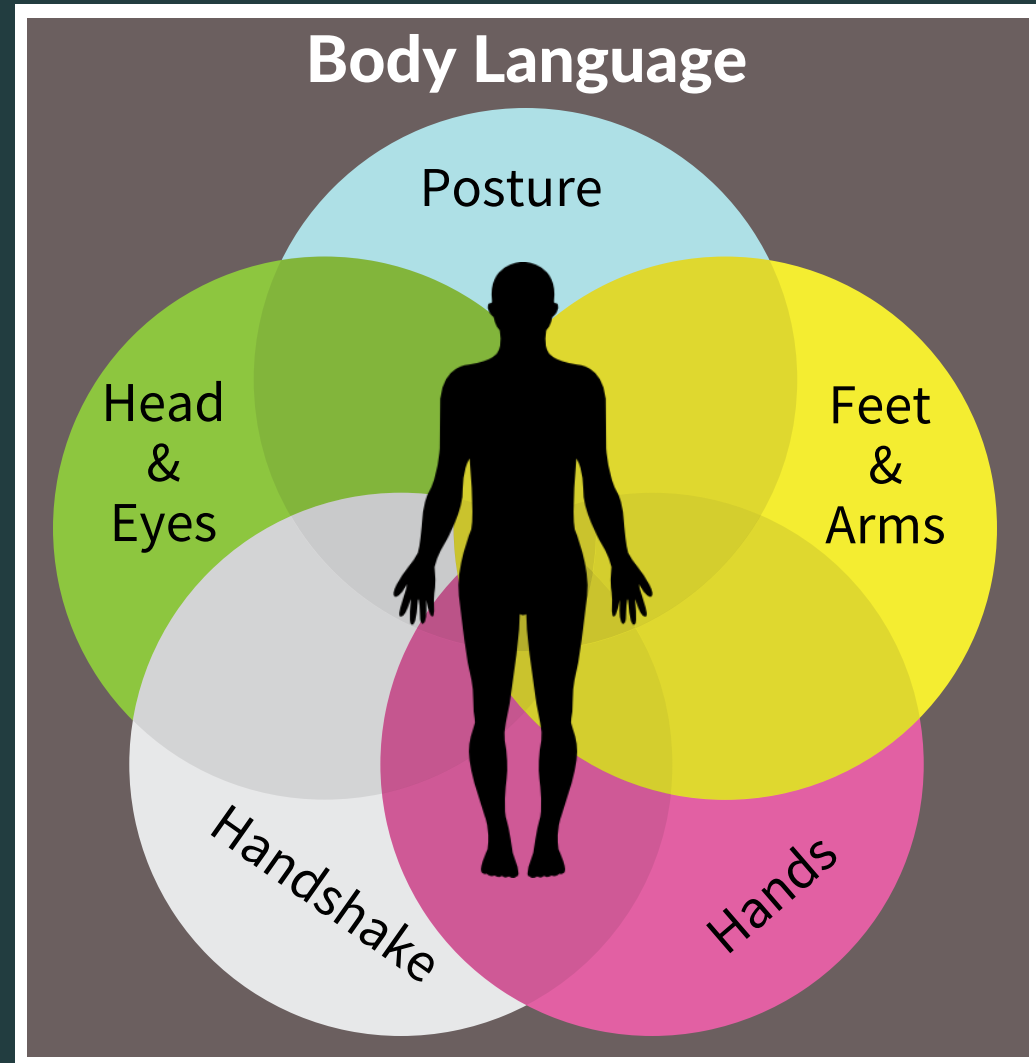
EXAMPLE

Thank you for calling the Department of Academic Affairs with Bethel University's College of Professional Studies. You have reached Jane Doe, Academic Advisor. Please leave a brief message with the pertinent information and I will return your call as soon as possible. If you need immediate assistance dial 123-456-7890. Thank you for calling Bethel University.

- Identify yourself
- Speak slowly, clearly, and directly
- Keep it short
- Keep it to one topic at a time
- Identify the type of response you need
- Avoid phone tag

FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION

- Smile
- Give a professional greeting
- Lean-in toward the customer
- Make eye contact
- Be aware of body language
- Provide contact info for future questions
- Thank them for coming



WHY CAN CUSTOMERS BE CHALLENGING?

