Providing a Great Service

Standards & Customer Service · https://milo.masseyservices.com/docs/providing-a-great-service/

by Bob Belmont

We're all in the service business, and hopefully, we are providing great service so our customers will rave about us and our companies will grow.

Great service starts with a ***great image***. Do you bring along a clean uniform just in case the one you're wearing might get dirty? A great image means a clean and tidy vehicle. Is your vehicle cleaned out nightly so that if a customer just happens to look into the cab, everything will be clean and organized? Is your vehicle free of dents, scratches, and cleaner looking than your competition's vehicles? Are your tools and equipment clean? If your competitor has a sharper looking setup he may already be drawing the attention of your customers. Is your paperwork clean and organized? Is your portfolio holder clean and attractive? I'll never forget a plumber I hired about 6 years ago. Upon completion of his job he brought in his dented aluminum invoice holder. The invoices and the holder were so dirty that one might guess the dirt was from working on numerous toilets, septic tanks and rusty water heaters. Nevertheless, I was pretty turned off. A great image is normally just a given in companies that already give great service.

The next key to *great* customer service is to always provide ***a quick response***. When a customer calls, he or she would enjoy an immediate response, if not a return call within a very short wait. When you wait until the end of the day, you now qualify as providing mediocre service at best. Great service means scheduling convenient appointment times for your customers in a timely manner. *Great service* means showing up on time every time. When you show up on time, do so with a smile! Be polite and ask about any concerns requiring special attention. Anticipate the situation based upon the customer's history, seasonal changes, pest outbreaks in the neighborhood, weather situation, and conditions at the account. Explain what you're going to do and why you're going to do it.

A third key to great customer service is to exceed customer expectations. Always listen and show that you care about their concerns. After listening to their concerns, provide a thorough inspection of all of the areas they discussed including other areas you feel may also be conducive to pest

development in the future. Provide a professionally prepared, written report with specific recommendations. Interior and exterior inspections should indicate all potential conditions, avenues, and sources conducive to pest development, with recommendations for preventing future infestations. If pests are present, deal with them immediately and solve the problem the first time. Understand that a polite smiling technician who only comes out for regular service and looks over the property, carefully baits garden areas, writes up an invoice, places it in the pre-arranged spot, and leaves, barely meets and definitely does not exceed customer expectations.

Great customer service means saying and doing what's right. If you're not sure exactly what's happening, don't guess! If you're not sure what the particular pest problem is, don't fake it! Worse yet, if the customer calls them sugar ants, don't you call them sugar ants! If you're sure they're ants, but not which kind, then call them ants and take
some back to try and determine the correct type. Use a clean, professional vial rather than a cheap pill bottle. Always tell the truth. If you don't know, find out the right answer and follow-up! As soon as you learn anything that helps to educate the customer, don't hesitate, just call to leave the message.

Great customer service is open and frequent two-way communication. Discuss all of the pests and the conducive conditions you find during your inspection. Explain what you have done (and why you have done it) to prevent future problems. Explain exactly what and how much the customer can expect to see and what corrective measures, if any, the customer needs to take. If recommendations are in writing, make sure that your paperwork is neat, complete, and accurate. Hand them appropriate information about pests and their prevention. Have available handouts that discuss seasonal problems. Since communication should be frequent, your portfolio of information about pests and their prevention should help in filling your communication needs. Thank your customer for their business and always leave the residence in as good or better condition than when you arrived. Establish realistic and attainable standards and expectations. Your customers should clearly understand the need to follow your recommendations. They should trust that your professional training and that of the experts who back you up would be of the kind that will keep them in an ongoing pest-free situation. This trust can only be gained through open, frequent two-way communication.

Finally, great service comes when you take ownership. It's OUR problem, not the customer's problem! You need to take whatever time necessary to prevent pests, and if you can't handle something, one of the other experts at your company can. If the customer sees any pests, instruct them to save them

for you. Pro-active follow-up is the key component in solidifying a great service relationship. Finally, thanking everyone involved goes a long way to ensure future trust. If, at your recommendation, a client pruned his trees because ants were trailing onto eaves and then down into his kitchen, he has just followed instructions and has helped to eliminate ants indoors. When you give thanks for following your recommendations, the customer generally feels like he was part of the solution, and then future recommendations will probably be followed. So remember to always thank the customer every time your recommendations are followed.

How close are you to providing great service? A great service organization starts and ends with great people. It's hiring great people and allowing those people the freedom to get the job done right. Great service is more than just good intentions. It's quality people and constant training. It's knowing what to do, how to do it, and getting it done.

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