

# Building Good Customer Relationships

## Coaching Questions

### “How do you avoid having dissatisfied customers?”

#### Topic Introduction

Customers are far more likely to talk about bad customer service than good customer service. Every time you or your employee communicates or interacts with a customer, you run the risk of a bad encounter. Avoiding bad customer service is the first step of building a good relationship. At least it is avoiding a bad relationship.

#### Discussion Questions

- Have you ever walked out of a store without buying something 100% because of the bad service?
- What did the employee do or not do that caused you to leave?
- How could the situation have been avoided?
- How can you apply that learning to your own business?
- What are some ways that **you** can mitigate any negative interactions (billing, collection, service issues)?

#### Key Learning

The first step of a good business is ensuring that you have high customer satisfaction levels and satisfy customer expectations. Avoid buyer’s remorse! Do not oversell your to the point that the regret their purchase afterwards. Do always make sure that you are satisfying a real need or want.

### “How important is customer relationships for your business?”

#### Topic Introduction

Customers are often valued as the lifetime value. This can easily be 10 times the value of an individual sale. Think about a coffee shop that has the average sale of \$2. The number of sales they have to make per year to breakeven can be daunting. However, if you realize that the average customer is spending \$600/year in coffee, retaining their customers throughout the entire year makes their business sustainable.

#### Discussion Questions

- Where are you a repeat customer? Why do you shop there? What are reasons why you’d stop going there?
- Have you ever given someone a referral?
  - Why did you refer the business?
  - What was the tipping point (the point at which you went out of your way to give the referral)?
  - What would be the benefit of getting a referral?

#### Key Learning

The value of your customer far exceeds an individual transaction. Coming up with a strategy that link them to you, creates referrals, generates residual income, and improve customer service is almost always a good idea.

### “How do you form customer relationships today?”

#### Topic Introduction

Building relationships with your customers is the next step after delivering customer service levels. This is where you build loyalty and the increased chance of referrals.

#### Discussion Questions

- Have you ever bought something you weren’t 100% sure that you needed, but you liked the sales person?
- Why do you think people buy from people they like? Why do you buy from people you like?
- Who is the most likeable person at your company/business? If you are a solopreneur, who is the most likeable person that you know? Why do you think that is?
- How can you start building better relationships with your customers?
  - What do you think is the most likeable thing about yourself?
  - What are ways in the long run that you can further improve you likeability?
  - If you were going to start doing one thing to be more likeable, what would that be?

#### Key Learning

Building rapport with your customers is key. There are tangible ways to do this. Often it is as simple as a smile. This can go a long way in starting off any relationship. Smiling can be contagious, and make others feel good. But there may be some other very simple things that that person is doing.

## Examples

### Real Life Example

"I recommended a company to 5 of my customers, and there was 100% close rate because it was recommended by someone that my customers liked and trusted."

### Real Life Example

Buying hair supplies that cost a lot of money from your hair dresser. You wouldn't go to a drug store and buy the same products, but from the hair dresser who you have a built a rapport with. A sales cycle for a business to business deal typically takes 6 months, and part of that is to trust and understand the other parties. That is building a rapport.

### Mini Case Study

Jimmy has recently moved to a new region and is starting up his business again. He had a lot of loyal customers in his last business, but he is worried about building rapport in a region that he wasn't raised in.

COACH: "I definitely understand how you must be feeling. You are someone to be admired to move and face starting up again. But I don't think that building rapport is going to be as difficult as you think. Let's look at some of the facts.

1. We already know that you are great at building relationships. You've had a loyal customer base before.
2. You already have gone through the learning curve of starting up a business. The details of doing it here shouldn't be overwhelming compared to understanding time management, bookkeeping, marketing, and the rest.

So with that in your back pocket, why don't we pull out some of that experience. How did you build your loyal customer base before?"

JIMMY: "Well it was different. I grew up there. It wasn't so much growing a customer base as doing business with people I had already known for years, and who knew me."

COACH: "Right. So you had trust. That is a solid foundation to build a relationship on."

JIMMY: "I guess that that is what I'm so worried about. In the new town, people don't trust me. How can they? They don't even know me!"

COACH: "Growing up with people isn't the only way that you earn trust. Think about someone in your life that you trust that you didn't grow up with."

JIMMY: "My wife. I met her in college."

COACH: "Okay. Good example. How long after you met her before you got married?"

JIMMY: "4 years. So I have to wait for years for a loyal customer base?!"

COACH: "Not quite. For instance, did it take you after you met her before you got married?"

JIMMY: "4 years. So I have to wait for years for a loyal customer base?!"

COACH: "Not quite. For instance, did it take you 4 years to trust your wife? Did it take you 4 years to know you were going to marry her? Did you have a feeling the first time you met? Was it soon after that you started getting serious?"

JIMMY: "Right. I see what you are getting at. It was my first impression of her, and each time added to the fact that I wanted to be with her. And you're saying the same relationship is built with my clients."

COACH: "(laugh) Well hopefully not the same relationship. But you get the point. It is about having positive customer interactions, each and every time you meet with them. This starts at the first impression and continues to be reinforced with every interaction. Customer satisfaction leads to the next transaction, which leads to the next. So really the first step is making sure that your customer aren't dissatisfied. Then we'll get started on making sure that you wow them!