- They may not have an understanding or expertise of the situation
- They may have difficulty in making decisions
- They may be impatient, hostile, non-communicative, immature, etc.
- There may be a language barrier

In an ideal world, customers are polite and understanding. They take ownership for their faults when necessary and connect with the appropriate people to expedite processes. However, our customers are human. They encounter a myriad of things everyday, just like us. Our role as representatives of Bethel is to assist our customers to the best of our ability. In order to do that, let's take a step back to examine why some of our customers may be more challenging than others.



WAYS TO WORK WITH CHALLENGING CUSTOMERS

Listen and don't interrupt

Ask questions

Show empathy

Solve the problem

Follow up

End on a positive note

Enough!

How should a challenging customer be approached? Use the provided tips as a guideline to assist with challenging customer interactions. For additional practice, role-play with a co-worker or colleague for feedback.

WAYS TO WORK WITH **VERY** DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS

- Listen to their concerns. Speak clearly and slowly.
- Set limits. Be clear that abusive or offensive language/behavior will not be tolerated.
- Involve a supervisor or colleague for assistance or a new perspective.
- On phone calls, ask for their number to return their call. This allows for a "cooling down" period.



WAYS TO WORK WITH *VERY* DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS



1. For in-person situations, get them out of the mainstream customer area, but don't get yourself stuck in an area alone
2. Reassure the customer that you will follow up
3. Don't make promises you can't keep
4. Document the incident
5. Understand what campus resources are available for further assistance

WHAT TO DO WHEN....

You have to share bad news



- Acknowledge customer's feeling
- Share the responsibility of the problem
- Convey sincerity
- Ask for the opportunity to correct the problem
- Request the opportunity to continue doing business in the future

You can't say "yes"



- Show empathy
- Explain the reason
- Offer what you can do
- Suggest what they can do

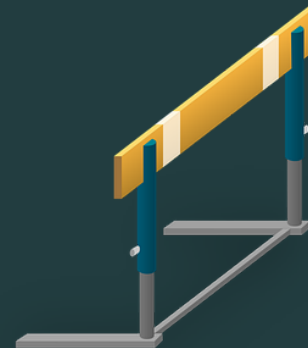
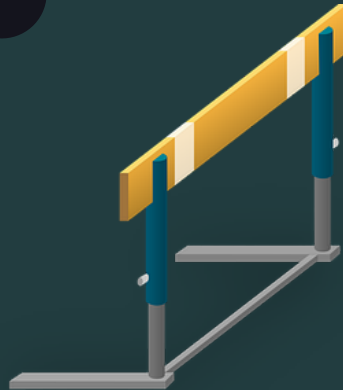
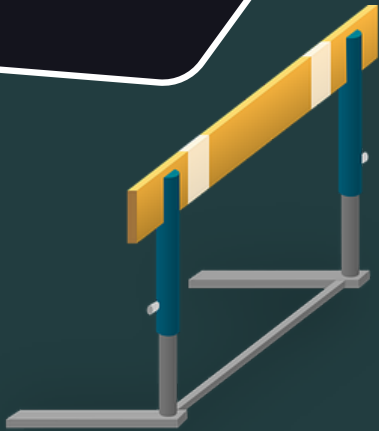
You are wrong



- Admit the mistake
- Apologize for the error
- Find a solution
- Document the error
- Incorporate ways to lessen the likelihood for future error

BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

In this day and age, a culture whereby customer service is valued from the top down, albeit trendy, fails to be genuinely adhered to by businesses. Company culture needs to drive customer focus throughout the organization and a sure way to know how to best serve the customer is by understanding what barriers could be prohibiting a good experience. If customers are treated fairly and their needs are handled efficiently, we will quickly begin to benefit from the rewards that a loyal, satisfied customer base brings. The next section of this guide will explore eight barriers to providing exceptional customer service. Discuss each in order to examine areas of improvement.



BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

1. Poor communication skills
2. Staff not empowered to make decisions
3. Lack of adequate training
4. Inconvenient access to support
5. "Auto pilot"
6. Difficult to understand processes
7. Delay in response
8. Dismissed actionable items from customer feedback



BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

#1 Poor communication skills

The first barrier to providing exceptional customer service needs no introduction. Previously, we mentioned the importance of having good communication skills. A commitment to improve in this area of focus requires the act of continuously honing the ability to relay information to customers - - in a way they can clearly understand. From improving vocabulary and the quality of the voice to the awareness of body language, this is one skill that makes an immediate impact for a heightened customer experience. Please review pages 18 - 23 for tips and best practices on improving communication skills.



BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

#2 Staff not empowered to make decisions

Every organization's biggest assets are their employees! In order to best serve the customer, it is highly recommended to provide all the tools employees need to feel empowered to make decisions. Failure to do so could result in inefficiency within the organization and disgruntled customers; that's why the second barrier to providing exceptional customer service is staff not being empowered to make decisions. If this is an issue as an employee or an area of uncertainty as a supervisor, be sure to prioritize having a discussion about the topic in the next department meeting. Below is a list of questions to help start the conversation.

Department
Goals

Staff

Questions

- Does the employee feel as though their supervisor/director demonstrates trust with them?
- Does the supervisor/director manage every aspect of the employee's day to day activities?
- Are roles, tasks/projects, and expectations clearly communicated?
- Does the environment welcome and support creative thinking and problem-solving for the sake of the customer, department, or organization?
- Is appreciation shown for an employee's resourcefulness?

BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

#3 Lack of adequate training

"I didn't know that." If you or anyone in your department finds this statement being made frequently it may be a tell-tale sign that training is needed. Imagine the domino effect of frustration being passed from employee, to customer, and ironically, back to the supervisor. No one wins when training is not made readily available, which is why this issue is third on the list of barriers to exceptional customer service. Thankfully, Bethel is encouraging all departments, university-wide, to provide regular training in order to ensure employees are equipped with what is necessary to be successful.



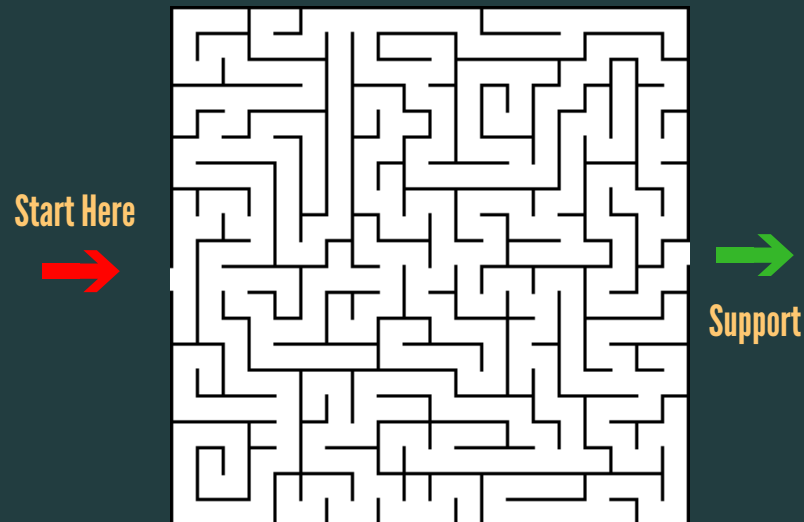
Tell-Tale Signs for Employee Training

- Lacks confidence
- Low productivity
- Low quality output
- Sloppiness
- Negative attitude and/or interactions with customers
- Increase in bad reviews or complaints from customers
- The need to raise the bar on performance
- New policies or processes

BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

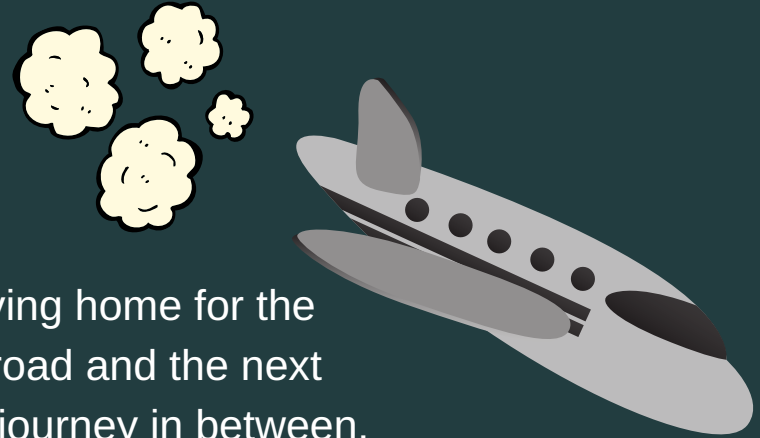
#4 Inconvenient access to support

The world we live in is fast-paced and organizations are challenged with finding ways of keeping up for the sake of their customers. People want information and support accessible where and when they need it. Fourth on the list of barriers to providing exceptional customer service is inconvenient access to support. Examine where easily accessible support can be provided to students, donors, and even other faculty and staff of the university, and it may uncover an opportunity for the employee and their department to improve. Consider the information requested by customers - who (type of customer), what, when, where and how - for themes or areas of focus; frequency, time and location of support currently being provided; and the potential reach of the provided support.



BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

#5 "Auto pilot"



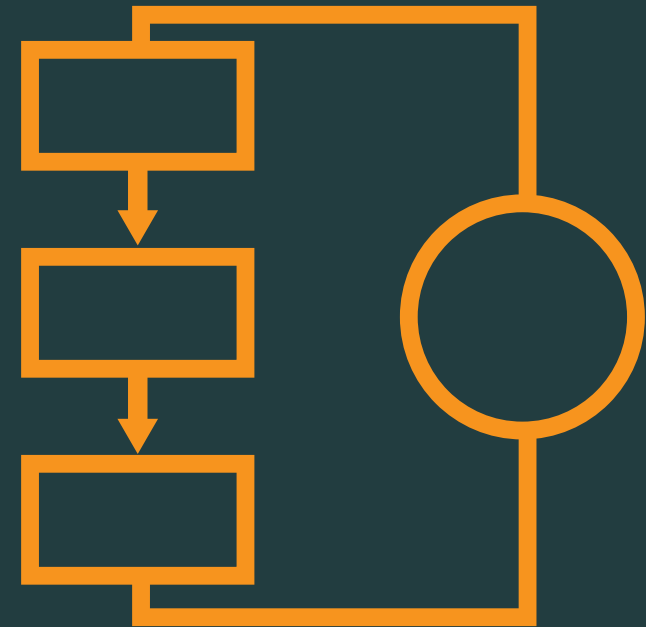
It's a beautiful Tuesday afternoon and you are driving home for the evening. One moment you were pulling onto the road and the next moment you are home, but cannot remember the journey in between. It has happened to everyone at least once. Auto-pilot. It's the process of doing something without focus. As representatives of the university, we have to be mindful not to fall into the trap of autopilot and showing no interest or concern for our customers' issue(s). Below is a checklist of items to help prevent 'auto-pilot.'

- Did you ask how the customer was feeling today?
- Did the customer clearly express the question or concern?
- Are there clues that could help you interpret the customer needs? (i.e. tone of voice, body language, mood, delivery of pace)
- Did you obtain any key information needed to assist the customer?
- Repeat the customer need for clarification.
- Are you addressing the customer by name?
- Did you articulate or summarize the assistance you will be providing?
- Did you communicate hold times or the anticipated time it will take to resolve the issue?
- Did you thank the customer?

BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

#6 Difficult to understand processes

Processes are put in place to provide a turnkey solution to frequently encountered issues. Considering the goal of a process, difficulty in understanding or comprehension of a process can cause just as much damage as not having a process in place at all. This particular barrier to providing exceptional customer service has the potential to cause more problems - reaching beyond the customer and the immediate department. A solution can be easily found in taking the time to revisit processes for training purposes - ensuring employees have a chance to address concerns and learn previously unknown information. Consider designating a group of individuals as the "Process Improvement Team" to consistently seek for ways to improve and train on processes within the department.



BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

#7 Delay in response

No one enjoys waiting lengthy periods of time to get the answer needed to their problem. As such, customers loathe having to receive a delayed response. While there may be certain instances that require additional time allotted to identify a solution, there should be a guideline for response time to ensure a quality customer experience. Take some time to calculate respective department response times and explore if it may be time to create policies or guidelines for support.

Average Reply Time

How long it takes the team/employee to get back to a customer.

Total reply time across all support conversations / Total number of cases = Average reply time

Average First Reply Time

How long it takes the team/employee to get back to a customer's first request.

