



THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Script for Adult Workshop

OBJECTIVE: *Participants will learn the values of delivering outstanding service, the six keys of customer relations, and how they can consistently deliver that service.*

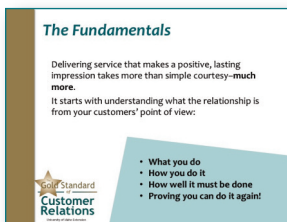
This script is meant as a guide. Please read through it entirely before presenting the material. Learn the presentation and answer any questions you might have before giving the presentation. When presenting, do not read directly from the script. Add any personal experiences you may have that apply. If you have any questions about the content of a slide, review the references. If you still do not feel comfortable with the content of a slide before presenting it, omit the slide from the presentation.



SLIDE 1: THE GOLD STANDARD OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Welcome and introductions. Compliment the company if you received good service when you entered the location, before anyone knew why you were there. If you did not receive good service, say nothing about it, but go right into the next paragraph:

In Extension (**or insert your profession here**), we all travel a great deal—and, we get to know what quality customer service looks like. To be honest, I often see exceptional service, and now I even find I thank people for providing excellent service. But, I also see bad-mannered and unresponsive people who I am paying for a service or product. If I were to categorize the service I see as I shop and travel, I would place that service into three levels: offensive, mediocre and exceptional. According to your customers, which of the three are you delivering?



SLIDE 2: THE FUNDAMENTALS

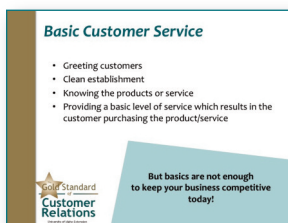
Delivering service that makes a positive, lasting impression takes more than simple courtesy—much more. It starts with understanding the relationship from your customers' point of view. Customer service is understanding what you do, how you do it, how well it must be done, and proving you can do it again!

Today, we are going to talk about how to deliver the exceptional service that we all want to receive, but often do not. We are going to let you in on the secret of how to deliver that exceptional service that makes a lasting impression. But first, we would like to ask you what you think are the fundamentals of good customer service.



ACTIVITY: Use an easel and pad to write down responses from the audience. If no one speaks up, you may have to ask someone directly. After 8-10 responses, place the pad to the side. We have found that most responses are positive so we can reward the audience and tell them that they already know many of the qualities of good service.

Now that we have seen some of the fundamentals of exceptional customer service, we must learn how to deliver it every day and in every encounter.



SLIDE 3: BASIC CUSTOMER SERVICE

This slide shows the attributes many companies consider the basics of customer service. While all of these are essential, delivering exceptional service takes much more than this.

We categorize these traits as good basic customer service. All of these serve a purpose and some, like greeting the customer and knowing your product or service, are more important than others. In our current economy, these basics are not enough. You must deliver exceptional service if you expect to not only sell enough to stay in business, but sell enough so your business thrives and has enough customer loyalty to withstand the pressures of the years ahead.

I am here today to talk about more than the basics. We will talk about what we define as the essentials of exceptional service.



SLIDE 4: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

Delivering exceptional customer service takes much, much more than the basics. Delivering exceptional service is more than remembering the golden rule—treat your customer as you would like to be treated.

The golden rule is a good place to start in service, because it helps you put yourself in your customers' shoes and look at your business from their point of view. However, it is not a good place to stop, because delivering exceptional service takes more.

After the next slide, please throw something at me if I slip up and say Customer Service. I want to talk to you about Customer Relations. You all have been provided with things to throw, so use them.....

I really want you to take home the idea of customer relations (*repeat*):



relations, instead of service. This means developing a relationship with every customer who enters your front door or your back door, comes via the computer terminal or over the phone, sends a request by mail or sends their husband in to your store to buy mascara. Each customer is there to fill a personal need.

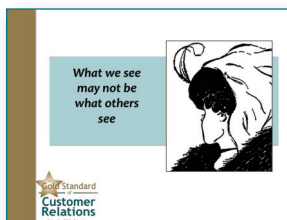
It is your job to develop enough of a relationship to find out what that need is, and fill it.

