



Customer Service Tips-- The Real Product of Your Agency

Your agency would not exist without customers. And if you are fortunate enough to have customers right now, you must be providing excellent customer service. For those of you not as fortunate; we are here to offer some tips that will increase customer support and loyalty.

We all talk about the importance of good customer service, but not all of us or our staff seems to follow through on it. The question is, what can we do about it and how can we guarantee customer satisfaction?

- ✓ Recognize that your customers are aware of the type of service they are seeking and the results they expect to receive from your agency and provide them.
- ✓ Treat your customers with dignity and courtesy at all times.
- ✓ Right any wrongs and don't put your customer through the third degree to correct a problem.
- ✓ Validate any customer concerns and fix the problem. It will do wonders for the attitude and actions that follow and future interactions with your customers. You will find that clients who have been recognized and respected will become loyal customers and they will tell others about your business and the excellent service they received.
- ✓ Be friendly and polite to your customers and expect the same from your staff.
- ✓ Get to know your clients and their personality traits. It is okay to speak to your customers on a personal level about their families, vacations, sports, etc.
- ✓ Show the customer that you appreciate them and not just the business dollars they provide you.

Customers will feel very special that you have taken the time to ask about them. It is not necessary to have a lengthy conversation, just to touch base on a person to person basis periodically and make every customer feel like a VIP. Studies have shown that customers who are "emotionally connected" to your place of business are more likely to remain loyal to you rather than a customer who is merely "satisfied" but not emotionally bonded.

Further points to discuss with your staff:

- ✓ Set performance standards for your staff and outline the behavior you expect from your employees.
- ✓ Be sure they know your requirements for how clients should be treated and how to address the customer's needs and requests.
- ✓ Develop a list of "Customer Service Commandments" that fit your agency and that you want your staff to demonstrate.
- ✓ Maintain on-going training and reinforcement of these "Commandments". Good customer service skills are not natural for most people; therefore customer service training should be emphasized.

- ✓ Direct your staff on how to handle a potential dilemma and the steps you expect them to follow when working with your clients.
- ✓ Most importantly, train your staff on how to recognize a potential problem, how to treat your customer respectfully and how to politely transfer your customer to a supervisor before a disagreement gets out of hand.

Customer satisfaction is not only achievable, it is essential in creating the proper attitude within a company. A successful agency needs to be sure that its customers will be satisfied, that your business will put the policies and procedures in place to empower its employees, and management will reinforce behaviors needed to make its customer the number one priority as it should.

Don't forget the quality of customer satisfaction your agency provides impacts your bottom line. Your client's loyalty will result in word-of-mouth advertising, improved reputation, and increased profits. Keep in mind that excellent customer service is an effortless way to establish a profitable and trustworthy agency.

In our industry getting the loan closed and disbursed should not be the only reward the mortgage brokers and lenders gain. They should also receive the best customer service possible. And in doing so, they will be left with an excellent impression of you and your agency and the desire to bring in another transaction.