

How to Deliver Customer Service Like an Athlete

Peter Drucker once stated that the purpose of every American business is one thing – creating customers. Research by the American Management Association shows that your average **happy** customer will tell three people about her experience with you. Research shows that out of 25 dissatisfied customers: one customer complains, 24 are dissatisfied but do not complain, and 6 of 24 non-complainers have serious issues with the organization. More importantly for selling professionals, customer service is included in 40 percent of every client interaction.

I remember the greatest words I ever heard when seeking to repair my computer after a 3 hour conversation, the representative getting tired stated, “You are a customer, and I will get this repaired for you no matter what.” When you supply grand slam customer service, your business costs are lower and your success greater.

Great Service Requires Great Solutions

After doing some research, I have discovered that the key to grand slam customer service is practicing it. Just like an athlete practices for an event, or the musician practices for a concert, the service provider must practice. Here is my seven-step protocol to enhance your service delivery.

PRACTICE TM Customer Service

- Positive First Impression – you must be genuinely interested in assisting others. Passion and empathy separates the athletes from the spectators.
- Rapport – 98% of every interaction involves trust and respect. Ensure you establish rapport with every client.
- Assess the Issue – Asking provocative questions is the only way to get to the heart and soul of every issue.
- Communication – The best communicators listen first, and speak second. Athletes know when to ask and when to tell.
- Time Management – Customer Service representatives are trained to expeditiously respond to issues but can you do this qualitatively too?
- Interest – Gaining interest requires an understanding of the multigenerational and cultural issues that assist in building rapport and becoming genuinely interested in others, a famous Dale Carnegie and biblical trait.
- Closing on a Positive Note – Always close your calls on the positive side, seeking to address any open issues and questions.

- ❑ Evaluation – Customer service requires conviction and passion to aid others. Once you complete your calls ensure you also evaluate them to carry good customer service from call to call.

No clients are the same. You must adjust this process to fit your business and strategy. Ensure success by evaluating your clients and your staff so as to closely align the staff with compelling client needs. Document your successes and discuss these with your team, so that your game plans adjust as new needs arise.

Drew Stevens PhD is known as the Sales Strategist. Drew assists organizations to dramatically accelerate business growth. He is the author of seven books including Split Second Selling, Split Second Customer Service, and Little Book of Hope and is frequently called on the media for his expertise. Drew was recently nominated as one of 50 Top Sales Experts. Download a free copy of Drew's White Paper on "Selling Effectiveness" or "Business Building" e-book at <http://www.drewstevensconsulting.com/freestuff>.

Copyright 2008 Drew Stevens PhD. All rights reserved. While you may copy this publication, its content may not be modified. You may, and are encouraged to, share the publication with others who may benefit from receiving it.