That is much more than ringing up the sale, putting the mascara in the bag, and taking his money. It may be listening as he asks you if this shade is the darkest they sell as his wife wanted the darkest black/brown mascara. You may then say, “Yes, it is the shade I think she wants, and you are a good husband to do this for your wife—most men would not.” It happens that I witnessed that exchange in a store recently, and I think that man will be back when he wants something else because the cashier made it a personal relationship of sorts, not just a sale.

Instructor Note: All the customer relations stories are provided as examples. Make the presentation your own and insert your own personal stories.

Maybe because of our technical environment where everyone can communicate without ever seeing the other party, people long for a personal touch. The cashier in that store provided it.

If you learn nothing more today, please take away this message: if you establish a relationship with customers instead of taking a basic service approach, you will be miles ahead of your competition. Yes, this takes more work, but people have learned tricks—some I can pass on to you today.



SLIDE 5: WHAT WE SEE MAY NOT BE WHAT OTHERS SEE

Today is all about challenges, and our first challenge to you is to shift your thinking or your paradigm. I want you to change your paradigm from customer service to customer relationships.

To help you make a paradigm shift, look at this slide. What do you see? Is this an old woman or a young one? When we first look at the picture we may see one or the other. As you looked for the second image you had to shift your perception or paradigm. That is, you had to look below the surface.



The same thing is expected in delivering exceptional customer relations. Delivering this “wow” experience is about looking below the surface and finding what the customer needs—it is about developing a relationship with the people who are the essential part of EVERYTHING YOU DO.

So, look below the surface. What do your customers value?



SLIDE 6: CUSTOMER RELATIONS ADVANTAGE

When your company focuses on customer relationships instead of just selling a product or service, you look for what the customer expects from the product or service and then you provide it.

According to research, customers do not really buy products or services. Instead, they buy the improvement in their life or the BENEFITS they EXPECT to get from those products or services. It is every employee’s job to figure out what that benefit is and to not only meet, but to surpass the customers’ expectations.

Companies that focus on the delivery and improvement of benefits have a competitive advantage over companies that only focus on the product or service and neglect what benefit each customer is looking for from that product or service.



SLIDE 7: WHY CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Bullet 1. Customer relations quality is based on a customer’s ideal expectations. Ideal expectations are very difficult to change. Every customer who enters your business—either through the front door, via the telephone or email, or even the back door customer, wants and deserves star treatment. Customers talk to you, not to a company. Customers think of themselves as people, not as customers, and it is not enough to serve customers, you have to truly **care** about them.

Bullet 2. So why did we choose the phrase “Customer Relations?”

Think about how language structures our environment. Often times just a word itself will invoke strong opinions or feelings. What does the word “service” mean to you?

Instructor Note: You may choose to capture the responses on the pad on the easel.



For example, we have strong opinions about those who work in public **service**. People are drafted into the **service**.

The word service is related to the words servant and servitude. In Latin, the root word “servus” means slave—a very loaded word.

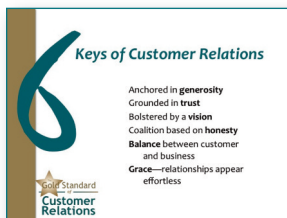
When we say or think the word “service,” all of our previous experiences and beliefs about the word surface. For employees, those previous connotations may KEEP them from delivering a customer-caring experience.

When put together, the connotation of the word service, and often the location of the customer service department, it makes one wonder why on earth would anyone ever go into customer service.

Bullet 3. Now imagine you are a new employee hired to provide the Gold Standard of Customer Relations. During your orientation, you learn about the company's vision, mission, and values, and you hear something you CANNOT BELIEVE YOU ARE HEARING.

You hear:

“At this company we don’t have a customer service department. In fact, we don’t provide customer service. We see the customer as the reason we are in business. Our only motivation is to create happy customers. In order to do that, we don’t want you to do customer service. We would like you to see your job as customer CARE. That means that you will create a relationship, actively and vigorously, with everyone with whom we do business.”



