

Customer Service in a Supply Chain Management World

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- *The single most important thing to realize about any enterprise is that there are no results inside its walls. The result of a business is a satisfied customer.*
- *Peter Drucker*



Let's Talk About It



- What customer service means
- Identify customers needs
- Dealing with difficult customers
- Taking customer service to the next level
- Creating your brand
- Connect with customers



I've learned that people will forget what
you said, people will forget what you did,
but people will never forget how you
made them feel.

- Maya Angelou



Something to Think About

What are your customer service strengths?

What are your customer service weaknesses?

The goal is to provide a stellar customer experience with each customer interaction.

Our job is to create value and promote high levels of customer satisfaction.



What Is Customer Service?

Customer service is the provision of service to customers before, during, and after an interaction.





Who Are Customer Service Providers?

- It could be argued that every member or staff within an organization has an element of customer service provision within their responsibilities.
- In any business, a customer service provider is someone whose performance of their role is important to the overall result for the customer.



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The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind.

William James



Establishing Your Attitude

We might all define customer service a little

differently, but we can all agree on one thing: to provide great customer service, you need to put energy, empathy and enthusiasm into your interactions with customers.

Great customer service begins with a great attitude.

Attitude is Everything

- Remain adaptable and readjust your sails
- Your approach is critical
- Your tone is crucial
- Words are heard and attitudes are felt
- Attitude is the difference between success and failure regardless of how talented you are.

“Attitude is a little thing
that makes a big
difference”
- Winston Churchill



Customer Service Provider

Develop a positive attitude.

- Your attitude is reflected in everything you do. It not only determines how you approach your job and your co-workers, but it also determines how they respond to you. Avoid complaining. Do whatever it takes to get the job done—and done right.

Solve problems.

- Great customer service providers are quick on their feet. Don't procrastinate, develop a plan of attack, and handle the situation as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Identify and anticipate needs.

- The more you know your customers the better you become at anticipating their needs. Communicate regularly so that you are aware of problems or upcoming needs.

Customer Centric

Putting our customer first

Understand our customers' expectations

- Know what our customers are expecting and know how to manage those expectations. Set realistic expectations by controlling our messaging, don't promise the world if you do not have the world to give. There is no better way to create a bad customer experience than to not meet expectations.

Customer loyalty

- Create a brand that customers relate to, this will encourage customers to trust you and this will create a loyal customer base.

Make customer interaction simple and easy

- Make interactions as easy as possible for the customer. This prevents the customer from being frustrated before they contact you.
- Make sure customers are the core of our business in order to provide a positive experience and build long-term relationships.

Customer Service Provider and the Internal Customer

Set clear expectations:

- As a provider of service, we are responsible for setting clear guidelines about what internal customers can reasonably expect.
- Last minute requests and deadlines are inevitable.
- When you encounter unrealistic expectations, explain your workflow, priorities, processes, and timelines. Then, reinforce your goal is to provide top-notch service for them.

Always keep customers informed on project progress:

- Nobody likes to be blindsided by delays or last minute requests for additional information. Err on the side of [over-communication](#).
- Always provide the requestor with a status update, and when you plan to complete the rest of the project.



The Power of a Smile

- Friendly
- Positive experience
- Welcoming



Excellent Communication

- Verbal
- Written
- Non-Verbal



Stay Energized

- Stay engaged.
- Take a walk, even if it's just to the restroom.
- Drink a glass of cold water.
- Be sure to eat a good breakfast and lunch.
- Find the humor/laugh at yourself.
- View negative situations as learning opportunities.



Understanding the Customer's Situation

- Allow the customer to communicate before jumping in and Interrupting.
- Don't listen to respond, listen to understand.
- Identify their needs.
- Let the customer guide you.
- Learn from experience.

Meeting the Customers Basic Needs

- Friendliness
- Understanding the need and empathy
- Fairness
- Control the situation
 - Customers are looking to you for guidance
 - You are the SME
- Options and alternatives
- Be informative
- Trust





Going the Extra Mile

- Use the customers name when speaking with them.
- Learn about their role and their department.
- Return calls promptly.
- Respond to emails in a timely manner.
- Do follow-up calls to ensure their issues were resolved.





Telephone Etiquette

- Answer promptly.
- Speak clearly.
- Identify yourself.
- Actively listen and take notes.
- Only use speakerphone when necessary.



