

5 CUSTOMER SERVICE QUESTIONS THAT COULD TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS

1. **Our Products and Services: Are they what Customers really *need* and are they delivered the way Customers *want* them?** It is not our own perception of the quality of our products or services that matters but the perception of customers that will cause them to have repeated businesses with us. The truth is that we may never know until we put in place a Voice of Customer (VOC) or feedback system to identify the true needs and requirements of our customers. This we can get through several touch points where the company interacts with customers such as customer product enquiry, actual sales transaction, relationship marketing, and customer service contacts. Embassy Suites interviews 5 customers a day in each of their apartments to continuously ascertain if they are truly meeting their customers' needs. So, when last did you assess your services based on customers' perception?
2. **All our policies and processes, do we consider the Customer first before instituting any of them?** The business model that will guarantee patronage, goodwill and loyalty from our customers is the Inverted Pyramidal structure where everyone in an organization from senior management to the lowest staff believes and demonstrates that THE CUSTOMER IS KING! Senior management must be role models and cannot afford to pay lip service to this. To ensure this, we should put ourselves in our customers' shoes (*being empathetic*) when introducing any policy or designing a process. Customers must perceive them as value adding, convenient, buttressing the fact that we are treating them as Kings!
3. **What is the Major Complaint our Customers have about us and how do we Eliminate or reduce this complaint?** We must be grateful to Customers that voice their complaints because most dissatisfied customers will not express their grievances but rather move to your next competitor! Line managers and heads of departments must work closely with their front line officers to identify the major complaints of their customers. Ability to resolve this complaint(s) on time implies that we are a responsive organization and we value their views on our products or services. If any organization wants to create a memorable impression that will endear its customers and increase loyalty, let them deplore resources to address this issue. Have you identified what your customers' number 1 complaint is?
4. **What product or service do we deliver very well now and how can we improve on them?** In Jim Collins Book: Good to Great, this is called the *hedgehog concept*. An organization must be able to assess their capabilities based on their peculiarities and

environment to identify which of their services or products they are better at than the competition. An organization cannot possibly be great in all products or services. They have got to focus on the profitable ones out of those they do well and put processes in place to improve on them. They will be *strategically positioned*, creating a unique and valuable proposition with overt benefit.

5. **How do we treat our staff?** Senior management must place great importance to this because the asset of any organization is her people! Treat your employees the way you want your customers to be treated because poorly treated employees treat the Customer just as poorly! In particularly the front line officers that relate on a daily basis with your customers, though they are mostly the ones lowly paid, still they have normal intelligence. With the right training and environment, they will deliver great service! Do we listen to our staff? Our policies, are they staff friendly? Is there a system in place we use to get feedback from our staff? Do we value them and accord them the respect and dignity they deserve? Most organizations in this part of the world put more importance on machineries than their staff. This is the reason why some have insurance policies on their machineries and equipments but none on the staff using them! Treating every staff well is the main factor accounting for the success of **WAL MART** the greatest company in the world by revenue founded by Sam Walton. I end this article with his quote:

“The folks on the front lines - the ones who actually talk to the customer - are the only ones who really know what’s going on out there.”

- Abiodun Adetula



www.acceltag.com