SLIDE 8: SIX KEYS OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS

To provide that kind of relationship, we have divided the Gold Standard of Customer Relations into six attributes. We pulled these six attributes from the histories of successful businesses—businesses that weathered economic storms and continued to do things better than other companies. Companies who remained in business while those who offered gimmicks and made promises they could not keep went under.

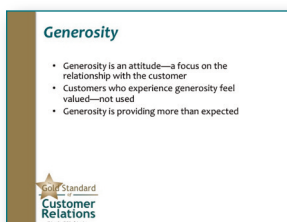
We then researched literature on business in general and again found these six attributes (or keys) to be at the heart of the customer relationships of companies that deliver the “wow” treatment you want for your customers.

- Powerful relationships are anchored in an attitude of generosity—a “giver” perspective that finds pleasure in extending the relationship beyond just meeting a need or requirement.
- Powerful relationships are grounded in trust. Partners don’t spend energy looking over their shoulders, but instead take a leap of faith and rely on the relationship.
- Powerful relationships are bolstered by a joint purpose, or vision. While this purpose is rarely “written down,” each partner has a vision of what the association could be, and a commitment to take the relationship to a higher plane.
- Powerful relationships are coalitions laced with honesty. Truth and candor are seen as tools for growth, rather than devices for disdain. Partners serve each other straight talk mixed with compassion and care.
- Powerful relationships are based on balance. Pursuit of equality, however, should seek stability over time rather than absolute encounter-to-encounter equilibrium.
- Powerful relationships are grounded in grace. The spirit of partnership has an artistic flow that gives participants a sense of familiarity and ease.

Source: Chip R. Bell. 1994. Customers as Partners. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Pub., Inc., pgs. 5–6.



Activity: Using the key definitions found in the Supplemental Materials section, form six groups (one for each definition). Have each group discuss instances where that key was demonstrated in customer relations. As you talk about each key in the upcoming slides, ask that group to share. Allow 5-7 minutes for activity.



SLIDE 9: GENEROSITY

Ask the generosity group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where generosity was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

- Generosity is defined as kindness, warmth, a welcome. It is how you would treat a guest in your home.
- Generosity means smiling and greeting or acknowledging customers as soon as possible when they enter the store. Researchers have learned that this acknowledgement not only makes customers feel more valued and more likely to purchase, but it also makes it less likely that they will shoplift since they know that you know that they have been seen.
- Generosity means answering the phone within two or three rings. We know offices get busy, so it is best to have a system in place for everyone, even the managers, to answer phones when things get hectic.
- Generosity means answering the phone and greeting customers with a smile in your voice and in a warm way—even when things get hectic and the last person you waited on was Attila the Hun! Some have found it effective to place a small mirror near the phone so they can see their smile to remind themselves to let the customer “hear” their smile.
- Generosity means providing a welcoming, clean area for clients to wait. Current magazines and reading material should be available. Clear out the clutter in your waiting area and provide a few comfortable chairs. A few books for small children are welcome by parents. Provide signs for the locations of public restrooms and make sure they are clean.

But most importantly, generosity is an attitude—an attitude that this relationship with the customer is the most important thing I have on my to-do list.



SLIDE 10: THINK ABOUT IT...

Think of a business in your community that does a superior job of showing generosity as we have defined it. What does it look and feel like? What are some of the special things that business does to make you feel welcome?

Instructor Note: All the customer relations stories are provided as examples. Make the presentation your own and insert your own personal stories.



Sample Personal Customer Relations Story:

I never expected to get outstanding customer service at a gas station. In these days of debit cards and self-service pumps, one need not interact with anyone to fill the tank, wash the windshield, get a receipt, and be on your way. But I learned that even a gas station can deliver WOW customer relations. I moved to Clark Fork because I fell in love with a house that was for rent there. I still got my gas in Sandpoint because it was cheaper, but one day, I was on my way at 7:00 a.m., and if you knew me you would know that is a rare time for me to be out of bed, much less on the road. But, I had to be in Moscow by 10:00 a.m., and already things were not going well.


