



Reputation: Intentions or Results

Five Steps for Recovery that Build Your Reputation

By CHRIS TOOKER

How Can I Help You?

Customer service as the final, most important pillar of Personal Branding

One of the many benefits of a good reputation is the blessings of repeat and referral business; however, anyone with any significant experience or a significant track record in business can tell you that it is only a matter of time before you trip or stumble in your delivery of the products or services you sell! This for many is their moment of truth and opportunity. There are so many different causes for the failure in their delivery, but this is non-critical to the customer! This becomes a catalyst for many professionals to show their true commitment to a high level of service measured by customer satisfaction or the lack of it.

You now have an opportunity to make your reputation. In order to make this missed step a positive catalyst I have found five basic steps that need to be implemented quickly but first a paradigm shift might be in order. I've found when the service isn't up to par the stress already exists for whoever is providing the service so it helps to remind yourself that they are the customer and this is your chance to grow and prove yourself as a high caliber service provider.

Remember that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care!

Five Steps for Recovering

The Key to Excellent Service is how you respond when you don't perform well!

1. Listen to and acknowledge the client and their circumstances and recognize how they are feeling! (*Angry, frustrated, disappointed, insulted, etc.*) Have empathy: personalize your response; I know how I'd feel, use compassion. **Remember they are not upset with your motivations, just your missed delivery!**

2. Apologize for the situation and anything that makes them know you are unhappy about how they are feeling. *If I were in your shoes I would.... be just as frustrated, disappointed, etc.* **It may not be your fault but it is your responsibility to help fix it.**

3. Identify that you, your firm can do better and let them know that there is a very sincere effort being made to make sure this does not happen again and you are going to try and remedy the situation **with a sense of urgency committing to get help to solve their problem isn't a guarantee that you can fix it; just a promise you will make every effort.**

4. Ask them what you can do to make them happy. (Scary but very key to a successful recovery.) Be genuine and give them the control they already have. Many times customers don't want what you think they do so ask and see if you can make them happy.

5. Maintain and verify the communication until the client is happy. Keep your sense of humor! Be able to laugh at yourself! Remember you can't fix crazy: But you should at least try to help them! Your efforts to stay calm, focused and genuine about their satisfaction is often the key to winning customers for life.

A Key to Being Effective is not in What You Say but How You Say It!

I believe I have been most successful by not doing everything right but by doing the "right" thing! Let your convictions and actions build your reputation!

Chris Tooker is Founder of Chris Tooker Training, a company specializing in improving customer satisfaction for the automotive industry. He is an entrepreneur, author, motivational speaker and "servant". Chris can be reached by e-mail at ctooker@christooker.com or (949) 305-9998.