

❧ Humor ❧

There's an interesting new novel about two ex-convicts. One of them studies to become a lawyer, the other decides to go straight.

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The Basics of Customer Service

A reprint of an article by Shep Hyken, CSP

Great customer service isn't rocket science. Customer service isn't a department. It is a simple philosophy that should be practiced by everyone in an organization, regardless of their position and/or title, and it can be broken down into four basic parts. While volumes of books have been written about great service, these four points could be considered the starting point — the basics. By understanding these very simple concepts, you will be well on your way to creating more moments of magic for your customers.

Common sense — This means doing the obvious. It is a little more than treating your customers like you would want to be treated. But, it is not much more. It is simply treating your customers the way they want to be treated. Understand that what you would expect might be different than what your customer might expect. For example, a bellman may work at a very expensive hotel. He will probably never stay at a hotel like the one in which he works. He would never demand the same level of service and attention that the hotel's guests demand, but he still understands what they want and desire, and he delivers it to them.

Flexibility — Rules and policies are nothing more than guidelines. Don't let "company policy" stand in the way of making a customer happy. However there is eventually a point where you have to take a stand. In spite of what you may have heard, the customer is not always right. But, they are always the customer. So, if they are wrong, let them be wrong with dignity. Do what you can, within reason, to see that your customer is always happy. I am reminded of the CEO of a major company that called all of his people together and told them, "Do whatever it takes to make the customer happy."

Well, they did, and almost put the company into bankruptcy. Along with empowering people to be flexible goes training. If properly trained, the employee can deliver what the customer perceives as a "whatever-it-takes" attitude, and the employees won't put the company out of business.

Solving Problems — There are two types of problems to solve -- business and non-business. Business problems include taking care of complaints and meeting a customer's needs. These customers are coming to you to either satisfy a complaint or have you help them with a problem, and you need to be there to help them. Then there are non-business problems that have nothing to do with what you and your company do on a day-to-day basis.

An example of a non-business problem might be a person who's car has a flat tire across the street from our place of business. They come to us for help. How do we react? Do

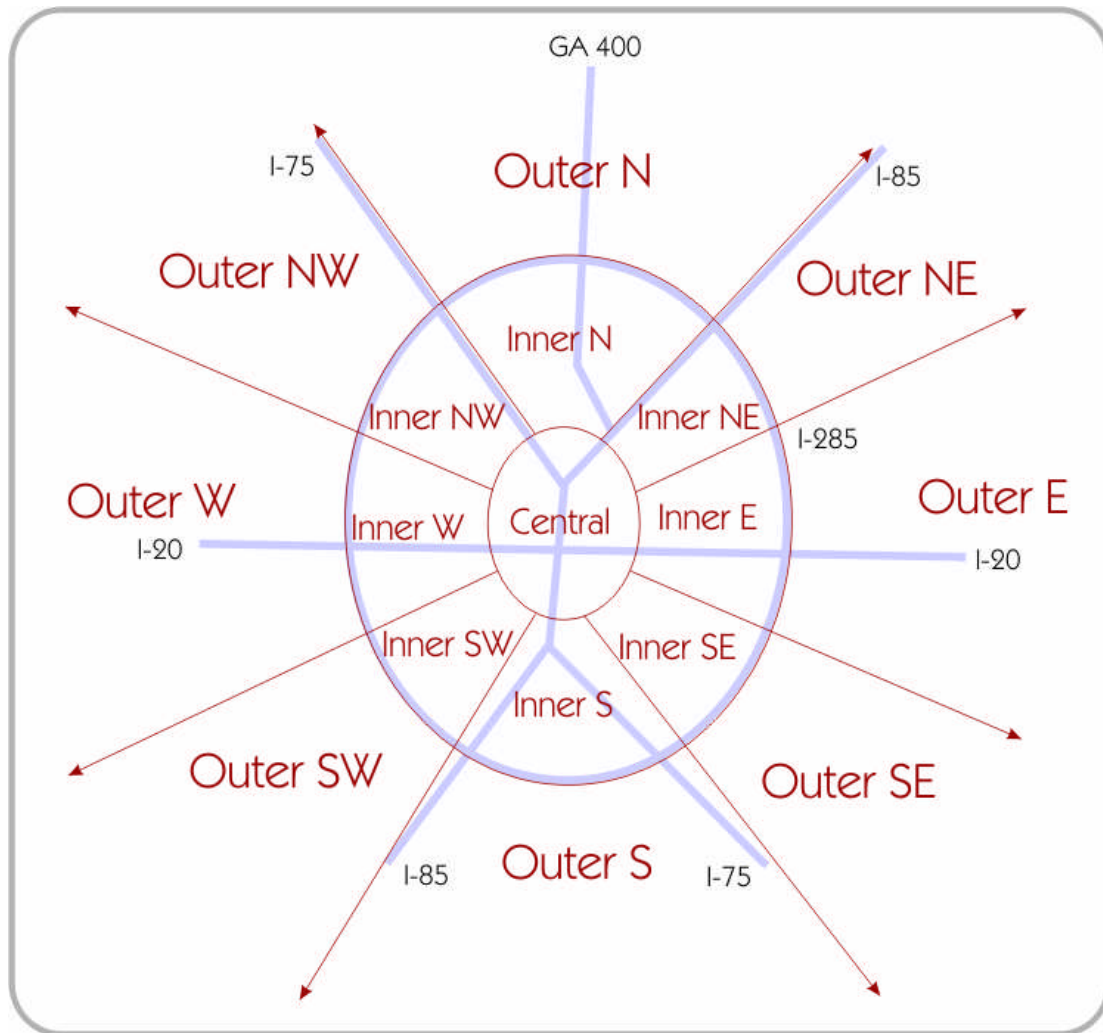
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Current Job Listings