I was nearly out of gas. I pulled into Hayes Gas Station across from the high school in Clark Fork. It was well below freezing, close to zero. Yet, within seconds, someone was out the door, filling my tank, and washing my windows. He noticed a certain college basketball team’s logo on my back window, and before I knew it we were talking about the latest recruits and the team’s chances to go to the NCAA tournament. All the time I lived in Clark Fork, I never got gas anywhere else.

Not only did the owner or an employee fill my tank even though it was self-serve, they got to know me. One day, as I was preparing for yet another race to the airport, I noticed I was out of windshield washer fluid. It seemed the gas station was also out. Hayes went to his truck, found a half full jug of fluid and put it in my car—no charge. Hayes could not have made much margin of profit on my gas purchases, but I will say that the whole time I lived in Clark Fork, I never bought gas anywhere else. He knew generosity, and how to deliver WOW service.

Now, think of a business that is unfriendly. What do they do that earns that title? Why do you shop there despite their unfriendliness? How does it make you feel to shop there, and if you had an alternative, would you use it?

**Generosity:
Being “in the Moment”**

- Think of a customer—a gem of the ocean. Think how easy it is to “be there” for that customer.
- Think about the customer—a crab—that no one wants to serve. How can you “be there” for that customer?
- After one month, examine how the “negative” relationship did or did not change.



SLIDE 11: GENEROSITY: BEING “IN THE MOMENT”

Bullet 1. As we mentioned earlier, we are presenting a series of challenges to you and here is your second. Think of a customer you like and enjoy, and think about a gift you might give him or her. The gift

doesn't have to be expensive; it could be a thank you note. A thank you—especially one that is hand written—carries a great deal of power in these days of instant messaging, Facebook, and email.

Bullet 2. Now, select a customer you don't particularly like and don't enjoy working with. Think of a gift you might give him or her. This one is harder. But, we often associate one negative experience with a customer with all future interactions with that customer. When we see him or her coming in the door, we can become defensive even before that customer has uttered one word. Perhaps you could thank that customer, too. Even if it is a note that says "we appreciate your business," you will be amazed at the power it will carry.

Bullet 3. After one month, examine both relationships and see if they have changed.



SLIDE 12: TRUST

Ask the trust group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where trust was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

Generosity or hospitality forms the basis of quality customer relationships. The next five keys are more difficult to accomplish, but when carried out, they move your customer relations effort into the "wow" category.

- Trust in relationships makes customers feel valued. When you trust your customers, employees, co-workers, and managers, it is like you are reaching out to them as partners in the ultimate success of your business. Trust produces trust. If you express trust to customers they will trust you back.
- According to the research, if you make a mistake (and mistakes do happen) trusted customers are more tolerant, accepting, and more forgiving. They will even defend you to others when errors occur. They might say to someone they hear complain about a mistake you made, "This is not their normal way of doing things."
- Customers see quality service. In many cases, customer demands for service are taking priority over price. They will reward those who treat them with respect and trust with repeat business. According to the book *The World is Flat* by Thomas Friedman, "There is no



future in vanilla for most companies in a flat world...the future belongs to those who know how to make the richest chocolate sauce, the sweetest, lightest whipped cream, and the juiciest cherries to sit on top, or how to pull them all together into a sundae” (p. 104). What Mr. Friedman is saying is that in the competitive, global economy, you have to provide something outstanding for your customers. Many companies are outsourcing to the cheapest labor source, and can outsource almost anything to meet customer needs 24 hours a day. Therefore, you have to have something the others don’t have—outstanding customer relations can provide the human touch customers seek.

Two points to remember about trust:

1. Make service guarantees easy to explain—no fine print on forms. Make it easy for the customer to collect. Your guarantee could be as simple as: “We promise that you’ll be happy with our service or product.”
2. Trusting employees, colleagues, and bosses is the beginning position for trusting customers.

Instructor Note: All the customer relations stories are provided as examples. Make the presentation your own and insert your own personal stories.

