

# Achieving Excellence Through Customer Service: Quick Tips

*UIC Office of Human Resources, Department of Organizational Effectiveness*

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## Quick Tip Survival Strategies

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### Identifying Your Customers

- A customer is anyone (internal or external) who has a service request
- Excellence in external customer service is achieved through excellence with internal customer service

### Understanding Customer Requirements

- Customers want to know that you value them
- Perceived value = Quality of interaction or product + customer service – the cost of the interaction or product

### Collecting Feedback and Addressing Customer Complaints

- Effective communication can make or break customer relationships
- Ask questions to clarify meaning

### Building Customer Relationships

- Avoid using exclusionary language (i.e. no, never, always, etc.)
- Honor your commitments



## Tools

Use the following tools as a starting point in doing something different to make providing quality customer service a reality in the workplace.

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| Statement  | Disagree ----- > Agree |   |   |   |   |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1                      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. Our entire staff has been comprehensively trained on the techniques needed to handle, diffuse and retain angry customers      |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 2. When handling calls from our customers, our entire team employs a uniform, effective greeting                                 |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 3. When an employee has a performance shortfall, our managers are trained to implement a proven coaching process                 |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 4. Employees at our organization know how to present negative information in a positive way                                      |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 5. Our team is skilled at knowing how and when to use a variety of questioning techniques in their customer interactions         |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 6. New employees are well educated on issues such as dress code, limits on personal calls and steering clear of office politics: |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 7. Our employees do a great job of rapport building and making our customers feel like friends                                   |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 8. When a team member is having a "bad day," that negative emotion is NEVER obvious to a customer                                |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 9. In our unit, co-workers are always treated as well as we try to treat our customers   |                        |   |   |   |   |
| 10. Customers are usually astounded by the high level of care they receive from our team   |                        |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Column Totals</b>   |                        |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Total Score (add Column Totals)</b>   |                        |   |   |   |   |

### What do the Scores Mean?

If your score is between 45-50...

If this is an accurate assessment, congratulations! If your customers rate you this high, you're obviously doing many things very well.

If your score is between 27-44...

Most organizations rate themselves in this range, about average, but still not excellent. How would your customers likely answer the same evaluation?

If your score is 26 or below...

Congratulations on recognizing a shortfall. You've taken the first step on the road to improvement. The next critical step is to begin fixing it.

*Source: Employer Administrative Services, a member of the Detroit Regional Chamber.*