

If the Customer Feels it was Poor Service, then it WAS Poor Service

If you are in a customer service field—aren't we all—how attuned are you to your customer service processes? Are they meeting customer needs and expectations, or are they outmoded and in need of a tune-up, or not consistently applied organization-wide?



Let me tell you a story. We needed an essential document quickly. We filled out the forms and took them in. The first person we saw told us we had to do one more thing. We did it and came back. The person we saw this time told us we didn't need that, we had to do something else instead. So, we did it and came back, a bit annoyed. The person we saw this time wondered what the heck we were doing and told us to do something else again! So, we did it and came back, rather upset now. Finally, they had what they wanted. Finally!

What's up with that? Four visits—during my work hours, I might add—to get a simple document. All of these people worked in the same department on the same job. They should **all have known what needed to be done and how and why**, and yet we got four different sets of instructions. If we had the option of going somewhere else next time, you can bet we would, but this organization is the only official means of getting that document. Which makes it even more **imperative that all employees are professional, informed, helpful, and know what they are talking about**, that they're all rowing in the same direction.

What's it like in your organization? Do you know how your customers feel about your service? Do you know if service is being consistently delivered by all employees regardless of length of employment or position within the organization? Is information readily available to all employees so they can be as helpful as possible to the customer?

It's important to review regularly to ensure your customers never feel they've been poorly served. The greatest customer retention strategy is excellent customer service.

—Communications Tips—

Communicate by Personality

Dominant and Interactive personalities (as defined by the DISC assessment) each have specific needs and preferences for communication. What works best with Compliant?

- ◆ Prepare your case in advance, providing straight pros and cons of ideas
- ◆ Support ideas with accurate data
- ◆ Provide reassurances that no surprises will occur
- ◆ Provide a step-by-step approach to a goal
- ◆ If agreeing, be specific; if disagreeing, disagree with the facts, not the person; strongly reject “poor-me” comments
- ◆ Provide a friendly, non-confrontational environment

Quote

“If the customer feels like it was poor service, then it was poor service.”—*Mark Perrault*

“If you could get all the people in an organization rowing in the same direction, you could dominate any industry, in any market, against any competition, at any time.”—*The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*

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Recommended Reading

“**The Five Dysfunctions of a Team**” by Patrick Lencioni

There once was a highly dysfunctional management team and a failing company. To save the company, the Board brought in a new CEO. She had a hard road ahead, but she set to with determination and a plan of action to bring this team together and turn the company around. In the end, the company was a bastion of trust and united vision. And they lived happily ever after.

At first glance, it may seem this is what “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team” is—one of those business books that's mostly fable and story-telling, without much in the way of content or applicable information. Don't be fooled. It's so much more than that. It contains a highly developed five-component model to identify and overcome the five key dysfunctions that can break a team and an organization. By seeing these steps in the context of a real-world scenario, it brings the truth and value of the model home to the reader.

This book is highly recommended if you lead a team. It's a quick read with clear, concise, practical guidance to improve your team.

