

The ABCs of Customer Service **©copyright by Robert (Bob) W. Lucas**

In a world of choice, where customers have numerous options and selections for products and services, quality of service is often the key in determining where they will spend their money. Whether you are a business owner, manager or front line employee you have a crucial role in the success of your organizations. By following the ABCs of customer service, you can enhance the customer's experience when dealing with your company and potential better secure their loyalty.

Always remember that your customer is the **ONLY** reason you have a job or business.

Become familiar with what your customers need and want and go out of your way to give it to them.

Continue enhancing your skills and product knowledge in order to better assist customers.

Determine the best and most efficient ways to deliver service, and then use them regularly.

Encourage customer to give service improvement feedback so that you can address any concerns that they have.

Fix service breakdowns immediately.

Give 100% effort in all interactions with customers.

Handle each customer situation as unique rather than applying a "cookie cutter" approach of treating all customers as being alike.

Implement a continual quality improvement system to enhance your service delivery efforts.

Join forces with other employees and peers by sharing best service practices in order to learn techniques for better serving your customers.

Keeep personal opinions and biases out of the service environment.

Let customers know that you value them every chance you get.

Make sure you have all the information and tools needed to serve customers before you come into contact with them.

Nurture each customer and treat them with the respect that they deserve in order to build stronger relationships.

Open dialogue with customers when service breaks down so that you can determine the true cause.

Practise excellent service strategies continually.

Quit focusing on “we can’t do...” and start looking for ways that “we can do...”

Remember Tony Alessandra and Michael O’Connor’s Platinum Rule of doing unto customers as *they* would want to be treated.

Start each business day by setting a goal to make things better for your customers.

Take time for yourself throughout the day to clear your head, reduce stress and keep a positive mental outlook.

Use mistakes as a basis for improving future service performance. Learn from them, but do not repeat them.

Verify from the customer that you have met their service expectations before concluding an interaction.

Work with supervisors and managers to develop strategies that help guarantee service success.

Xteme service initiative results in satisfied customers.

You often control the outcome of any service experience. Prepare for them and make them successful.

Zero in on ways to make yourself and the organization the best you can be!

Bob Lucas B.S., M.A., M.A, CPLP is an internationally-known author and learning and performance professional. He has written and contributed to thirty-one books and compilations. He regularly conducts creative training, train-the-trainer, customer service, interpersonal communication and management and supervisory skills workshops. Bob can be reached at blucas@robertwlucas.com or through his website www.robertwlucas.com. Follow his blog at www.robertwlucas.com/wordpress and like him at www.facebook.com/robertwlucasenterprises