

“Customer service is the soul of every successful business. It is the culmination of past experiences, knowledge of present demands, and the ability to intelligently anticipate what the future will hold.

In Latin American countries, in particular, the ability to adjust to the “ups and downs” of the business and economic environment means the difference between success and the failure to survive.

I help my clients survive ... and flourish.”

-Sandra Handley

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Where ideas turn into action

Top 10 Tips for Turning Customers Into Your Biggest Fans

By J. J. Murphy

As individuals we use products and services and, as customers, we return to businesses that provide value and we steer clear of companies that do not.

The same is true for those who come to us for our services. When you are passionate about your work, it is reflected in your service. What do you do to keep customers happy and provide them with value?

1. Explain What's In It For Them

Your customer wants to know the benefits of your service or product. The benefits of using your services communicate the usefulness, reliability, and overall value of these services to the customer. Continue developing the benefits of your services to continue attracting clients.

2. Do Your Best

Offer excellent service and products. When the results exceed another person's expectations, they tell friends. Nothing beats word of mouth for effective advertising.

3. Tell the Truth

If you promise to get back to a client in a day — do it. If it's going to take a few days, be honest. If you can't meet the client's needs, offer a referral.

4. Continue Your Education

Keep your skills at the cutting edge and tell your clients what's new. Learn something about your client's industry and share any helpful tips. Make it easy for your clients to see how you help them. Network with members of your niche market to enjoy a cost-effective method for attracting the right clients.

5. Offer What They Can't Refuse

This could be in the form of a sample or “try me, you'll like me” offer. You may be the answer to a customer's prayers.

6. Think “Two Ears, One Mouth”

Listen to what others say and ask if you can quote them. If the response is lukewarm or negative, get the person to tell you what would make them happy and meet any reasonable need. Converts become fans.

7. Reach Out, Touch Someone

Make it easy for customers to refer a friend. Ask for referrals and testimonials.

8. Reward Referrals

Determine how potential customers find your business. If from a friend or a colleague, say “Thank you.” Consider offering a referral fee, a free service, or sending an appropriate gift.

9. Keep the Price Right

Value is more than cost. If you have a clearly defined pricing policy, educate your customers on the value they receive. If your value is remarkable, your price is considered remarkable.

10. Take Stock

On a regular basis evaluate your service in terms of efficiency, responsiveness, flexibility, consistency, reliability, and accessibility. While providing the best possible service, do not assume that things are static. Consumer perceptions may change to some degree and what was important last year may not be now.