

Things Never to Say to a Customer

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The health and well being of your organization depends on the service your customers receive. If they receive stellar service, then customers smile and stay loyal. If they are not impressed, they begin to look elsewhere. There are some phrases inside sales, technical support and customer service representatives use inadvertently that may sabotage building rapport. These should be avoided at all costs.

1. No, we can't do that.

Customers hate being told “NO.” It gets their dander up. If you have to tell them “no,” remember to add the phrase, “But what we can do is.”

2. That's not covered by your policy/warranty.

When customers think a policy or warranty includes certain items, it can really disappoint them. First apologize for the confusion. Then, be gentle when educating them on any terms or conditions. Be sure to tell them what to do when the renewal comes up or what to ask for the next time they make a purchase.

3. Don't take it out on me.

When a customer is really angry and has a raised voice, it is very easy for the inside sales or customer support rep to defend himself by saying, “Don't take it out on me.” Usually, this statement escalates anger and almost never calms the caller down. A better way is to empathize with the customer.

4. May I put you on hold?

In today's hectic world, callers want a quick resolution to their issue. They do not want to be transferred, and they do not want to repeat their story. Their expectation is that you will have the answers to their questions and know the product line. If you do have a legitimate reason for placing a caller on line, be sure to tell the customer why this is necessary and that you will have already updated the next support person on the issue.

5. That is not our fault.

Customers are quick to blame. But it is always a mistake to take the person's attack personally and begin to defend one's self. A better idea is to apologize and then address why this issue was out of your control. Customers typically understand that some issues, such as deliveries or pick-up schedules are not always manageable.

6. You're wrong.

Customers can misinterpret or feel they know more than the support person about a product's capabilities. While it is important to educate the customer, we need to do it delicately. “I can see why you would think that. Other people have also done the same thing.”

7. That will cost extra.

Customers are looking for bargains and “freebies.” Waving delivery charges or extending a warranty goes a long way with making a customer feel special. Obviously, companies can't give away product, but when it is doable, consider the long range advantages. When extra charges are absolutely essential, make sure the customer sees how the additional investment is of benefit.

Customers have choices today. Their loyalty is critical in a troubling economy. Be sure you minimize the risk by avoiding the seven deadly statements.

Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their presentation and telephone communication skills. It is not what you know but how you communicate it that makes a difference. When you have to have impact, phone (847) 438-4480 or visit our web site, www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com.