Total first reply time (Sum of all time taken to reply to first contacts) / Total number of cases = Average first reply time

Average Resolution Time

How long it takes from a case being opened to being closed.

Total resolution time (Sum of duration of all resolved cases) / Total number of cases = Average resolution time

Average Number of Replies Per Case

How many replies it takes for the customer to have their issue resolved.

Total resolution time (Sum of duration of all resolved cases) / Total number of cases = Average resolution time

Average Handle Time (AHT)

The total average duration of a single interaction, including hold time, talk time and the follow-up or related admin tasks.

Total resolution time (Sum of duration of all resolved cases) / Total number of cases = Average resolution time

BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

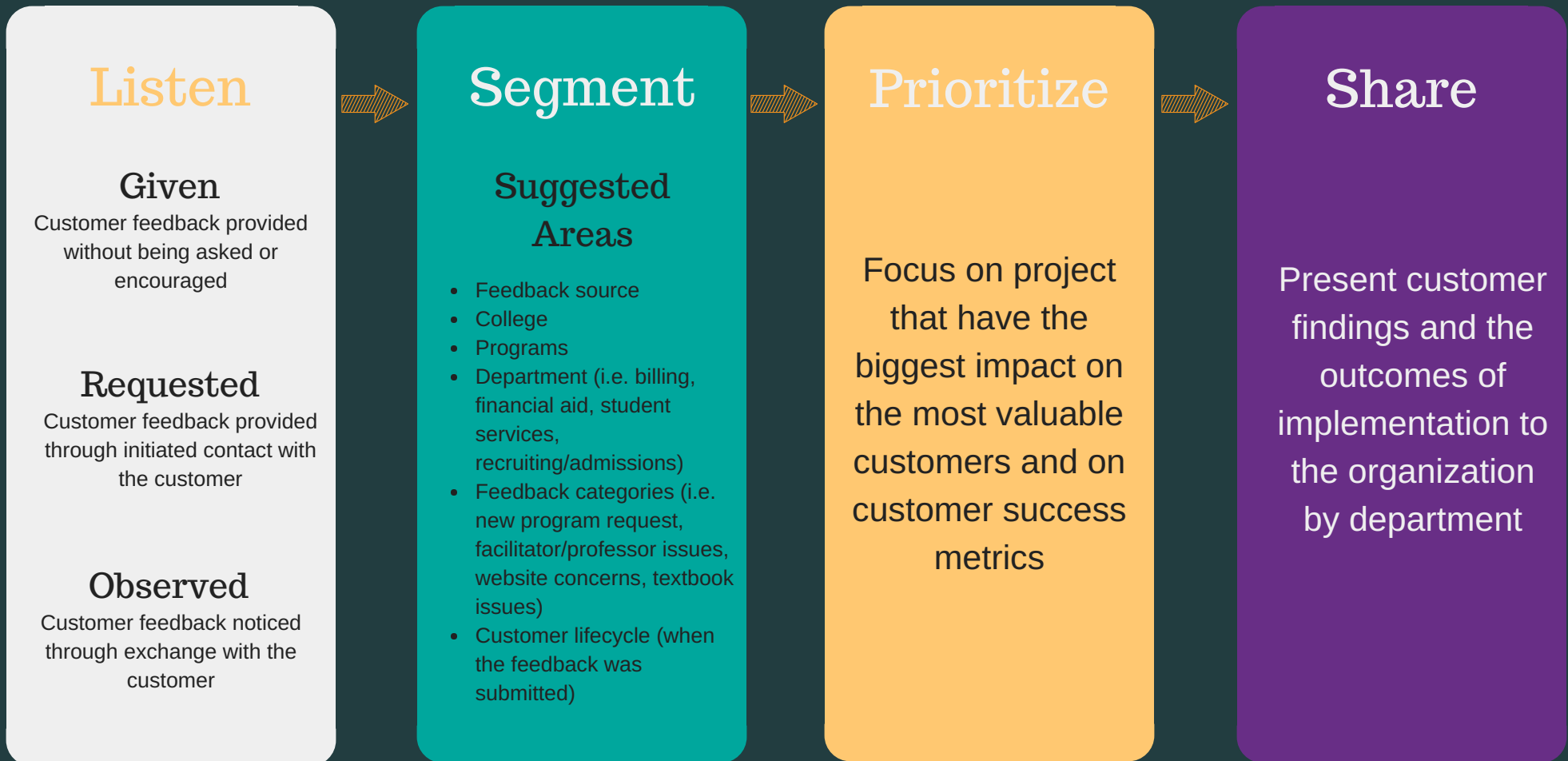
#8 Dismissed actionable items from customer feedback

