



Know Your Weaknesses

Find out where you fall short, and improve
By CHRIS TOOKER

In sports and business, there's a saying that goes, "Manage to your strengths and weaknesses." When your Personal Brand and your reputation for customer care are the backbones of your success, facing up to your strong suits and shortcomings helps you build a better, stronger brand, and a more prosperous business.

Usually, we know what we do well; after all, we spend most of our time doing it; however, in customer service, it isn't the things you do well that clients remember, it's the mistakes you've made or the times you've fallen short that stick in their memories. So a key strategy for improving your overall level of customer service – and customer satisfaction- is recognizing your weaknesses and dealing with them head-on.

Three Ways to Correct Customer Care Weaknesses

1. **Accept** the fact that to get better, you have to be aware of your strengths and weaknesses. If you are unsure of the areas or skills that need improving, ask a few of your customers for their honest feedback. You'll be surprised how many will be delighted to help you. When you are genuinely interested in building a better, stronger Personal Brand, your customers are your best resources for improvement. They will help you discover service blind spots you might not have recognized-and they'll remind you of the areas in which your service is strong. You'll probably learn about some areas of your business that need wholesale change. Don't be afraid to change. It's the only way to make the big leaps ahead.

2. **Acquire** help, knowledge or resources that complement your strengths. Look for support, services and tips to fill the gaps in your service offerings. Don't simply focus on solving the problem; that's like plugging a hole in a leaky boat. You should be looking for ways to avoid the rocks! Develop processes to ensure that your service is sterling from the first time your customers come into contact with your business. Also, ask other business owners or professionals; they'll usually share effective tactics they've used to close their own service gaps.

Attack the area in which you want to see improvement. Commit to the idea that you will get better! Remember, your customers are counting on you. As your service improves, customer satisfaction will rise and you'll feel more confident in every aspect of your business.

Aspects of Your Service to Examine:

- ◆ Sales
- ◆ Organization
- ◆ Follow Up
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Quality Control
- ◆ Speed
- ◆ What else can I help you with?

Tools You Can Use to Improve:

- ◆ Planners
- ◆ Consultants
- ◆ Software
- ◆ Training
- ◆ Surveys
- ◆ Handbooks

Remember: if you are not improving, your competition is. After you have received feedback from your customers, evaluated options and worked on your entire service plan, share your ideas with colleagues, customers and staff. People may enjoy being served, but they value and appreciate being listened to when they know their opinion matters.

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How Can I Help You?
Customer service as the final, most important pillar of Personal Branding