



Information Overload

Issue 9, May 2003

Welcome

In this month's issue we will be looking at the issue of customer service, and in particular our attitudes about providing this very basic of services. We all know when we have been subjected to both good and bad customer service, but what does customer service actually mean? And how can we ensure that the organisations that we work for do not foster a culture of poor customer service. What simple things can everyone do to ensure that doing business does not disadvantage anyone.

In this Issue we will be looking at:

- Customer Service
- Attitude
- Did you know?
- ARRM Update
- A Thought to Ponder

Customer Service:

The phrase Customer Service, tends to be that catchall notion that says you should treat everyone in the same manner that you expect to be treated, or face the consequences.

We all tend to know poor customer service when we are on the receiving end, but don't think twice about inflicting poor customer service on our own customers.

So who are our customers, and what is customer service?

Believe it or not, your customer base is anyone and everyone who has cause to use your service. They can be both external to the organisation or department or those who work within your organisation or department. It's a sad fact of life, but most "service" organisations simply fail to recognise their biggest customer base are those people who they work with on a daily basis.

Failure to treat your internal customers well, gives the impression that you simply do not care. If you don't care about your internal customers why should your treatment of your "external" customers be any better?

Lets face it, it all comes down to a question of attitude.

Attitude:

We all try and maintain a professional image when we go to work. But it is more than just wearing the right clothes, making sure that you had a shower this morning, your hair is washed and brushed and your teeth are clean. It's all about the "attitude" that you wear when you go to work that makes the biggest difference to your professional image.

Let us explain. If the organisation that you work for fosters a culture of under performance, then you are likely to have an attitude that says:

- It's ok to arrive late for work every morning and leave a few minutes early at night in order to "miss the traffic"
- Making people wait whilst you finish a telephone conversation,
- Ignoring your customers whilst you speak to your colleagues;
- Make too many personal phone calls during work time;
- Spend the first half an hour every day answering e-mails that do not need to be answered, let alone read,
- Chew gum,
- Fail to "deliver" when you say that you are going to;
- Pointing to something and telling them "It's over there" rather than taking your customers to the exact location;

- Having an attitude that says I can't be bothered to smile; or
- I can't be bothered to be polite;
- You are interrupting what I am trying to do;
- You are not important so go away until it's convenient for me to help you;
- Failing to follow instructions;
- She'll be right.

We're sure that you can add a few more to this list, but these and others like them are prevalent in today's work environment. How many times have you been subjected to this kind of attitude? How many times have you subjected your "customers" to this kind of service? Isn't it time that you changed your attitude to the way that you work?

Whilst we don't purposely set out to have a poor attitude that says I really don't care, and it doesn't matter if "that" doesn't get done until tomorrow. Procrastination, under performance and poor attitude can have a major impact on the customer service that we provide, our "attitude" allows us to do exactly that.

Did you know that 80% of our work produces just 20% of the results? Well it's true. Why? Because we allow ourselves to be sidetracked into doing those things that are not important. As Jim Rohn says "It's easy to be faked out by being busy, the question is what are you busy doing?"

If you were your own customer, would you be happy with the service you received from yourself today? If you were honest with yourself, the answer would be probably not. If you fail to treat yourself with the professionalism that you deserve, if you have failed to impress yourself in any way today because of the poor attitude that you have towards yourself, how are your other customers likely to feel? I would hazard a guess that they would feel cheated, disgruntled and will probably vote with their feet.

Unfortunately, most of us cannot vote with our feet, especially when we are dealing with ourselves. Well the good news is, it's all about our attitude. And we can change our attitudes can't we?

So next time you are faced with making a decision about whether or not to serve your customers, ask yourself this one simple question – would I be happy with the service that I am about to give. If the answer is no, then you must change your attitude.

Did you know?

- It can cost up to five times as much to attract a new customer than to retain an existing one;
- The average business never hears from 96% of its unhappy customers;
- For every complaint that is received, the average company in fact has 26 customers with problems, 6 of which are serious in nature;
- Of customers who register a complaint, between 54 and 70% will do business again with the organisation if their complaint is resolved. That figure goes up to an impressive 95% if the customer feels that the complaint was resolved quickly;
- The average customer who has a problem with an organisation will tell 9 or 10 people about it. 13% of the people who have a problem with an organisation recount the incident to more than 20 people;
- Customers who have complained to an organisation and had their complaints satisfactorily resolved tell an average of 5 people about the treatment that they receive.

John T Self, Customer Service Facts and Figures
<http://www.sideroad.com/cs/column7.html>

ARRM Update:

Did you know that persons in charge of a school of anatomy must keep a register of bodies received by the school?

© IEA 2003. All rights reserved. You are free to use material from the Information Overload newsletter in whole or in part, as long as you include acknowledgement of source.

The register must include the following details for each body received; the date and time the body was received; the person from whom the body was received; the name, age, sex and last address of the person whose body was received; the date and place of

death of the person whose body was received; the date and time the body was removed from the school for disposal; and the date, place and method of disposal of the body.

A Thought to Ponder:

“The Superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions.”

Confucius

Please feel free to pass on this newsletter to your colleagues, to subscribe send an e-mail to training@iea.com.au with “subscribe newsletter” in the subject line. If you would prefer not to receive this newsletter, please send an email to training@iea.com.au with “unsubscribe newsletter” in the subject line.

© IEA 2003. All rights reserved. You are free to use material from the Information Overload newsletter in whole or in part, as long as you include acknowledgement of source.

Information Enterprises Australia Pty Ltd
Unit 4, Upper Level, 201 High Street, FREMANTLE WA 6160
Tel: 08 9335 2533 Fax: 08 9335 2544 e-mail: training@iea.com.au