



"Help!" Makes Great Customer Service

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Do you help your customers?

I do. Or rather, I thought I did. But one day I realized that I was wrong.

My visit to the Emergency Room (ER)

Not long ago, I got sick. Sick enough that I ended up going to the emergency room. As the men out there know, we don't go easy. From a man's point of view, whatever may ail us will certainly get better on its own, if we just ignore it long enough. But on this day, "ignore therapy" was not working and had just made me feel so much worse. I woke at 2 am sure that some animal has just reached its claws down my throat and scratched out whatever used to be there. My throat was so very painful. Joining that pain, was shooting pains through my jaw, and in my ear. For any of you who have had a migraine, this pain was so very bad that I was wishing I could just have a good ol' migraine instead of this.

So there I was, walking into the ER and I couldn't imagine feeling more miserable.

My visit in the ER consisted of seeing four different people, answering the same question for all of them, and getting cleared for strep throat. That was the good news. After the doctor saw me, I was diagnosed with a throat infection and an ear infection. I was given a prescription and sent on my way.

Now please understand this. Through my rounds of staff, questions, and answers; I repeatedly asked if they would treat the pain. I had understood that they would treat the cause, but I wanted the pain treated as well. It didn't work that way. On the way out the door, I asked one more time and was told to take some Tylenol.

I realized something that day. I, the customer, had walked in the door that day wanting help. I had left that ER feeling just as bad as when I had walked in. Feeling.....not helped.

Best of intentions.

Was it because they were incompetent? Did they just not care? I am sure that all the medical personal I met and the ones I didn't meet, are professionals that even today want to help and heal. Same thing I wanted. They did a wonderful job healing. I am sure my medications were going to fix me right up, as they planned.

But was I helped? I believe that they were convinced so. They had helped to heal someone in distress. That, to them, was help. And they had efficiently moved on to help others.

I on the other hand, I wanted a different help. I knew I was on the way to being healed. I didn't feel helped when I had left.

My best of intentions, back at work.

You see, I work with my assistant in schools, helping staff who are having troubles with computers. The two of us take care of the 900 computers, 20 servers, and all the computer network cables and equipment. In order to do that, we try to be as efficient as possible. The less time we spend

talking with people and explaining what we do, the more time we can spend fixing problems that are occurring with the computers. This allows us to fix more peoples' computers, thereby helping more people.

Learned my lesson.

But my realization that day? Here it is. If people don't feel helped, it doesn't matter how many problems we fix. It was time to spend a little more time making people feel helped. I went back to work and began to talk with my customers. I would stop and ask, "did that help?" As I get a sense of how they are feeling about their predicament, I can evaluate if they have been "helped."

So is it worth the effort? I think so. It paid off for me. The teachers and staff in the schools were more satisfied and less frustrated with the computers. Less frustration equaled less complaints and more acceptance for new ideas and new technologies.

So, the next time you are are faced with a customer who needs help.... stop, listen, and "Help!"

Make This a Great Day!

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