

Bright IDEAS: Build Exceptional Customer Interactions



Although it's not all doom and gloom, the economic climate continues to be a concern for many. We all have to work harder, and know that the worst thing we can do is nothing. It's a good time to take stock of your customer interactions, eliminate wasteful work and build customer value.

Customers today are demanding more in their expectations of how they are serviced and the levels of service they receive. Every customer interaction is an opportunity to build or destroy customer value. The challenge of course is that customer needs are always changing, so organizations must respond in real-time to deliver an experience that is ideal for *that* customer, at *that* time and under *those* circumstances.

I thought it would be good to note a couple of prime examples of simple processes that turned into customer interaction nightmares.

My satellite dish receiver did not seem to be working properly. Upon calling customer service, I received instructions on how to reset the receiver, which I followed while juggling my phone. I was then informed that the wait for a rep would be 30 minutes. I patiently waited and was, of course, disconnected. I called back, listened to the same instructions again, waited and was finally connected to a rep who led me through the different set of resetting instructions, which worked. A week later, I had to go through the whole process again when the receiver again quit working. There was no way to circumvent the system based on what I had already done.

Finally, an appointment to replace the unit was set up. Two missed appointments and eight phone calls later (listening to the same reset instructions each time) my unit was finally replaced. Why was the process so long and what's the cost to the satellite dish company to do business this way? I can think of a number of solutions!

And, here's another pet peeve. Ever call the local phone company about a billing or service issue, enter your phone number into the system and then have the service rep ask you for your phone number when they answer your call? Certainly, they must have caller ID! This happens with many credit card companies as well. Might be nice to have the account number saved so it doesn't have to be repeated, and have your

Memorable Quote:

"Jackie is a top notch process re-engineer with creative and innovative ideas that can save you money and improve operating results and customer satisfaction."

*Tim Dressman
Executive Director
St. Leonard Retirement
Community*

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customers personally greeted when their call is answered.

Different reasons, different experiences but all examples of what happens when processes lack customer interaction focus, are riddled with wasteful work, and designed to destroy customer value. Take a hard look at your customer interactions today!

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