Sample of personal trust story:

One bright sunny, winter day my younger sister and I were driving from Boise to our home in north central Idaho. We had finally made it through Boise and into a small town slightly north of Boise, when we decided to stop for a snack. We pulled into a convenience store, only to be greeted with a large prominent sign on the door that stated, “Only one teenager allowed in the store at a time, no purses, backpacks, or bags of any sort allowed in the store. Must purchase an item to use the restroom, and cash only.” At the time my sister and I were 20 and 17.

What a message to send! Unfortunately this town was quite a long distance from the next gas station. We were forced to patronize the store. But that is something I will always remember. The experience colored my perception of the business (one I will never patronize again), and my perception of the community.



SLIDE 13: TRUST IS A TWO-WAY STREET

Most customers, most of the time, are honest. We know that from experience—and from research, as well. Customers are not, however, always right—and neither are we. Everyone makes mistakes, gives wrong information, misunderstands directions, or simply understands a situation differently than was intended. Our perception is our reality. What we believe we have said, and what customers say they heard, are not always the same.

In this short workshop, we don't have time to go into all the steps you can go through to manage an angry customer, or the benefits of responding to customer complaints. But, understand that companies that respond effectively to customer complaints are more likely to keep that customer. The problem is that most people do not complain when something goes wrong. And, that is a loss for the business.

How many people do you think happy customers tell about your service? Research shows that they only tell 5–7 people.

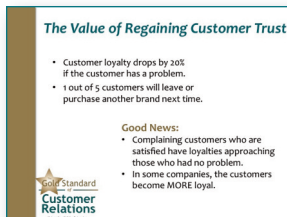
Now, how many people does an unhappy customer tell? He or she tells 14–20 people! In a small town, that can be deadly to your business. And, in these days of the internet, if your customer is really angry and sends a mass email to 100 people who then email another 50 people—well, you can imagine what has just happened to your company's reputation.

For businesses that get no complaints about their service, no news is NOT good news. Of all the customers you serve, surely someone has had a negative experience. You want to fix it to the customer's satisfaction, not ignore it or not hear about it.

Some simple things you can do to find out about unhappy customers include:

1. Have delivery people leave a card with the manager's name and phone number so that customers can call with complaints.
2. Make it easy for customers to complain. Call them after the sale to ask if everything was to their satisfaction. Ask open-ended questions. Open-ended questions require more than a yes or no response.
3. Ask the customer how your business can make it right. You will

be surprised how little customers expect. They will not ask for the moon, but often ask for a small thing—even just an apology.

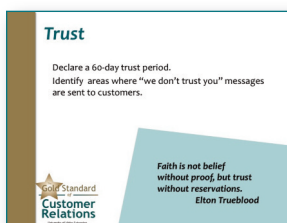


SLIDE 14: THE VALUE OF REGAINING CUSTOMER TRUST

Research indicates that for every unhappy customer who complains to a business, there are 26 other customers who are just as unhappy but not willing to tell you. But remember, they tell others. This negative word-of-mouth discourages potential customers from ever giving you a chance. So for every complaining customer, there are possibly 26 others who have either had a negative experience or heard about one and thus will not/no longer do business with you. But your business never gets a chance to hear about it and take corrective actions.

The good news is, if you find a way for customers to bring you their complaints, research tells us those customers will become at least as loyal as people who have never had a problem. This is because until there is a problem, “service” and “quality” are just words. Once the customer has a problem and you resolve it to the customer’s satisfaction, he or she gets that “wow” feeling about your service. Every Nordstrom and Fed Ex story of excellent service is a recovery story. Customers who have complained and received a satisfactory resolution have a higher sense of loyalty than those customers who had no problems.

According to Technical Assistance Research Programs, if customers complain and are satisfied, their loyalty approaches that of customers with no problems. If they are not satisfied, loyalty decreases by 50%.



SLIDE 15: TRUST

Our challenge to businesses: Declare a 60-day trust period, when managers and employees identify areas where “we don’t trust you” messages are sent to customers or employees.

