

Make someone happy

Build customer loyalty with these six principles as your guide

IF YOU are in sales, customer service or a frontline position, there are many opportunities to delight your client or customer. To "wow" him, you need to embody these six principles. They serve as a compass, directing how you should behave and what you should do to make your customer or client say: "Wow!"

1 Be interested to be interesting

Ladies, can you remember first dates that never became second dates? Why? What happened?

You may say: "There was no chemistry", or "He didn't seem interesting".

What caused this lack of chemistry?

Did your date talk about himself throughout dinner? Did he sound as if he was the sales and marketing manager of Me Inc?

It may have been interesting initially, but the evening eventually went downhill and you caught yourself thinking about what you were going to do that weekend with your grandma, whether you had prepared the dog food ... and how soon you could go home without seeming rude!

Well, he didn't seem interesting because he didn't seem interested in you!

If he had asked you about what you like and what you do, he would have engaged you in a conversation that made you feel special.

Instead, he came across as a salesman peddling fresh meat to a vegetarian!

When you show interest in another person or his organisation, you immediately become interesting to him. He appreciates your effort and reciprocates positively.

2 Be a giver

True giving is about offering something without actually focusing on what you can get in return.

In truly engaging your customer and contributing to their Wow! experience, you should let your customer's happiness be your compass.

Constantly look for ways to fulfil customers' needs and go the extra mile.

3 Be sincere

True engagement can only happen when you connect with the customer's heart.

By respecting him and making him feel special, you engage him emotionally. It is this emotional connection that drives your customer's decisions.

Author John McKean in *Customers Are People* emphasises that 70% of the customer's decision to buy is dependent on how he is treated.

The emotional connection is also one that is more enduring.

Your core focus should be to win your customers' hearts.

If you do that, they will remember you and subsequently return or tell others about you. Win their heart, head and then, wallet.

Sincerity has to be the key value that resides within everything you do. We have all been disgusted by a service provider who changed his tone and manner after we made the decision not to purchase.

It is this same sincerity that will make your customers forgive you for a little service shortfall.

4 Own it

Have your personal signature on everything you do.

There is a story about a roadside worker in Switzerland who was painstakingly measuring the black and white markings on the curb and painting them with utmost accuracy.

Someone walked up to him and asked: "Why do you bother getting it straight and equal? Nobody's going to care."

The worker replied with pride: "I care, it's my work."

5 Ask "Why not?"

People who "wow" others want to see delight on their customer's face in spite of any obstacles in their way.

They are willing to "bend" the rules for a reason. They put the customer at the centre of everything they do.

They put in that extra effort to make sure the customer leaves happy and wants to come back.

Train yourself to constantly ask, "Why not?"

6 Sniff out opportunities

Just do it! If you see an opportunity to



Constantly look for ways to fulfil customers' needs and go the extra mile. — Bloombergpic

make your customer happy, grab it! You may not get another chance.

It may be an article you come across on a topic that you were discussing with him — just forward it. Or it may be a simple card to show him you care — hand-write and send it.

The difference between just doing your job and being a great salesman or customer

service officer is seeing the opportunity to wow and acting on it.

Live and breathe these six principles and make someone happy today. — Source: ST/ANN

■ **ARTICLE** by Bentley Williams, the principal consultant of Bentley Williams Consulting.