<u>Position</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Description and Requirements</u>
★ Account Analyst	Atlanta Inner NE	Indep. Agency	Great position with one of Georgia's best independent agencies. Great pay, benefits and working environment. Compensation up to low \$40Ks for right candidate.
Commercial Producer	Atlanta NW	Indep. Agency	Some of the best commission splits in Atlanta, with an excellent support staff. Well established, growing agency, with extensive ties in the community.
Commercial Lines CSR	Atlanta Central	Indep. Agency	Top Atlanta agency needs a strong commercial lines account manager. Compensation up to low \$60Ks, depending on qualifications and experience.
★ Commercial Lines CSR	Augusta	Indep. Agency	Great agency in Augusta. Top compensation and benefits. Must be licensed and experienced in commercial lines.
Commercial Lines CSR	Augusta	Indep. Agency	Great agency in Augusta. Top compensation and benefits. Must be licensed and experienced in commercial lines.
Commercial Lines CSR	Sarasota, FL	Indep. Agency	Sarasota, FL: Middle market account experience, great benefits, friendly and technologically advanced office. Compensation to mid \$50Ks for right candidate.
★ Junior CSR	Florida	Indep. Agency	Junior account manager position at great agency, with starting compensation up to \$40K for right candidate, plus bonuses and excellent benefits package.
Junior Producer	Atlanta Outer E	Indep. Agency	Great position for a young producer with some WC experience. Good commission splits and support team.
Personal Lines Producer	Atlanta Central	Indep. Agency	Outstanding opportunity including base salary plus commission for inside sales position in a friendly, fast growing agency.
★ Personal Lines Analyst	Atlanta Central	Indep. Agency	Prefer one to two years experience as CSR. License not required initially but will need to obtain (agency pays for this). Sales component available but not required.
Technical Assistant	Atlanta Inner NE	Indep. Agency	Great account manager position with one of Georgia's best independent agencies. Great pay, benefits and working environment. Compensation to \$45K for right candidate.

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GUIDE TO ATLANTA METROPOLITAN AREAS
(For other metro areas, contact us for more information.)



RESPONDING TO POSITIONS

If you are interested in any of the above positions, please email your updated resume to: resumes@harmonyrecruiting.com, or you may send it via facsimile to us at 678.623.3474. If you have any questions or other needs not addressed here, feel free to call us directly at 678.464.4564 and ask to speak to any of our recruiters.

Interviewing Tips

Avoid conflict. Be polite and deferent to everyone you meet. If you have a strong personality, temper it for the interview.

Let the other person talk. Give full, complete answers, but don't ramble. No employer wants to hire an interviewee that won't let them get a word in edgewise.



we tell them there is a pay phone down the street, or do we help them by picking up the phone and calling for a tow truck? Solving non-business problems are a potential way of generating good public relations. And, you never know, but this person could turn out to be your next customer.

Recovery— This is probably one of the most important points. I don't care how good you are. You can have a long-term satisfied customer for years. As soon as something bad happens, you have to recover. It is that recovery that will be that customer's final judgment on just how good you really are. Remember, studies have proven it is much less expensive to keep an existing a customer than to get a new one. Do what you can not just to recover from a problem, but to give the customer a renewed confidence to continue to do business with you again.

Sometimes this means going beyond just fixing a problem. Sometimes you have to get the customer back in the door. For example, a restaurant that had a problem with a guest's meal might not just remake the dinner, but also give a complimentary appetizer the next time the guest comes back. Not only did the restaurant resolve the complaint, but also gave an incentive for the guest to come back.

So there you have four basic components of a good customer service strategy. These simple yet powerful tools are the key to success in customer service and will create many MOMENTS OF MAGIC!



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