

Customer Service Solutions

Common Sense Tips That Really Do Work

By Larry Williams

There are times when we make decisions at work that are more personal in nature. To us, they may seem harmless as they are not intended to interfere with our day-to-day activities on the job. While sometimes done with the best of intentions, these decisions can also hamper our efforts to deliver great customer service. The following tips will help you stay focused on your customers.

Don't invite friends to work

While it might seem innocent enough, most supervisors frown on socializing at work. Several things at play here could damage your reputation. For starters, it is simply not within your authority to grant permission or a special invitation for people to visit your place of work. You would be hard pressed to find an employer who would encourage this sort of invitation.

The presence of a friend can contribute to a social atmosphere in the workplace. Most employers expect you to concentrate on work and not conversations with friends. This, in turn, would give your superiors cause to question your priorities and dedication.

Liability issues also come up when friends assist you or travel in work areas not designed for untrained and uninvited people. If your friend gets injured as a result of their extended stay on the premises, your employer may have to deal with legal complications, insurance problems, and worker's compensation insurance investigations. Any of these consequences can jeopardize your job security.

Unless it is authorized and/or encouraged, don't invite friends to work. Your job requires your undivided attention. Any distraction, regardless of how innocent it may be, can seriously affect your reputation and tenure.

Don't give out personal information

Personal information is personal. When you begin to feel comfortable with a returning customer, it's easy to see the glass as half full and not half empty. Most people prefer to stay positive and not consider the way some people can complicate personal lives with unnecessary drama. Sadly, many workers have placed themselves in compromising and embarrassing situations simply by being nice and sharing personal information.

Be selective and careful when you give out personal information. Your last name, contact information, on-line social media screen names, and the coffee houses you frequent reveal the kind of information a customer can use to contact you away from work. Protect valuable information such as your marital status, children, and type of vehicle you drive.

Even when you want a relationship you have formed at work to be long-lasting, be extremely selective in how forthcoming you are with this personal information. There are too many people in this world with bad intentions.

Don't assume that everyone you come in contact with is harmless and has your best interests at heart. Don't give out personal information that might compromise you and the many things you have worked so hard to achieve.

Recap: Have the clarity to make personal decisions that will have minimal risk of affecting your job, employer, performance or self. When you're at work, be the best employee you can be. When you are off the clock, be the best friend you can be. Next time we'll get dressed for success!

(Editor's Note: Larry Williams is the author of the book – *Customer Service A to Z*. He is a nationally-recognized seminar speaker and passionate about spreading a positive message of customer service standards. For more information, please visit the website <http://www.CustomerServiceAtoZ.com>.)