

the
first mile



The Essential ART of Customer Service

Participant Guide



www.edgetrainingsystems.com

(800) 476-1405

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Edge Training Systems, Inc.
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Participant Documents:

- Who are your customers
- Whose job is customer service?
- Paying attention
- Showing respect
- Giving time
- Action plans

For Preview Purposes Only

Who are your customers?

Consider the following statements and decide whether you agree or disagree.
Be prepared to discuss the reasons for your answer.

1. A person is only my customer if they buy something from me or from my organization. (Agree/Disagree)
2. Any person who expects to receive products, services, information, advice, or support from me or from my organization should be considered a customer. (Agree/Disagree)
3. People inside my own organization should be considered my customer if they receive my work product or depend on the work I do in order to do their job. (Agree/Disagree)

Some organizations have different names for some customers. They might be called subscribers, members, passengers, clients, patients, end-users, patrons, viewers or guests. Does your organization have any special names for customers? If so, write them here:

Whose job is customer service?

Imagine for a moment that you were the owner of a popular restaurant. Place a check mark beside each of the employees below whose job has a direct impact on the level of customer satisfaction your restaurant patrons would receive:

- The employee who answers the phone, takes reservations and gives directions to the restaurant.
- The employee who sweeps the outside sidewalk and removes cigarette butts from the planters beside the restaurant entrance.
- The host or hostess who greets the customers entering the restaurant.
- The wait person who takes the orders and serves the food.
- The dishwasher who cleans the glasses, plates, and silverware.
- The maintenance person who changes burned out light bulbs in the hallway outside the restrooms.
- The cook who prepares the food in the kitchen.
- The bus person who clears and cleans the tables.

Now think about the people who work in your own organization. How does the job each person performs impact the level of customer satisfaction received by your organization's customers?

Paying attention

Customers want to know they have your full attention. Think about your workplace and answer the following questions:

What are some of the things customers might see you do that would make them think you are not giving them your full attention?

What are some of the things you could do to demonstrate to each of your customers that you are paying attention to them?

Are there any things in your workplace that might be distracting your attention away from your customers? How can you deal with those distractions?

Showing respect

Customers expect to be treated with respect, both for themselves individually, and for the value they bring as a customer to your organization. Think about your workplace and answer the following questions:

What might customers see you do or hear you say that would make them think you are not showing them respect?

What are some of the things you could do or say to show courtesy and respect to each of your customers as people?

What are some of the things you could do or say to show your customers that you respect their value to your organization?

Giving time

Customers want to be given enough of your time to meet their needs and they want you to understand that their time is important as well. Think about your workplace and answer the following questions:

What might customers see you do or hear you say that would make them think you are not taking enough time with them to understand and meet their needs?

What are some of the things customers may expect of you that take more of your time?

How can you handle a situation where a customer requires more of your time than you have available to give at that moment?

Action plans

Use this page to create your own personalized action plan for developing your customer service skills. Select one to three areas to work on and make your objectives as specific as possible.

Area to work on:	Objective:	
Actions I will take:	People/Resources to help me:	Target Dates:

Area to work on:	Objective:	
Actions I will take:	People/Resources to help me:	Target Dates:

Area to work on:	Objective:	
Actions I will take:	People/Resources to help me:	Target Dates:

Notes:

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