Create a customer-focused company; one where people are encouraged and rewarded for pleasing the customer before pleasing the boss, for doing the “right” thing, even if (while they are learning) they may make mistakes. Create an environment where employees feel safe to share, to learn, and to experiment.

Providing outstanding service means giving employees a number of ways to meet the customers’ needs. It means drawing on the uniqueness and creativity of all the people working for your company.



SLIDE 16: VISION

Ask the vision group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where vision was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

A vision is a powerful image of what an organization intends to become. By painting an inspiring picture of its future condition, a vision statement enables an organization to move to an improved, more advanced level of world-class customer relations. A vision of world class customer relations must focus on employees and customers.



SLIDE 17: DEFINING YOUR VISION

A customer relations vision statement should stress the importance of quality customer relations and spells out your company’s basic commitments.

A vision statement is a declaration of purpose, values, and direction. It is long-term, and general in nature. Adapt your general vision statement to include specific strategies and tactics so it can easily become part of the everyday way your company does business. If you already have a vision statement, you may want to make sure that it talks about your commitment to both customers and employees.

Optional Activity: If the business does not have a vision statement, ask small groups to come up with one sentence to describe one company goal in customer relations. Have each group read their statement and see how they can combine statements to form a customer relations mission statement.



SLIDE 18: COMPANY CUSTOMER RELATIONS VISION “MUSTS”

According to Hal Rosenbluth and Diane Peters in their book *The Customer Comes Second*, excellent performance delivered to customers comes from your employees. Employees deserve recognition, public commendation, and a clear standard for your company’s definition of world-class customer relations. Rosenbluth and Peters tell managers to celebrate and have fun with employees. In order to please your customers, you must please those who serve your customers. Delivering world-class service to your customers is not a luxury, but an investment in your business’ future.

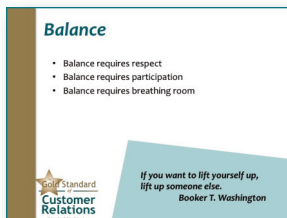


SLIDE 19: TRUTH

Ask the truth group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where truth was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

The truth building block of a successful relationship values **frankness**. Truthful companies are **dependable**. The path to truth in customer relationships includes the **courage** to ask for criticism as well as the **consideration** to right wrongs. Truth may sometimes cause relationships to temporarily feel uncomfortable, but in the end, truth makes a relationship healthy. By being truthful with customers, you nurture a healthy, long-term relationship.



SLIDE 20: BALANCE

Ask the balance group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where balance was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

Bullet 1. Each customer deserves respect. I read a story recently that illustrates the respect element of customer relations.

Instructor Note: All the customer relations stories are provided as examples. Make the presentation your own and insert your own personal stories.

Sample Customer Relations Story:

A teller in a Spokane bank refused to validate a customer's parking ticket because the customer had not made a transaction at the teller's window—and the customer looked like he had just come in from plowing a field with his bare hands. He wore dirty jeans, a flannel shirt, and work boots caked with dirt. The customer asked to see her supervisor. The supervisor also refused to validate the parking ticket. After all, why should the bank validate a parking sticker for someone who hadn't deposited any money and who looked so scrubby? As the customer turned to leave, he said to the teller and her supervisor, I will talk to the manager about this. The teller and supervisor were not concerned. They felt they had treated the customer with the respect due someone who did not deposit any money and who looked so dirty.

As it turned out, that customer did talk to the manager, and he withdrew over ten million dollars he held in various accounts in that bank.

*So, the teller and the supervisor learned a very valuable lesson. Never judge anyone by the way he or she looks. That customer in the dirty jeans and flannel shirt may have more to invest in your business than you could imagine. Remember, no one customer is more important than another—**each** customer is the most important to your business.*

Bullet 2. Give employees the power to make decisions, on the spot. Doing so empowers them to provide a top notch customer experience. At the same time, be open with your customers about what is going on in your company. Involve them in the decision making in small ways that will make them feel like partners in your business. For example, “We are really swamped today, and I appreciate that you have waited patiently for us to get to you,” even if that wait was only five minutes.

