

Tool 12-8**Customer Service Formula**

CUSTOMER SERVICE FORMULA

Use the following steps to ensure that you reach an acceptable resolution to customer-service challenges.

Listen	<p>The main things a customer wants in a challenging situation are a solution and to know that his or her concerns have been heard.</p> <p>Practice active listening skills to ensure you get to the root of the problem. Listen carefully, ask questions, take notes, use appropriate body language and tone, and restate information to ensure that you understand correctly.</p>
Apologize	<p>Apologizing doesn't mean you're accepting blame for a situation. It is simply expressing your regret that a customer is experiencing a negative situation.</p>
Conduct Two-Way Conversation	<p>Ask open-ended questions that can't be answered with a "yes" or "no" so that you can get information on the situation. Summarize and paraphrase what the customer is saying so you can try to get to the root of the problem.</p>
Determine Solution Together	<p>Allow the customer to bring solutions first. Amend his or her solution as needed and see if you can reach an acceptable solution in that manner before moving to alternate solutions.</p>
Explain What Will Happen Next	<p>Give the steps that will happen, deadlines, and any other follow-up actions that you will take to repair the situation.</p>
Thank Them	<p>A sincere thank you at the end of a challenging situation can help restore positive customer opinion. The last thing they hear before they leave should always be a positive comment. Additionally, letting customers know that you appreciate the fact that they called your attention to the problem helps them to feel like a part of the solution.</p>