CUSTOMER SERVICE TIPS

Email Etiquette - Part 2

One way to serve our external customers is to encourage communication via email. When done correctly, email can support customer satisfaction efforts. When communicating by email with our students, their parents, and our other customers it is useful to follow these guidelines:

1. **Respond to email inquiries quickly**, preferably on the same day. **A fast response conveys competence and signals to our customers that someone is listening.** Even if you cannot yet answer the question or resolve the situation, send an email stating that you are working on the issue and indicate when you will get back to the customer.

2. **Greet your recipient.** It is proper to use the formal salutation, “Dear (recipient’s name)”, or the more informal, “Hello (recipient’s name)”. A pleasant greeting sets the tone for a pleasant interaction.

3. **Avoid emailing confidential or sensitive information.** Nothing on the Internet is absolutely private, so never include credit card numbers or other private information in an email. Instead, arrange to speak with the customer over the telephone or in person to exchange sensitive information.

4. **Adhere to good writing principles.** Use proper grammar and spelling. Avoid emoticons (like smiley faces) and humorous abbreviations (like LOL) in business emails. Keep paragraphs short for easy reading. Number questions or other items to promote comprehension.

5. **Address customers’ concerns point by point.** Where appropriate, direct the customer to URLs within your Web site that offer the information they seek. This encourages self-help and empowers customers with more detailed knowledge.

6. **Be clear about the next step.** Tell your recipient what they need to do in order to proceed, and/or what you will do next. Include a timeline or deadline.

7. **Thank the customer for corresponding with you.** Let the recipient know how to contact you should they have further questions or require additional assistance.

Sources: Yale University Netiquette Guide, Chris Pirillo of Writers Write, and NetManners.com.

Today’s Customer Service Quote

*Treat every customer as if they sign your paycheck, because they do.*

Anonymous
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