Technology and Customer Service

- As you know, a great deal of customer interactions are taking place virtually.
- To provide excellent virtual customer service, you need to understand what works and what doesn't work, and how to make the most of the tools that are available to you.

E-Mail Proper-Use Guidelines

- Organize your thoughts.
- Use the subject line effectively.
- Keep the message brief and to the point.
- Be conscious of the tone.
- Maintain professionalism.
- Use short paragraphs and blank lines between paragraphs.
- Proofread the message before hitting “Send.”
- Include a signature block.



On-site Meeting Etiquette

- Be punctual.
- Come prepared.
- Know the meeting participant(s) and dress accordingly.
- Speak loud and clear so you do not have to repeat yourself.
- Actively listen and participate.
- Be attentive to your nonverbal cues.
 - Body language and facial expressions
- Wait for your turn to speak, do not interrupt.
- Follow the agenda (stay on task).
- Put away technology and stay engaged in the meeting.

Virtual Meeting Guidelines

- Prepare ahead – test technology
- Stick to time
- Dress appropriately
- Have a clear background
- Try to avoid distractions
- Do mute yourself when not talking
- Speak to the camera
- Use the Keyboard less
- Minimize body movement
- Avoid eating
- Protect sensitive information
- Wrap up professionally
- Email a meeting recap to the participants if needed.

A black and white silhouette of two people climbing a large rock. One person is on the left, reaching up to help the other person who is on the right, higher up on the rock. The background is a light, hazy sky. The image is used as a background for the text.

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People don't want to communicate with an organization or a computer. They want to talk to a real, live, responsive, responsible person who will listen and help them get satisfaction.

General George S. Patton



Turning Difficult Customers Around

The important thing to keep in mind when dealing with a customer complaint is that losing your patience with the customer will never lead to a satisfactory conclusion.

Managing Difficult Customers

- One of the hardest challenges of working as a customer service provider is dealing with difficult customers.
- Sometimes customers have a legitimate reason to be upset and sometimes they don't.
- In either case, we as customer service providers need to be prepared for dealing with difficult customers and finding ways to gain their confidence.

Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning.

Bill Gates

4 Main Points

When diffusing an Upset Customer

Remember CARP

- **Control** - Remain calm and don't feel attacked.
- **Acknowledge** - Listen to the customer.
- **Refocus** - Sincerely apologize for their bad experience.
- **Problem-solve** - Provide a solution for their issue.



How to De-Escalate a Negative Situation

Do:

Acknowledge	Listen	Offer Solutions
Empathy goes a long way! Make sure you are making it clear to the customer that you understand why they are upset	Body Language and gestures go a long way. Showing that you are actively listen can make the customer more comfortable	Always have some sort of solution or answer to their questions

Don't:

Blame	Blame the customer
Diminish	Diminish the customer's grievance
Tell	Tell the customer it's not your problem



