

Avoid Speed Trap Policies

If you want to differentiate your company in the marketplace, then you need to show how you can dramatically deliver service and products faster than your competitors. Amazon does it. Apple does it. How might you improve speed without compromising quality?

Recently, one of my employees was having a problem with an item shipped to her from Amazon. She needed to return the product but was not savvy to the website info necessary to make the return. So she called and talked to a human being directly. An understanding rep sent her a return packing slip via email so all she had to do was print and tape the label on the box. AND... According to company policy, credit will only be issued once the product is received at Amazon. In this case the customer was issued credit to her account right away. Speed trap avoided and another happy Amazon customer.

Customers Value Speed!

Speed involves using tools and techniques to dramatically reduce the time needed to complete a task while still placing a high importance on the level of quality. Remember, customers will reciprocate your helpful actions. When you resolve situations quickly and effectively and then respond to their need, most customers will pay you back with continued or increased loyalty, goodwill, and even repurchasing. Keep in mind, there's nobody more valuable than the customer.

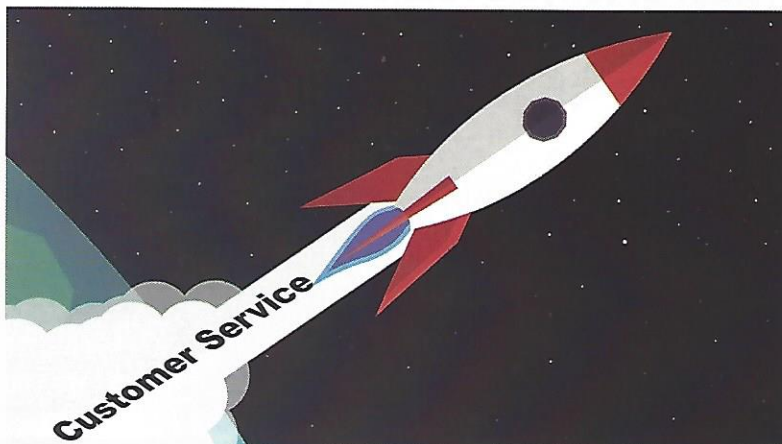
Just ask Apple. They are known worldwide for service and speed. They take care of questions, problems, and concerns faster than competitors. Apple has elevated customer service into a science. Today, the company stands shoulders

above the competition when it comes to alleviating the stresses a customer might experience. There's no outsourcing as they specialize in fixing Apple products and making a stressful situation more manageable. They make it easy and fast.

Apple's secret weapon is incredible customer service. The most recent earnings report listed Apple as the most valuable company on the planet at a mind-blowing \$775 billion with a staggering \$261.5 billion cash balance. Written out, that is "\$261,500,000,000.00!"

In my book *Empowerment: A Way of Life*, I illustrate four challenges that all businesses face. They are:

- Many executives don't trust the customer. They believe the customer is trying to take advantage of them. Employees feel the same way.
- We don't trust employees. We pay them as little as we can and have even less confidence in their ability to make decisions. We have a belief that our lying, cheating customers are going to take advantage of our incompetent employees.
- With *Empowerment* you don't need as many managers and supervisors. They're not overly excited about losing their perceived power, nor are they thrilled about the potential of losing their jobs.
- Very few employees are on their knees at night praying for *Empowerment*. It's just too risky.



I stress that *Empowerment* means every employee has the ability to make **fast** decisions in favor of the customer. It's important that we are honest and sincere in our efforts to service our customers. The only way we can do that is by empowering employees to satisfy the customer **quickly** and to their satisfaction.

“When you resolve situations quickly and effectively, and then respond to their need, most customers will pay you back with continued or increased loyalty, goodwill, and even repurchasing”

Satisfying customers quickly benefits everyone. A company's success lies in empowered employees. It is important to train employees and make sure they have trust in what empowerment will bring to a company. Moreover, happy, empowered, fulfilled employees are the key to creating "over-happy customers" for your company.

When employees are empowered and given responsibility, they use their talents and skills to maximize the opportunities. And as you can see by the most successful companies in the world, empowered, responsible employees that know the **value of speed** contributes greatly to your bottom line.

About the Author:

John Tschohl is a professional speaker, trainer, and consultant. He is the President and founder of Service Quality Institute (the global leader in customer service) with operations in over 40 countries. John is a self-made millionaire traveling and speaking more than 50 times each year. He is considered to be one of the foremost authorities on service strategy, success, empowerment and customer service in the world. John's monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.



“Speed is making fast decisions, on the spot, in favor of customers.”

~John Tschohl

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