

The Most Powerful Customer Service Tool

Exercise

This activity promotes group discussion to tap the creative professionalism of each individual. It awakens the realization that there should not be any excuses given for not providing excellent service.

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Conclude that there should not be any excuses for not delivering excellent customer service.
2. Determine that creativity is a critical tool to be used in responding professionally to customers.
3. Evaluate actual situations in which excuses have been given and determine what should have happened.

Method of Instruction

Place participants in teams of four to six individuals. Have them complete the “Excuses” handout. Select a team leader. Explain that they are to share and list three to five common excuses they have either heard other customer service representatives give or they themselves have used for offering indifferent or poor customer service.

Examples:

- My computer is down.
- I’m having a Monday.
- That’s not my customer!
- I just took the last call!

Tell participants,

“Comments such as these bring service to a screeching halt. Now, please be aware that the most important part of this activity is not the excuses you come up with. The most critical part is the second column titled, “What should have happened?” What should have happened instead of that excuse even being said? What should have happened to give the customer the service they expect, want, and need? What should have happened to prevent that excuse from ever being said in the first place?

“This is where your creativity as professionals really needs to be utilized. For example, when someone realizes that their computer is down, does that mean that business

comes to a halt and we simply lose that customer? Or, can we creatively come up with other solutions and actions to, at the very best, keep the door open for future business?”

Have the team leaders take charge and lead their groups in a discussion using the handout as a guideline. Emphasize again that the most critical part of the assignment is the second column—what should have happened?

Allow 10 minutes for discussion. Then, have each group share one item at a time—the excuse and what should have happened.

This is a great activity to get the creative juices flowing and the realization that there should not be any excuses for not delivering excellent customer service.

Excuses!

List five common excuses you hear customer service representatives give for offering indifferent or poor customer service.

Excuse #1

What should have happened?

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Excuse #2

What should have happened?

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Excuse #3

What should have happened?

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Excuse #4

What should have happened?

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