



It's All About Service

Our business is a service business. And it's service that distinguishes the ordinary from the best! Most all financial institutions offer a similar array of products: checking, savings, loans, online banking and check cards, just to name a few. Pricing is similar. Good service is like the ante into a poker game. A smile and a pleasant exchange while handling your financial request accurately and efficiently is the bare minimum.

The distinguishing measurement is how the customer perceives your service. The customer's perception of services received is our measure of success or failure! It's all about service! It is the CU that adopts the customer's point of view that sets itself apart from the rest. This means we need to look at our business through the customer's eyes. The customer is looking for happy, eager, willing service. They want reliability and assurance that their money and financial needs will be handled with care and knowledge. We have to know our products...it's our job! And, most of all the customer wants to feel as if they are a VIP!

If you want to be considered extraordinary, you must deliver the extraordinary!

So what does extraordinary look like?

Here are a few examples:

- Immediate acknowledgement of the customer with a smile
- Consistently calling the customer by name
- Clean, organized and professional interior and exterior of your branch
- Proactively servicing the customer's needs by looking for ways to improve their relationship with you

Adding the personal touch such as:

- Sending occasion cards for: new baby, wedding anniversary, special trip, congratulations, graduation, new job, retirement, or...
- How about their anniversary of being a customer with your CU?
- Cut out articles of special interest for your customer



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- Print convenient hours to do their banking
- Customer appreciation days with refreshments or small gifts
- Always Thank your customer...Thank you for choosing our CU, Thanks for your business, Thanks for the referrals, Thanks for opening a new account, Thanks for your courtesy or just Thanks for making my day!

We need to actively look for ways to enhance the customer's financial position with our CU. This means being proactive vs. reactive by asking questions that determine the customer's values and plans so that we might select the right products to help them.

Choose open-ended questions. When you ask the customer's opinion or preferences you demonstrate that you truly care about their feelings and priorities. It's the combination of open-ended rapport building questions and being a good listener that demonstrates our genuine desire to serve or help the customer. Service translates to helping!

How you handle complaints and resolve errors can also set you apart from the competition. Acknowledging the customer's complaint by paraphrasing their concerns, offering to assist, providing options, and finally a "thank you" for calling it to your attention are important. If the credit union has made an error, taking ownership with a simple "I apologize for the mistake" goes a long way, followed by a commitment to resolve the error. Be sure to follow up with the customer after it's taken care of to make certain they are satisfied with the outcome. Follow up separates the amateurs from the professionals!

Organizations providing quality service grow twice as fast and pick up market share 3 times quicker than their competitors. The Ritz Carlton winner of the Malcom Baldrige National Quality Award has three simple steps for its service delivery:

1. A warm and sincere greeting using the guest's name
2. Anticipation and compliance with guest needs
3. A fond farewell, giving a warm good-bye and using the guest's name.

The Ritz Carlton motto is "Ladies and Gentlemen, Serving Ladies and Gentlemen." Simply stated but saying so much!

With competition so great, and products delivered so similar, service becomes the distinguishing element that separates the good from the great! It's seldom one action but a series of small actions, focused on the customer's needs and delivered consistently that sets one financial institution apart from the rest. In essence...it's all about service!



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