



A WOMAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS

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The Messenger

Sept/Oct 2020

A Letter from Kim

Customer service is vital to the survival of your company. If your customers aren't happy, it will just be a matter of time before your business fails. We define customer service as giving customers what they need, in the manner they need it, while treating them with dignity and delivering the highest service possible every time. In this Messenger, we will show you how the customer relationship process develops. Understanding this process will ensure that your customer service outshines everyone else's.

To improve your customer service, you have to realize why it is so important. First, customers talk to each other and will tell about bad treatment or service they have received. As negative words move along the grapevine, business will decline. Second, standards are moving higher and higher. Customers expect more out of you than they did in years past. If you are not constantly improving and raising your standards, your customers are going to be disappointed and will look for someone else who will meet their expectations. Third, poor customer service affects revenue. Poor customer service leads to unhappy customers who will turn somewhere else to get what they want. You should also note that most customers will not complain to you--they will just leave without notice. This gives you no chance to make amends and try to win back their loyalty.



21st Century Customer Service

There are five main stages for customer bonding. During each stage, the relationship between you and your customer grows. Being conscious of the development process will help you to be a more attentive vendor.

Friendship

In this stage you begin to build the relationship. One side, usually yours, might be giving more than others, but this helps to lay the foundation of trust. The relationship is based upon your strength but be careful. A little mess up early on can derail the relationship. Persistence and following through with what you say is the best recipe for success.

Dating

Once you've built the initial relationship with a customer, he/she starts to be open to limited products or services. As you do business together, good performance will open up the relationship



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21st Century Customer Service continued

to deeper bonding. You know that the customer has a desire and a need for your products or services. The relationship is still fragile. Doing a bad job will cause the customer to stop the relationship cold. Spending time getting to know your contact person and going the extra mile to communicate makes all the difference.

Going Steady

At this point, the relationship is stable, and each party is involved. Information is being shared on a need-to-know basis. The customer now trusts you and is investing time in bringing you up to speed. However, there are still issues that must be dealt with, so you won't lose them. Competition will attempt to interfere, and the cost factor may still be an issue. Get in touch with your contact as often as possible. It also helps to create reasons for your customers to need to call you for advice.

Engagement

By this point, people are committed to the direction of the relationship. Communication is exchanged between customer and vendor frequently. Competition has trouble breaking in due to the depth of that relationship. Even though the relationship is strong, it is hard to keep it developing in this direction. Make sure that customers have numerous reasons to come to you for added value.

Marriage

Finally, the relationship is so strong the customer becomes a mouthpiece for advertising your products and services. They tell others of why they should use your company. Since the customer is spreading the word about you, be sure the quality of your work is excellent. The customer's credibility is on the line when they recommend you. You should praise customers when they recommend you to someone else. Help them sell you. Give them information about new services and products you offer so they can give it to others.

Once you have gotten to the marriage stage, you still must be careful that you do not slack off with your customer. Do not take for granted that they will always be there. Customers want to feel appreciated and taken care of. If you keep your customer happy, everyone will be happy.

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Truth

**A soft answer turns away
wrath, but a harsh word
stirs up anger.
Proverbs 15:1**

**Gracious words are like a
honeycomb, sweetness to the
soul and health to the body.
Proverbs 16:24**

**Happy customers are your
biggest advocates and
can become your most
successful sales team.
Lisa Masiello**

STUDENT Spotlight

We want to recognize students who have successfully passed the PMP® Exam.

What is your favorite food?

Mexican

What are your hobbies?

Dancing, spending time with family

Congratulations, Teresa Hoelscher!

What was the best thing about the PMP® Exam Prep Boot Camp?

The support that Dr. Mathis gave me and made me feel that each question was a good question.

How do you think the PMP® Certification will help your career?

It has given me the opportunity to keep my title and salary that they hired me at. It was a stipulation of hiring me at this level.

What was the most challenging thing about the Boot Camp?

The amount of homework required after a long day.

Please write a recommendation about our class.

The Mathis group was the most supportive PMP® boot camp organization that I have worked with. I have taken 2 other boot camps with no success. The Guarantee gave me hope that they believed in what they did and they were the best...which they are. You MUST put in the time, but in the long run, they give you the tools for success.

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We are excited to announce that we've completed all the steps to become an Authorized Training Partner (ATP) with Project Management Institute (PMI)! We're one of the first organizations in the country to complete the application and training required for potential ATPs. The ATP partnership is replacing PMI's REP program. Beginning in 2021, PMI will require that any business that teaches PMP Exam Prep Boot Camps be an ATP.