

## Ten Principles for Delivering Great Customer Service

1. **Put your customers first.** This means doing everything in your power to meet their needs and seeing things from the customer's perspective. Do things for their convenience and make sure your procedures are efficient.
2. **Always acknowledge customers.** In face to face interactions a smile, eye contact or a nod in the customer's direction can make all the difference. No-one likes being ignored or made to feel they are wearing an invisibility cloak.
3. **Make your regular customers feel valued.** It is much easier to win business from existing customers than it is to find new customers. It helps if you have a good memory for people and the things that matter to them. If you do not, you can always make a few crib notes in your customer files.
4. **Always listen to your customers.** High quality listening is one of the most important things you can do for your customers. Asking questions and listening is essential to resolving problems or complaints. It is not just about problems though, sometimes customers simply have a need to chat.
5. **Always treat customers with respect.** Common courtesies should never be overlooked no matter how busy your staff are or indeed if the customers themselves are less than polite or well behaved. Similarly, it is important to respect individuals whatever their background or lifestyle.
6. **Always keep your cool.** There are no doubt customers can be demanding and at times downright unreasonable. But it is also fair to say that no-one ever won an argument with a customer. So, it is vital to maintain a calm and professional approach and to be patient with customers.
7. **Be willing to 'go the extra mile' for your customers.** Often it is the small things that can make a considerable difference, doing something the customer did not expect. At other times it may mean pulling out all the stops to resolve an issue.
8. **Check customer satisfaction levels.** Customers can be fickle and there is no room for complacency in delivering customer service. If you want to stay ahead of the competition, then it is important to gather feedback from your customers about your products or services. It is equally important to analyse and act upon feedback received.
9. **Make things easy for your customers.** Whether you deal with customers mainly online, over the telephone or face to face, it should be easy for them to do business with you. Do not expect them to jump through unnecessary hoops or to be kept waiting.

10. **Show appreciation for your customers.** Remember your business would not exist if you did not have customers. Make a point of thanking your customers for doing business with you. Be genuine in what you say. Customers will see through false statements or sentiments and they will not be impressed.