



NEW STRAITS TIMES **klassifieds**

HOW TO DEAL WITH UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS



whatever you can in your power to solve the problem as quickly as possible.

BILL GATES' ANSWER TO CUSTOMER SERVICE

Bill Gates, one of the best-known entrepreneurs of the personal computer revolution is no stranger to controversy. The former chief executive of Microsoft said: "Think about customer complaints as opportunities to improve your service and to transform unhappy customers into fans. Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning."

From Microsoft's founding in 1975 until 2006, Gates had primary responsibility for the company's product strategy. He aggressively broadened the company's range of products, and wherever Microsoft achieved a dominant position he vigorously defended it.

As a result, Gates has been criticised for his business tactics, which was considered anti-competitive. In the later stages of his career, Gates pursued a number of philanthropic endeavours - donating large amounts of money to various charitable organisations and scientific research programmes to give back to society.

No one likes to receive a complaint, but it really is a matter of whether they arrive sooner or later.

A research shows that 96% of unhappy customers don't actually complain. However, 91% of them will simply leave and never come back.

Knowing this, wouldn't you agree that a complaining customer is sometimes better than one that is silent but halfway out the door? Having unhappy customers may be a second chance in disguise. Here are some tips to help you deal with unhappy customers.

IT IS ALL ABOUT BRAND REPUTATION

In this era of social media, people frequently turn to social networks to complain, and they can be really rude about it. What you need is the skill not to respond unkindly, because your answer may well be read by anyone. Protect your brand by being kind - always.

IT IS NOT PERSONAL

Always remember that complaints are not personal, and the customer's anger is not directed to the employee, but towards the company in general. This

fact will help you to remain calm and polite. If you listen with understanding and sympathy, even the angriest customer will calm down.

LISTEN CAREFULLY

Find out what their problem is, so you can work towards alleviating it and not towards a solution that does not actually help them in any way. The point is to resolve the customer's issue.

Before taking action, verify that what you are doing really helps the customer by asking the customer himself/herself. Once a resolution is agreed, act quickly to implement it. All the customer really wants is a listening ear that will respect their point of view and work towards helping them.

DON'T MAKE EXCUSES

No matter what or who caused the problem, never blame your customers (even if they have caused the issue). Making excuses is simply a waste of time, and it makes customers even more annoyed. Instead, take full responsibility and do

"Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning."

- BILL GATES



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