

# Marketing Insights

Tips to boost your business

*“We learn about tomorrow by what is happening today as a result of what we did yesterday.”*

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## Back to the basics for customer service

by Cheryl Hanna

Is it really poor customer service or do we as consumers expect too much?

Do people really boycott businesses and restaurants the first time we feel we are treated poorly? When I first graduated from college, and of course I was poor, I purchased what to me was a very expensive white shirt with navy blue trim from Macy's. I didn't wear it for a while because it was way beyond my budget at the time, and so I waited for a special occasion to dress up and show it off. I followed the directions to launder the garment, and the navy blue piping bled onto the white part of my beautiful blouse. Unfortunately, Macy's customer service was rude and even argued with me telling me that the store never carried the brand, and I could not have purchased it from their store.

I didn't have the receipt, and never did return to Macy's for years after that and had no recourse at the time; there was no Twitter and no Facebook either. I'm not even sure if the late 1980's put much effort into employee training and the consequences for rudeness, lack of training, or chewing gum in my face as the customer service representative told me I was not receiving a new blouse or a refund.

I would like to think in the ensuing 25 years that customer service has evolved into an appreciation of the customer and her business. We surely write about it enough, but I am convinced we learn about tomorrow by what is happening today as a result of what we did yesterday. Customer service may have evolved into a much more sophisticated science, but still shouldn't my experience never have happened?

And so now in 2011 let us return to the core elements:

- 1 When I walk into a store, someone should greet me, smile, and engage me in a short conversation. I don't want to feel obligated to stand there and chat, but someone thanking me for my patronage would make me feel important.
- 2 I want an employee to ask me if I need help and point me in the right direction. I don't want anyone to hover over me unless I ask for that particular kind of assistance.
- 3 I want to speak with a kind person who I see is genuine and not someone who is doing their job just for the paycheck.
- 4 If there is a waiting line at checkout, I want the cashier to smile and be kind; never yell out "NEXT."
- 5 If I'm purchasing something heavy in weight, I appreciate someone helping me load it into my car.
- 6 I appreciated the bank manager opening the door for me the other day. (I broke my wrist two weeks ago.)
- 7 I want a customer service representative to believe me when I bring in faulty merchandise and act courteously, promptly, and ethically when I have a complaint.

I'm looking forward to a great year of customer service.

Article originally published on [Service Untitled](#) and written by Cheryl Hanna