Establishing Common Ground

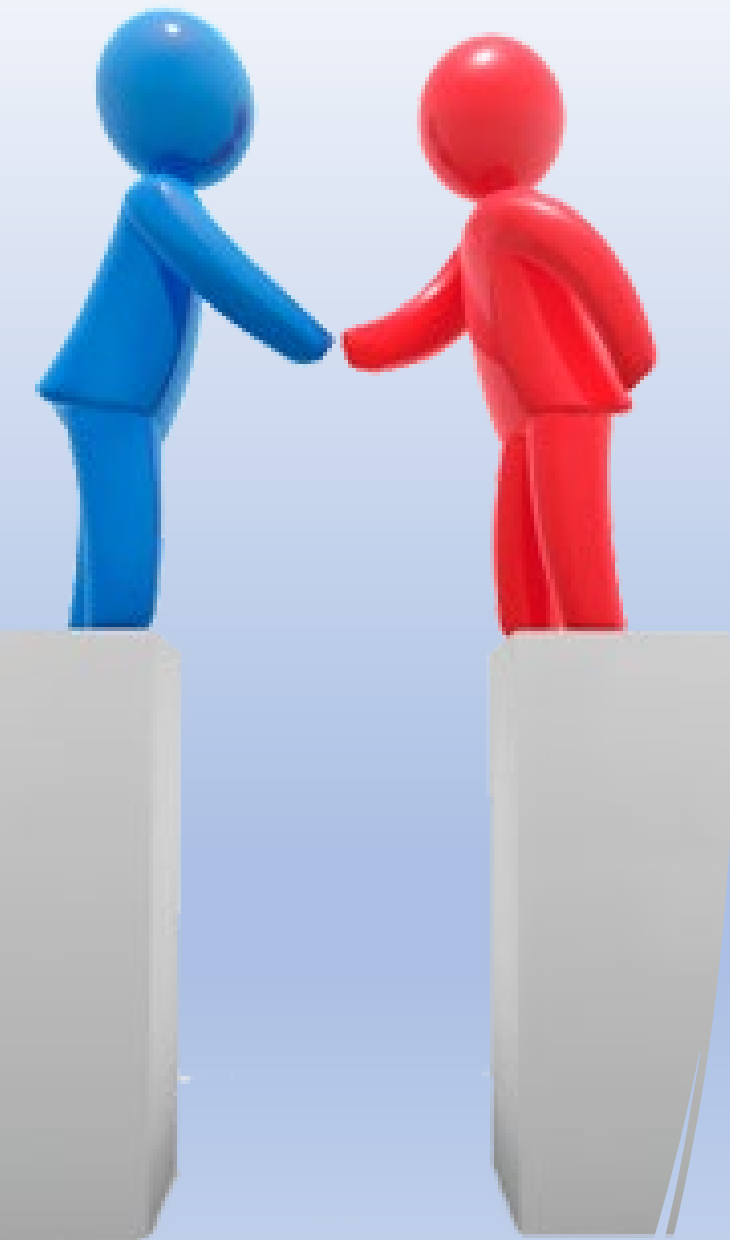
- Assure the customer that we're on the same team.
- Have the customer part of the process.
- Establish a common goal.
- Formulate a solution.
- Keep them in the loop.
- If you have to say no, explain why and provide another solution (win/win).





Managing Your Own Emotions

- Composure
- Don't escalate the situation
- Keep calm
- You are a human being
- Breathe...



Tips for a Great Customer Experience

- Greet customers with a smile (in person, virtual meeting, over the phone)
- Be helpful
- Go the extra mile
 - Give more than what they expect
- Don't make customers feel inadequate
- Always fit in a "thank you"
- Listen to your customers
 - Listen twice as much as you speak
 - Never talk over a customer

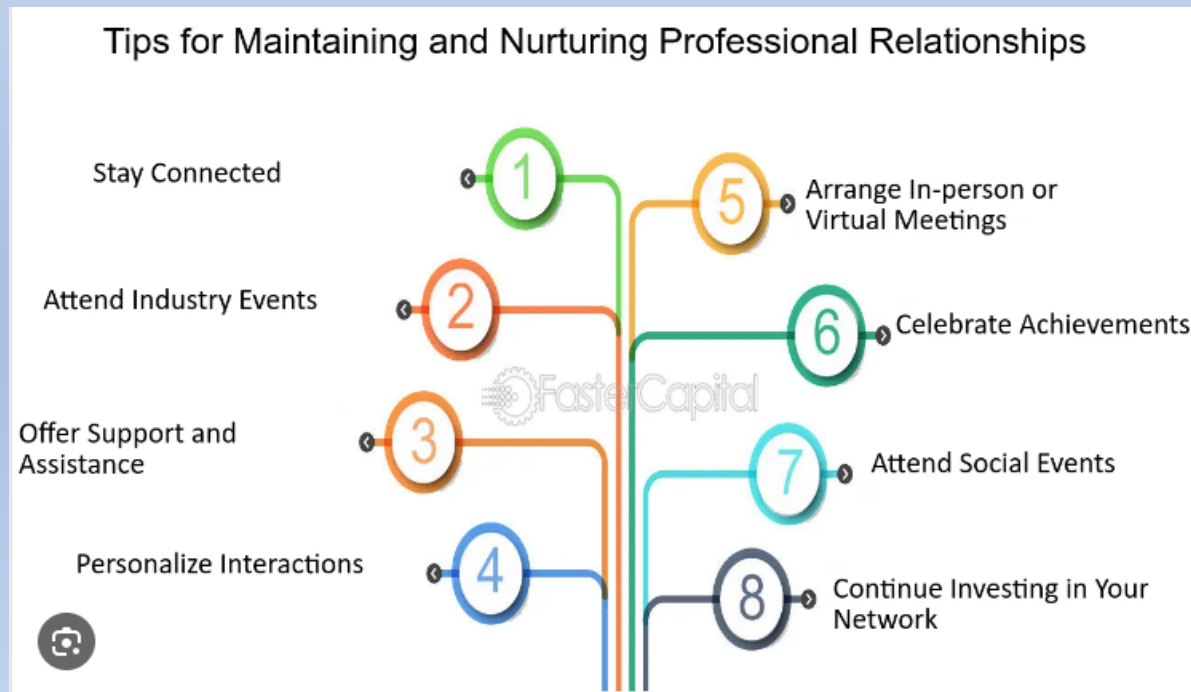
The Forgotten Art of Empathy

SCM isn't just about numbers, contracts, goods and services. It's about the end users, the suppliers, the stakeholders.



