

A study of professionalism and service

[Experience](#)



Question One

As with every purchase decision, individuals prefer to do business with people they like, with people who seem genuinely interested in them and with people who really care about their concerns. Today, it is more important than ever that businesses recognize and appreciate that they must build rich, quality relationships with their customers and must orient their businesses around assuring outstanding customer delight. By increasing customer delight and quality of the service to the customer leads to repeat sales, there is a lower risk of doing business with the organization by delivering the service right the first time, more business gets generated through positive word of mouth, lower acquisition costs to attract new customers, lower cost of delivering the service for the organization as the customer gains greater familiarity with the service. The research says that the average person who has a complaint tells 9-10 people about it. 13 % tell more than 20 people. By delivering great customer delight this tremendous bad word of mouth is turned into a positive and promoting situation. Also according to TARP (Technical Assistance Research Programs) Washington D. C. Companies who are service-leaders typically charge 9% more than their competitors, grow twice as fast as their low service competition, and improve their market share by an average of 6% per year. The bottom line is that customer delight and satisfaction largely increases customer loyalty, the customer complaints are at a minimum, and it helps a business gain competitive advantage.

Question Two

Disconfirmation is a very powerful predictor of satisfaction. Positive disconfirmation is essentially when perceived quality is higher than expected. Which will usually result in satisfaction and will almost always result in the will expectation being raised.

< **RETAIL EXAMPLE (POSITIVE DISCONFIRMATION)** >

Lets say that Mike heard about the new Eatons store opening and decided to do his upcoming Christmas shopping there. Remembering the poor customer service he experienced at the old Eatons and the not so competitive prices his will expectation of the new Eatons is very low. As a matter of fact the only reason he is giving Eatons another chance is because he lives across the new Eatons location and he is too lazy to go anywhere else. As Mike walks through the doors of the new and reopened Eatons he is greeted by their welcome person and finds himself surrounded with customer service representatives kindly offering their help and expertise advice. Mike wonders if he had even walked into the right store. After he realizes he really is in the new Eatons he decides to start shopping. Mike finds everything on his Christmas list quickly and discovers their new and finally competitive prices making Mike a very satisfied customer. In this story Mikes Perceived Quality of the new Eatons is through the roof and Will Expectation is very low. Now the space between the will expectation and perceived quality is Disconfirmation and in this case because the perceived quality is higher than the will expectation the Disconfirmation is POSITIVE.

Negative Disconfirmation occurs when perceived quality is not as good as expected. This will probably result in dissatisfaction and will very likely result in lowered expectations for the service.

< RETAIL EXAMPLE (NEGATIVE DISCONFIRMATION) >

Lets say that Mike has recently been on a business trip in Vancouver B. C. On the last day of his trip he decided to by his wife a gift as he usually does. Mike was walking through the mall looking for a suitable present. He walks past a trendy new fashion franchised store called Urban Behavior. Mike notices a dress that his wife might like in the store window and decides to buy it. As he is asking the sales person about the dress he realizes he doesnt know any of his wifes measurements. But thankfully the sales person is very knowledgeable and manages to extract the right information from Mike in order to be able to make an educated guess about his wifes size. As Mike is about to pay for the dress he notices the new promotion that the store is having where the sore pays for the customer tax and all sales are tax free for the customer. Being a new store and looking for new and loyal customer base this seems very reasonable to Mike. Mike brings home the dress and his wife loves it. A month passes and Mike realizes it is Feb. 12. And Valentines Day is just around the corner; he remembers the success the dress was with his wife and recalls seeing the Urban Behavior opening in his local mall. He decides to go to the store and buy her Valentines Day present there. As he walks in his will expectation is very high and he remembers that he once again he forgot the measurements but remembering the last experience he feels confident that that will pose no problem. When he walks in right away he notices another dress which would be perfect for their Valentines night

out and decides to buy it. As he struggles to get the attention of any of the sales people who all look preoccupied he is getting impatient. He finally gets a sales persons attention and explains his predicament only to be told that he cannot be helped because they need her measurements or the actual person in the store in order to fit them. And all sales are final in their tax-free sales. Mike soon finds himself abandoned in the store with no help form the staff. Mike has finally had enough, leaves the store and decides to buy his wife flowers. And he promises he will never set foot in that store again. In this story Mikes will Expectation of the Urban Behavior is through the roof and the Perceived Quality is lower than ever. Now the space between the will expectation and perceived quality is Disconfirmation and in this case because the will expectation is higher than the perceived quality the Disconfirmation is NEGATIVE.

