

How to Identify With a Customer in Your Business Industry

No matter what industry you work in, this can be applied to your line of work, especially in the hospitality industry. Nearly half the jobs held at any given time are service positions. It's the way our economy works. The vital function of helping customers get the service and goods they want is pretty much everything that keeps the wheels going round. Amongst the special skills this position takes is being good with people. "Good with people"; we hear that phrase so much, but what does it really mean? It means understanding people on the same level that a rocket scientist understands a rocket. A service and sales person is, in short, an expert in interfacing with the public. Your customer is typically looking for an efficient transaction. Especially in today's society, they are probably pressed for time and have a million other things on their minds. There are harried parents running errands, stressed business persons who don't have a lot of time, and all manner of people with a hundred other concerns besides the immediate matter at hand. An old saying that you should keep with you at all times: "Be kind; everybody's fighting a battle, even if you can't see it." It is just a fact of life that you will encounter customers who are rude, obnoxious, offensive, or even... just between us professionals... just plain disturbed. But you are forced to cope with them within the space of your brief transaction, hopefully to make the best of it. But, without many exceptions, you will discover that if you were to see below the surface of some of your more difficult clients, that there is much more going on in their big picture than you can see. Every now and then, this happens: You get into a confrontation with somebody, maybe it gets pretty heated, and then something odd happens where you have to get to know each other a little better - and suddenly you make up and become friends! Now how in the world did that happen? What actually happened is, you're both good people, but you got off on the wrong foot, because you were strangers. Nothing magnifies this problem like the Internet. People get in outrageously heated fights on Internet forums all the time, taunting each other back and forth as if they were in kindergarten, and yet if you met each of the participants face to face and talked with them for five minutes, you'd usually conclude that neither of them were all that bad. But the nature of the computer screens out facial data, tone of voice, gestures, and all of the other subtle cues we use to understand each other. We have only the printed text, which is great for articles and books but not always good for casual conversation. Back in the "real world" where you deal with people face to face, many of the same effects apply. Some of your days in the customer service industry go by where your longest transaction is two minutes. Filtered through that short a period, a tiny misunderstanding can bloom into a full-scale fight - without either parties' intending it. You also have to take factors of position in life into account. People who aren't fluent in your language, the very old or very young, the disabled, or people with impaired cognitive functions may all be prime candidates for a communication accident. These are the times when you have to be extra courteous and patient. Give these people an extra minute to sort things out than you would a regular customer. For those "problem people" who seem determined to make trouble for you, the thing to focus on is to not react emotionally. People can not rage forever at a blank wall; their single-person, one-sided fight will expire in a matter of minutes, and as any customer service phone representative can tell you, their emotional state will dip and they will be remorseful for what they have done. The best thing to do is to protect both your own dignity and that of the hostile person as well. This isn't always easily done - some people seem so determined to make fools of themselves that you have to wonder if they get some kind of thrill out of humiliation. At the end of the day, forgive the difficult people, be happy for the much larger number of well-adjusted people, and forgive yourself, as well. We are all imperfect humans, even with as hard as we try to correct that.

About the Author

Freelance writer for over eleven years. Looking for a discount on your work uniforms and accessories? You might want to check out these sites. [Work Uniforms](#) [Aprons](#) [Uniform Scrubs](#)

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