



# The Voice of Your Customer

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## **They Attended the Customer Service Training, Right?**

By Crystal L. Kendrick

The most successful business leaders know that happy customers become very loyal customers; thus they value the often sizeable investment in customer service training programs with the intent of creating exceptional customer experiences. Business leaders often stress the importance of providing outstanding customer service during employee presentations and routinely include their commitment to customer service in mission statements and strategic plans.

Organizations will then hire experienced trainers and highly recommended consultants to design and implement a world class Customer Service Training Program. Employees spend hours in classes and workshops, watching videos, completing exercises and even role playing customer scenes. At the end of the project, everyone in the organization is on board and customers are happy.

Within weeks, business leaders and customers begin to experience many of the same behaviors that warranted the Customer Service Training Program including improper communication techniques, a perceived disinterest when completing tasks and a reluctance to simply “go the extra mile”. Without fail, business leaders ask, “have they attended the customer service training class” and then begin to question the content and delivery of the program.

Unfortunately, exceptional customer experiences are not a direct result of a good customer service training program but rather a change in the culture of the organization. While business leaders often promote excellent customer service, it is important to include a good combination of technical competencies and customer service techniques with practical examples of positive behaviors to be implemented while interacting with customers. In addition, it is also very important to include customer service objectives in employee performance measurements throughout the organization, develop a scheduled observation program and offer meaningful recognition when exceptional service is provided.

Without a change to the culture of the organization, employees will, by nature, continue to focus on the financial and product quality objectives that they believe will ultimately result in an improved performance evaluation, recognition and possibly promotional opportunities. To consistently create exceptional experiences, customer service must be taught, expected, measured and recognized!

*Crystal L. Kendrick is the President of The Voice of Your Customer, a consulting firm specializing in survey research, market assessments, business trainings and social marketing campaigns named the 2007 SCOMBC Emerging MBE of the Year. For more information, visit [www.thevoiceofyourcustomer.com](http://www.thevoiceofyourcustomer.com).*



*Do you offer EXCEPTIONAL customer experiences...or simply good products and services?*