

ENG 1121

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Proposal

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Customer Service

As a group we've noticed that we interact with a lot of disrespectful customers. We realized that there have been too many events where we just stay disrespected for the sake of the customer and we found it unfair to employees to deal with such behavior and have to tolerate it. This needs to be talked about and fixed in order to promote fairness within consumer and employee, in other words set a boundary where both customer and employee gives and receives respect. We have to educate our customers on how to talk to employees and how to respect and this applies to both parties because to have respect you must gain respect and even though it is a work environment we are hurt by the disrespect from our customers. Same way a customer feels when employees either talk to them with an attitude or anything of that sort. We feel that too because we are only humans. We feel the same things as everyone else and this is something we need to announce to customers and corporate to make sure there is an understanding that you should treat others how you want to be treated and this is anywhere. The significance of this proposal brings about the type of behavior we as employees are expected to put up with and tolerate. We're addressing both customers and corporate to apply the understanding that the

customer is not always right and we should teach our employees how to cope through situations where a rude customer interacts with them.

Besides articles, we have all experienced this in our own jobs and we have had to put up with customers that constantly disrespect us and insult us. I, Jazmin, personally engage with this kind of customers daily at my part-time job. For example, there was a time where a customer came into my store angry at the fact she had lost her water bottle, since she had walked in she began yelling at everyone as she went to get another water. She then came to my register screaming at me about water not being free, and calling me a thief for charging her for the water bottle. At that very moment I felt attacked, and offended because I honestly didn't have anything to do with her losing her water bottle or being having to charge her. I was honestly just doing my job and my only reaction was to stay quiet because I was not trained to deal with customers like that. I have been called out my name many times while trying to serve the customers my job receives and I stay quiet because I am told that if I disrespect or give attitude to any of my customers I am wrong and that can lead to being fired. In other words, this is where the "customer is always right" applies and we have to tolerate being dehumanized by people just because we're employees and we're not supposed to do anything back or even feel insulted or disrespected. While doing my research to see if other people feel the same as we do, I found interesting articles that describes other employees and other people arguing on how we as employees are mistreated by customers and respect should be given both ways. We work hard, we are there to work same way everyone else does. We have our own lives, our own problems and we don't bring it to work with us but yet we have to deal with the immature behavior of customers because of something that has nothing to do with us or even something we did to them. In the article "No, The Customer Is Not Always Right" by Jayson DeMers on Forbes

explains how the whole concept of the customer always being right is incorrect and we should realize that we are not in a competition with customers. We should not be positioned against each other during a disagreement or any altercation. There shouldn't be a situation where we must step down even if the customer is completely in the wrong. The problem is that customers have been told their entire life they are right regardless and that we as employees must tolerate their inappropriate and unprofessional behavior and language. Although the "customers is always right" statement was a way to ensure the customers to feel secured and receive good service it's as if over time customers have used that an excuse to verbally abuse us and take advantage.

This issue is a common conflict that we all face as people who work because not only are customers to blame but so are employers. We are not trained to handle situation like these and that is where a change needs to be made as well as address on how customers shouldn't use the phrase customers are always right as a way to degrade employees.

In the article, "The customer isn't always right: Why standing up for your employees is good for business" by Jim Belosic states "Complaints can sometimes be demoralizing for the people who have to deal with them." Thus, proving that disrespect takes a toll on us when all we are trying to do is our job and provide you with the customer service you deserve. In other words, dealing with disturbing customers challenged our mental stability because we are not trained to deal with disrespect, we are not trained to handle such a situation. Whenever something breaks out, as an employee we are put on the spot automatically because everyone looks towards our reaction towards the customer.

We are not mentally trained to settle conflicts and find solutions. This is why there's no many interactions with customers and employees that result badly due to not having the proper skills to handling a person who clearly doesn't deserve the company's service. The "customer is

always right” phrase needs to be converted into “treat others the way you want to be treated” because it emphasizes on how we are equal and we deserve the same respect they want to receive and it explains the need to understand that as humans we make mistakes we are wrong and some points in our life but disrespect needs to be addressed if we want to provide good service.

Working in customer service challenges your ability to stay calm through different occasions of mistreatment. Some employees break down and are unable to continue dealing with this sort of disrespect and that is why change needs to be made and phrases need to be written with a better understanding of treating each other equally and fairly and knowing how to approach and dismantle a situation.

After looking over the problems and causes to our customers reacting negatively, we need a solution to help fix and reduce these issues that employers deal with. Funny enough, in the article “How Consumer's Moods Drive Decisions” by Derek Thompson, the weather can play a huge effect on the customers' mood. As Derek quoted by research from Saeideh Bakhshi in the article, “The best reviews are written on sunny days between 70 and 100 degrees.... A nice day can lead to a nice review.” Yes, it is not a real solution because realistically we cannot just make it sunny outside and wish our rude customers goodbye, but it is a factor we can think about in the future. Terrible cloudy and rainy weather can put some people in a bad uncomfortable mood. It's like foreshadow taking its place with the weather.

Another solution that is brought up is to stay calm and don't react; as quoted by the team that runs the website, MindTools, “If you are faced with an unexpected verbal attack, a natural defense mechanism is to ‘bite back.’ Something as simple as taking some deep breaths can give you a vital few seconds to gather your thoughts and avoid retaliating in a way that might see you being viewed as the aggressor.” As human beings, the natural instinct when being threatened is

to either run from the situation or to face it head on. Solution is to not give them a negative reaction and react with a neutral state; this would most likely diffuse the situation.

One Thing we may want to consider that sometimes it is not the customer but the workplace itself. That we may be under stress and sensitive to a customer's remark because of management issues. According to the article "The Art of Employee management and Positive Impact In Retail" by Susan Hunt Stevens, management can help calm the employers down. She stated "When employees see their superiors chipping in, they are more inclined to participate themselves." A solution like this from inside the job itself can benefit both ends from the customer and the employer to lead into a positive engagement.

Furthermore, is the psychological term positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is when you are rewarded for doing something and it encourages people to believe that same action can grant you the same result. Positive reinforcement between the employees and the consumer can change their mood in a good way. As stated by the post "Is Positive Reinforcement The Secret to Customer Behavior" written by Demi Oba, she stated "By offering exclusive experiences or valuable discounts in exchange for engaging with their community, customers will more likely to adopt these behaviors quickly" Positive reinforcement to the customers can make them repeat the same engaging behavior and inspires positive action, deepens the relationship with the community, and reduce alterations to the employees. In addition, we believe that training our employees can result in better customer service and provide both parties with respect due to the fact we will train employees to deal with rude customers but we will also address customers each time there is an altercation and they are in the wrong.

As employees and customers, we would like to make sure that we pass on a message to others and have them understand the feelings of disrespect and mistreatment that we feel from

one another. We all have our share of experience with rude customers or rude employees, and it is not the best thing to deal with or understand. Some of us can handle the mistreatment but there are others who cannot handle the mistreatment. Others may feel the need to retaliate and/or do something irrational to put their job on the line. Sure, it is justifiable to have a bad day every once in a while, but taking it out on the people who serve you is not the way to go and to assume that you are always right. As stated before, treat others on how you would want to be treated. Do not abuse your role as the customer, to prove that you have power over the employee. They are here to assist you in any way possible and give you the best shopping experience possible. Hopefully the solutions that were discussed, helped change your perspective towards the employees; to actually understand and give the respect that is needed and improve the relations when it comes to shopping. Give you all that positive reinforcement and hope you come back for a good customer service. So, let's help each other out here and grant the best service you ever had.

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