Throughout this guide an emphasis has been placed on customer satisfaction. However, knowing the customer's level of satisfaction is a mere byproduct of giving room for customers to share feedback. Mining the data collected from feedback allows organizations to view their systems and processes from the point of view of the customer. Oftentimes, customer feedback aids in the prevention of unexpected processing errors, bottlenecks within a department or organization as a whole, and other inefficiencies from impacting productivity and causing irreversible damage to the university's stature. Fresh eyes on an idea, process, document, etc. validates how crucial the customer perspective is to any organization. In addition, employees, too, can contribute useful feedback due to their salient interaction with customers. Use the diagram on the next page to plan how to tune into the voice of the customer through feedback.

BARRIERS TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

#8 Dismissed actionable items from customer feedback

STEPS FOR PROCESSING CUSTOMER FEEDBACK



CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS SELF -ASSESSMENT

DIRECTIONS: Now that we have come to the end of the customer service guide, it is time to self-assess. Rate yourself in each of the below areas to the extent which you feel it applies to you with the scale provided. Remember that the questions apply to both external and internal customers and may exist in varying proportions depending on the job function.

- S** = Strong. This describes me all or most of the time.
- M** = Moderate. This describes me part or some of the time.
- I** = Improvement opportunity. This describes me very little or not at all.
- N/A** = Not applicable to me at this time.

Customer Focus

S M I N/A

I feel that it is important for me to give my customers an understanding that:

CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS SELF -ASSESSMENT

Personal Characteristics

| | S | M | I | N/A |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I have patience with my customers, even when their actions are difficult to handle. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I show respect for my customers and my coworkers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I have a positive attitude and outlook about my job, my customers, and my organization. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I sound and act confident in my abilities to do my job and in my interactions with my customers and coworkers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I am efficient in all aspects of my job and handle my time very well. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I apply high ethical standards as I fulfill my job roles and functions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Customer Service Challenge

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I view every customer as a unique individual with a need to fulfill, problem solve, or an issue to address. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I effectively discover and try to understand my customer's point of view. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I know how to recognize the signs of emotional communication (anger, fear, guilt, etc.). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I know ways to diffuse a customer's emotional "charge" and move the interaction to a problem-solving process. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I don't add to an emotional interaction by reacting emotionally to it myself. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I know that some of my customers have difficulty with the issues or problems they present to me and I prepare myself to handle the stress associated with tough interactions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I focus on the results I can achieve by solving my customer's difficult problems and keep these goals firmly in front of me at all times. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS SELF -ASSESSMENT

Customer Service Challenge

S M I N/A

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8. I do not use judgmental or blaming behavior when I interact with customers who are experiencing difficulties. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I recognize and know what to do when I encounter customers who create difficult circumstances, such as dishonest interactions, abusive behavior, and defensive/ attacking verbal and nonverbal communication. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I recognize and know what to do when I encounter customers who have special needs including the elderly, the disabled, customers from different cultures, and people who speak English as a second language or don't speak English at all. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
-

Count the total number of S, M and I responses. If the number of I is 6 or more, it may be time to talk to your supervisor, team, or others about ways to enhance your customer service skills. It's likely to lead to greater job satisfaction for you.

Total number of S responses: _____

Total number of M responses: _____

Total number of I responses: _____

RESOURCES & PUBLICATIONS

Raving Fans by Ken Blanchard & Sheldon Bowles

Customer Mania! It's Never Too Late to Build a Customer-Focused Company by Ken Blanchard

Exceptional Front-Line Customer Service in Higher Education by Julie A. Selander

Customer Feedback: How to Hear the Voice of the Customer
by Anton de Young

SURVEY

How helpful has this guide been?

Click the below link to take the survey:

[Customer Service Guide Survey](#)

