

## Service Has a Feeling

By Judith Filek- President  
Impact Communications, Inc.

People who rave about the service they receive from an organization expect more than the resolution of a problem. They want to “feel” valued as a customer and to be given special treatment. For customers to conclude the service has been excellent, phone reps need to focus on conveying warmth and concern, in addition to problem solving. Reps can demonstrate that they care in two ways- in their voice and in their responses.

First and foremost, the tone of the rep’s voice needs to be friendly and sincere. A rep who sounds rushed certainly will not convey the right attitude. While everyone has different tonal qualities, people who smile automatically warm up their voice. It is a good idea for business professionals to keep a mirror near their phone to remind them of the importance of smiling.

In addition to smiling, the tone of any voice can be improved by pausing and breathing. With proper breath and frequent pauses, an individual’s voice can become richer and more enjoyable. It is remarkable what a pause for a second or two between phrases or statements can do to convey “I care.” To make an immediate, positive impression, reps should pause at least three times in their typical greeting. Those pauses convey that the rep has put aside his or her work and is now focused totally on the customer. The customer concludes the call is not an intrusion but rather a welcomed occurrence.

Without pausing, it is impossible to convey any emotion in a voice. In fact, the voice may even sound flat or bored. A voice without emotion is a monotone. Customers have a knee-jerk response to a monotone voice. Thus, it is important to pay attention to how one’s voice sounds. When possible, reps should tape their voice and listen to it from the customer’s perspective.

Obviously, if a customer is going to feel the service received was special and remarkably better than the norm, the customer expects more than a friendly voice. The customer expects that his question or problem will be handled well. If the rep uses positive words and phrases instead of negative or tentative statements, the customer will be pleased. They rejoice when they hear statements such as, “Sure, I can help you with that.” They do not want to hear what the rep can’t do. Having to say “no” is a reality, but when it is couched with something positive, it is likely to be accepted. Every customer knows that a company can’t give away the business.

Customers also want to believe that the rep is confident. When a rep says “I think” or “I’m not real sure,” the customer questions whether he should be talking to someone more informed. Again, listening to how one responds to a customer is essential to any rep.

Finally, customers appreciate the rep’s acknowledgement of their dilemma. When customers hear the rep take responsibility on behalf of the company for any inconvenience or loss of business an issue caused, they give the company high marks for service. The more specific the acknowledgement statement the more likely the customer will be impressed. Customers will not be satisfied with “ok” or with an acknowledgement followed by “but.”

Excellence in service depends heavily on how the customer “feels.” If a company promotes service with feeling, it is likely they will achieve the results they desire.

*Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their face-to-face and over the phone communication skills. When you have to have impact phone (847) 438-4480 or visit our web site, www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com.*