Give customers options: we can deliver the washing machine today, but that would mean our delivery would be late. Tomorrow we could come at a time more convenient to you.

Or, let them know that it costs extra for you to have a driver deliver after five, and that to keep your prices competitive you need to keep deliveries within a certain time frame. If you are going to miss a delivery, or not be able to provide what you said you could, let your customer know and ask them what alternatives they think should be made.

Bullet 3. Some customers are uncomfortable with the closeness and partnership we are advocating. They want to buy a new jacket and get out of the store. “Feel out” each customer and look for signs that you are getting too close. Some might interpret a helpful employee as one who does not trust them and is following them around the store to make sure they don’t steal something. Others may want the attention to seek advice about a purchase. Look for clues in people’s facial expressions and body language. We can hide what we feel in our language, but it is much more difficult to hide what we feel in our body language.



SLIDE 21: THE FOUNDATION OF BALANCE: MUTUAL RESPECT
Our Challenge: Look at your policies and procedures. Are they getting in the way of quality?



SLIDE 22: GRACE

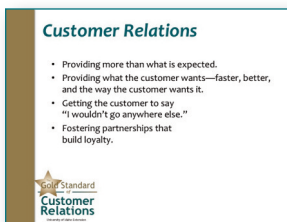
Ask the grace group from the key definitions activity to share experiences where grace was demonstrated.

Instructor Note: Allow 2–3 minutes for this discussion.

Great customer partnerships make the purchasing experience appear seamless and filled with flow and polish. Graceful customer relations have an “at home” feeling.

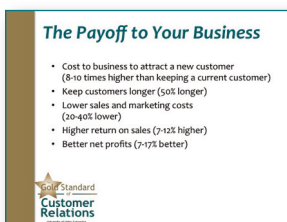
Graceful customer relations providers learn their customers’ standards for great service and try to exceed them.

Instructor Note: Select a short customer relations video to view. We have found that a video adds value and energy to the presentation—see the References and Resources list for a couple of suggested videos.



SLIDE 23: CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Remember, quality relations are customer-defined and each customer defines them differently. Also, note that the customer doesn’t give you very long before he or she makes a judgment about your business. Research shows that customers form an impression of an employee in the first 20 seconds, and apply that impression to the entire company! The person you employ to work the front desk, answer the phones, and greet the customer has incredible power to make or break that first encounter with the customer. That employee should be rewarded well. He or she may also need an opportunity to recover from negative experiences with customers before dealing with the next customer with the positive attitude you would like to see.



SLIDE 24: THE PAYOFF TO YOUR BUSINESS

Creating the kind of customer relations we are talking about has a payback for your business. Quality customer relations lead to customer satisfaction, which leads to loyalty. Loyal customers not only stay with you, they increase their business with you, eventually developing a relationship that helps keep your customer loyal and unlikely to be lured away by the competition with the promise of a lower price.

Business organizations such as the American Management Association have quantified the pay-back to businesses of developing customer loyalty. The experts estimate that it costs a business 8 to 10 times more to attract a new customer than it does to keep a current customer.

According to the American Management Association, creating partnerships such as we have talked about today help businesses keep customers longer, lower sales and marketing costs, provide a higher return on sales and lead to better net profits.

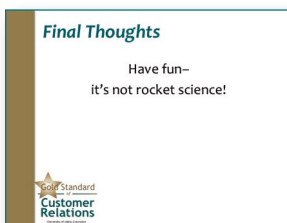


SLIDE 25: OUR CHALLENGE

Our final challenge to you:

As best-selling author Tom Peters says, “Commit yourself to performing one 10-minute act of exceptional customer service per day and encourage your colleagues to do the same. In a 100-person company, taking into account normal vacations, holidays etc., that would mean 24,000 new courteous acts per year. Such is the stuff of revolutions.”

*This quote is from
Tom Peters, In Search of Excellence. 1982.
New York: Harper & Row.*



SLIDE 26: FINAL THOUGHTS

Have fun. Throw a fish or throw a pillow. Take some risks, have some fun, and just maybe your customers will have fun, too.

Instructor Note: Ask for questions.