

Keeping Customers

Adapted from Dartnell's Quick Sales Quiz Book, 1999.

The customer who's happy with you and the service you provide is likely to continue doing business with you. Rate yourself on these customer sales basics.

1. Do you periodically ask clients about their perceptions of your organization?
2. Do you show everyone respect, including the customer's staff? List the people you've connected with inside and outside the organization. On a scale of 1 to 5 rate your customer service.
3. Do you take the time to understand how your organization works?
4. Do you take the time to understand how the customer's organization/practice works?
5. Do you objectively look at complaints and deal with them right away? Is the problem communicated and does the client receive a response?
6. Do you consistently look for ways to improve your service and work to keep energy high, even with repeat visits?
7. Beyond the objectives of the sales call, can you readily define the additional value-added services you provide? What do they get from your visit that they don't get from a phone call or the Internet?
8. Do you follow up with customers to ensure that they're pleased with your referral suggestion or service? Is your language upbeat and positive?
9. Are you patient and flexible? Do you use different tools and information to appeal to the client's personality, budget, and business needs?
10. Do you tell customers that you value their relationship with you and your organization?

Hopefully, you can answer YES to all of these questions. If there are areas that deserve extra attention, post the quiz by your desk for the next week. Detail 3 to 4 ways you can enhance the area. Customer service slides, not because we don't know how, but because we don't take the time. For many organizations the focus is on new business. Work to keep the balance.