Nurturing Relationships

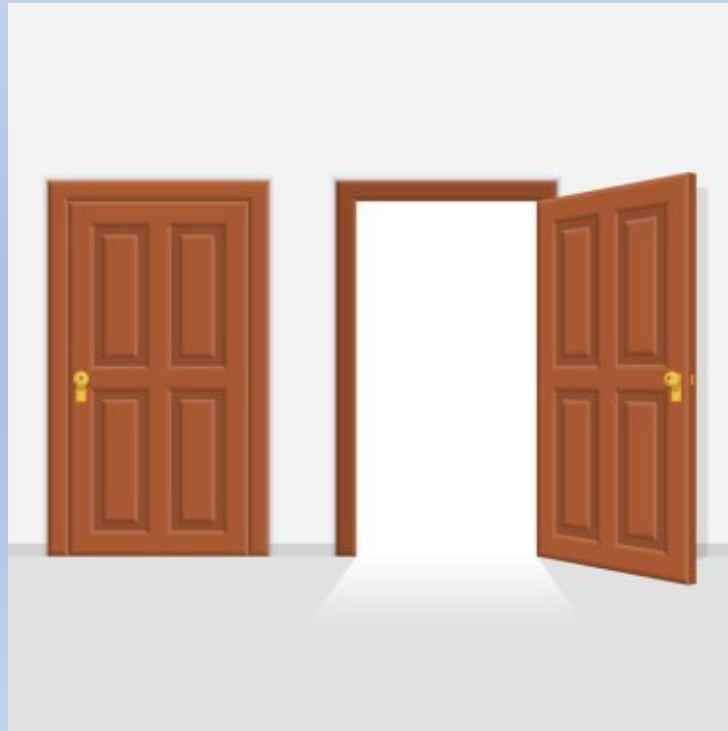
The best SCM professionals aren't spreadsheet wizards; we're relationship architects. We know that a successful negotiation isn't just about terms – it's about trust.



Opening Closed Doors

SCM isn't a silo: it's a gateway. The best among us know how to open doors that others deem shut.

We turn skeptics into allies, showing folks that we are not the roadblock but a catalyst for growth.



SCM isn't an island, it's part of the organizational ecosystem.
Procurement isn't the bottleneck, we are the bottle opener from which all things flow.

The Bigger Picture



Your Challenge

Next time you're knee deep in RFP's or vendor evaluations, remember this: Behind every requisition submitted is a person. Behind every negotiation is a relationship waiting to blossom.



Prepare For Success

- Maintain a positive attitude.
- Be orderly in person and in work.
- Never compromise with honesty.
- Obtain counsel of others.
- Be sincere yet decisive.
- Plan tomorrow's work today.
- Build good professional relationships.
- Self-presentation is critical to your success.

Do You Have a Success Jar?

What is a Success Jar?

It is a simple jar that holds all of your successes, accomplishments and celebrations! It is a great method to fighting your fears and self doubts!

Here is how to create your Success Jar!

- Every time you accomplish anything - no matter how small - write it down on a sticky note.
- Fold up the sticky note and add it to your success jar.
- Once a week, open your Success Jar and read all you have accomplished.

Take the previous week's sticky notes and add them to a plastic zip bag. At the end of the year, read them all and celebrate how far you have come. You will be amazed!

We are always so busy looking ahead that we forget to stop and look at how far we have already come. It is easy to lose sight of what you've accomplished when you are concentrating on what is left to be done.



Questions or Comments?



A watercolor illustration of various flowers and green leaves. In the top left, there is a large, light pink flower with a dark center. To its right are several green leaves. In the bottom right, there is a bright orange flower and a smaller pink flower, both surrounded by green foliage. The overall style is soft and artistic, with visible brushstrokes and a gentle color palette.

Thank
You