

# Extraordinary Service in Extraordinary Times—What It Takes

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When a sales or service center is deemed or reported world class by such organizations as JD Powers or The Association of Support Professionals, the sales or service representatives themselves attribute it three key factors. They are:

- Knowledgeable
- Committed
- Empowered

## **Knowledgeable:**

World Class Sales and Service Representatives know:

- How to fix problems, not just the easy ones.
- How to access answers on their own CRM system.
- Who has the answer for what question.
- What the issues are with new versions or product lines.

These individuals are continuous learners. They rarely escalate calls because they know how to resolve them. They make it a point to stay up-to-date on the latest protocols or revisions. Some even comment that they pay attention to what bloggers are writing about their product or equipment because savvy technical bloggers often know more or have already solved problems that customers are bringing up.

Lala Mamedov, director of support and services for Intuit, says “The Intuit reps understand what the customer needs from them at each step of their interaction with our product.” They take pride in knowing their business inside and out. They are the consummate professionals.

## **Committed:**

Sales and service representatives in world class centers keep their focus on their customers. They are passionate in their desire to be of assistance. When customers call with problems, rather than requesting invoice numbers, sales and service representatives begin the conversation by thanking them for calling attention to the issue. Throughout the dialogue, they listen carefully, often checking for understanding. They recognize that the unspoken message is as important as the spoken. Before any solution is proposed, they elicit feedback and involve the customer to insure that expectations have been met. As a result, customers feel valued.

Phone representatives say that when you spend time to really understand the customer’s world, his/ her work environment, their customer’s customers, you can’t help but feel sympathetic to their situation. Your behavior follows suit.

## **Empowered:**

Lastly, sales and service reps state they are empowered to resolve a customer issue without going through a lot of hoops. If they feel they need to erase a bad memory of a faulty product, they will overnight a replacement part. At Simpson Strong Tie, it is not uncommon for sales people to drive a product to a store or construction site, recognizing that any delay is costly at a construction site.

Customers notice when sales and service representatives have provided extraordinary service. As a result, they remain loyal and refer others that they know. Customers often describe their interactions with these representatives as exceptional. They comment that company representatives were empathetic and willing to go above and beyond. Often, they write they felt “wowed.”

Many companies offer the same products, but those that provide phenomenal service increase

market shares, even in a down economy. They are the company that others benchmark themselves against.

*Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their face-to-face and over the phone 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](http://www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com).*