Question Three

The five dimensions of service quality (RATER) include Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles, and Empathy. They each relate to customer expectation in a different but a very important way. Reliability involves consistency of performance and dependability. Essentially it involves performing the promised service dependably and accurately at the designated time, and right the first time. If the business reaches a level of reliability their customers eyes their expectations will rise they will see it as a dependable, high performing, accurate organization which keeps their promises and gets their orders right the first time. If the levels of reliability are not established the customer expectations will be very low and they might expect a problems form the organization where there is none. Eventually they might

choose to take their business elsewhere. Assurance refers to the courtesy and competence of the service personnel to instill trust and confidence in customers. If the business manages to reach levels of assurance from their customers by

dealing with knowledgeable and pleasant service providers they will obtain higher levels of customer expectation. Their customers will reach higher levels of customer loyalty and will act as promoters of the organization by the good word of mouth. The customer expectation levels rise generates higher levels of customer service not only in one organization but all of them because of the need to compete and stay in business. Therefore resulting in benefits for the customers. Tangibles include the physical evidence of the service. It is the seeable part of the service, which the customer uses to remember the service and make it tangible. By including tangibles such as tools or equipment used to provide the service, physical representations of the service, such as a plastic credit card and other customers in the service facility. Customers expectation grows in terms of business loyalty they expect to be treated as a part of the stores family they feel like a part of a whole. The tangibles such as a store point system card resulting in savings and getting change in store currency (Canadian Tire) lifts the customer expectation of the business organization and the care for their customer base. Empathy goes beyond courtesy. It involves making the effort to understand the customer's precise needs. By displaying empathy towards your customers you guarantee that there will not be a problem in the service because if there is one empathy guarantees it will be solved or if not solved everything will be done in order to make the customer feel like they and

their problems are important to the organization and it will result in higher customer expectation. In case an organization displays a lack of empathy towards their customer base they put themselves in jeopardy of seeming careless of the true needs of the customers and it might result in loss of customer base. Responsiveness is in term concern and the willingness or readiness of the service personnel to provide service promptly and efficiently. By displaying responsiveness an organization may lift the customers expectations. If your last experience with a company was positive, you may approach a new situation with the expectation that you will again be satisfied. But if the organization chooses to neglect responsiveness its customer base may start to expect less and less from the organization resulting in associating the organization with failure and taking their business elsewhere.

Question Six

It is true in order to deliver good customer service, companies must find out what factors drive customer loyalty(Customer loyalty: Playing for keeps by Laura Struebing) There are many loyalty programs that drive customer loyalty, and they are different for everyone. Some stay for the air miles, some for Petro points but in the core reasoning they all stay because their needs have been met and their desires fulfilled. The loyalty programs just create an illusion of a good deal so that the customer feels as if he or she is getting something back for their loyalty to the company. In the article however Connellan brings up an interesting point that two customers can get the same outcome but the process that each went through might not have been the same. So in order to reach true customer loyalty companies must

pay as much attention to the process as they do to the expected outcome, because a customer might be satisfied with the outcome but not with the process, or vice versa. As discussed before to deliver good customer service, companies must find out what factors drive customer loyalty. Now according to Kessler,

customer satisfaction measures include both hard and soft measures. Hard being the behaviors that are measured by cash register receipts, market share, revenues, and profits and include customer retention levels and number of referrals from other customers. Hard measures show what customers are actually buying. And soft include surveys, focus groups, interviews, and observations. They help determine what customers think of a service or product relative to the competition. Loyalty programs are in turn built by taking surveys and opinions of the actual customers or potential customers. The management must realize that complaints are great insight into their business. And with the airing out of the problems come out solutions, a customer that leaves angry may never come back but if the problem is addressed and solved loyalty might be expressed by the same angry customer that is why companies should make it easy for customers to complain. In solving a problem the customer must always be made to feel that he or she is right or at least feel that the company is concerned about his or her welfare and about the resolution of the problem. By introducing loyalty programs like a “no hassles” service guarantee companies can learn about customers’ changing expectations, and they can adapt their processes to satisfy customers more often, and thus promote customer loyalty. Also in today’s competitive world companies need to undersell and overdeliver

themselves, small improvements to make the customer happy can set a company apart from the rest, companies still need add value for the customer. Loyal customers need to be shown the respect that they deserve. They are the ones that generate higher profits; they are the ones that are willing to pay a higher price for a product. So in turn they are the ones that deserve the price breaks, and get something in return for their continued loyalty, and that is what the loyalty programs provide and they have earned it. Loyalty programs should be more than frequent flyer miles, punch cards or reward certificates. Incentive programs should be so appealing that customers will not want to leave because it will cost them too much. But even though a company has the best loyalty program in the world the customers will only remain loyal if they are completely satisfied. Companies can not give away customer points in order to make up for neglecting the basics the first time. Only when the company shows outmost quality in the basics the first time and has a recovery process for customers with bad experiences, then they can offer successful frequent buyer programs resulting in a high level of customer loyalty.