

Provide excellent service

A mindset to provide good customer service can result in positive change

HAVE you ever come across customer service — either positive or negative — which you will never forget? I bet you have and have probably shared your experience with your friends.

A satisfied customer will tell people about the good service, and a dissatisfied customer will naturally tell people about the bad service. The situation amplifies with the ever-increasing pervasiveness of the Internet and social media.

One of the key challenges most companies face is the customer contact point — it can make or break a business.

Every time a customer comes into contact with a company, he goes away feeling better or worse about it. And it is how well the employees manage those numerous moments every day that ultimately determines how successful the business will be.

Change your mindset

Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) is about leveraging the language (linguistic) of the mind (neuro) to produce (programming) a behaviour that achieves a desired result.

In this context, I am going to share with you five simple ideas on how the mind can be programmed to produce excellent customer service:

1 Customer service mindset: changing beliefs

Do your employees believe that serving a customer means helping another person to solve a problem and make his day? Or is customer service a task they have to get on with?

One of the best ways to change your employees' mindset is to fully immerse them in the customer's perspective so they can experience their service through the customer's eyes, hear what he has to say about the service and how he feels at the end of the day.

A tiny shift in your employees' mindset will result in a big positive change in their behaviour towards customers.



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2 Capabilities: follow the role model

Do your employees know what capabilities they need to attract and retain customers? One effective way is to identify the best customer service employee in your company, define the critical success factors (such as values, beliefs and behaviour) that have made this person special through the eyes of the customers, and let the other employees model their behaviour on these qualities through training or small-group coaching.

3 Behaviour: creating the right emotional state

How do you feel when you go on holiday or when you are doing something you love to do? You feel absolutely

happy, don't you?

Your thoughts have a direct influence on your emotions. One way to put your employees in a positive emotional state to serve your customers is for them to share a positive event when they felt happy with a customer, with their job or in their personal lives.

Accompany these sharing sessions with uplifting music, encouraging words from their supervisors or even a simple cheering that builds the team spirit.

4 Metaprograms: understand what motivates your customers

Assuming you have built up a rapport with your customers, you may ask them why they want to purchase a

particular product or service. The words they use will define whether they are motivated by pain or pleasure.

With this knowledge, you can increase their positive feelings by relating how your products and services can create pleasure or resolve their pain. When you know what your customers' metaprograms are, you can create instant rapport with them.

5 Handling objections

In any customer service line, one is bound to encounter demanding customers. One way to handle them professionally without being affected emotionally is to ask yourself two simple questions:

■ What is the positive intention of their behaviour? This will allow employees to see the positive reasons why the customers behave the way they do.

■ How can I help the customer, bearing in mind their positive intentions?

The pursuit of great customer service is a never-ending journey. Seek constant improvement by constantly asking your customers "How are we doing?" and "How can we get better?" To transform your customers, you have to first transform yourself. - Source: ST/ANN

● **ARTICLE by Cayden Chang, director and founder of Mind Kinesis Management International.**