

# **Customer Service Strategies**

***Delivering World Class Customer Service***

**August 2023  
Dr. Stacey Smith**



**FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT CENTER

# Training Objectives

*At the end of today, participants will be able to:*

**Objective 1:** Explain the importance of customer service.

**Objective 2:** Define 7-11 and 10 & 5 rules

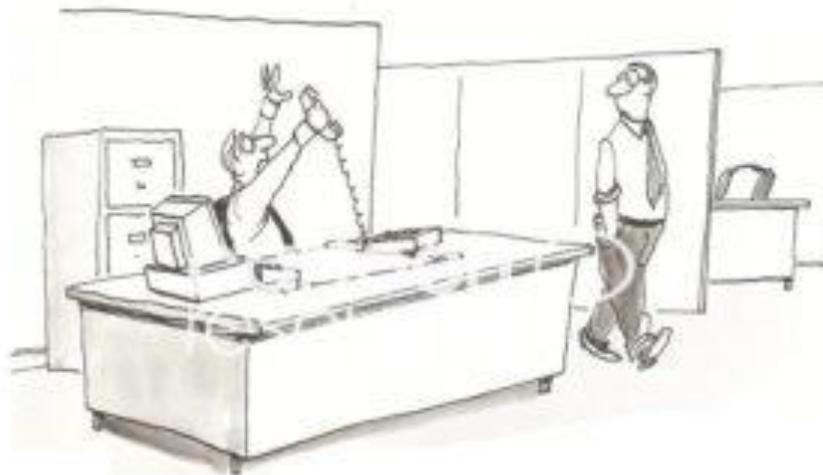
**Objective 3:** Describe the anger cycle

**Objective 4:** Create a 'pickle' to go the extra step

## cus·tom·er serv·ice

*noun*

the assistance and advice provided by a company to those people who buy or use its products or services.



**"I have a customer on the line, but I'm not trained on what to say to them!"**

# Customer Service

Take a moment and consider, what was your best customer experience ever?  
What made it so great?

Who are your customers at BCC on a day-to-day basis?

**External**

**Internal**

**“Your customer doesn’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” – Damon Richards**

# Customer Service

**Why is customer service  
so important at BCC?**

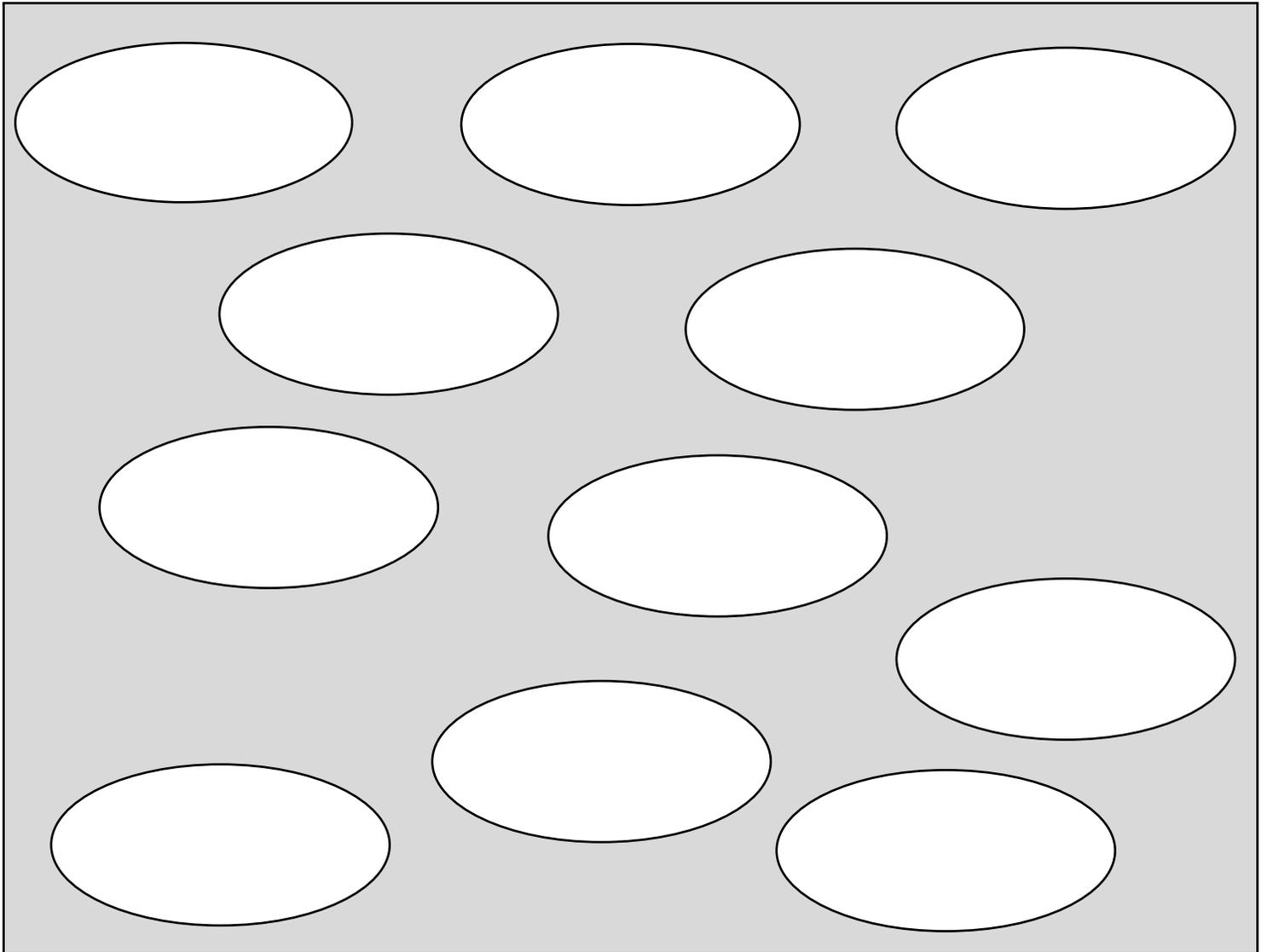


“People will forget what you said.  
They will forget what you did.  
But they will never forget how you made them feel.”

-Maya Angelou

# The 7/11 Rule

According to Dr. Michael Solomon's (NYU) research:  
It only takes 7 seconds to form 11 impressions about you & your organization.

A large rectangular area with a light gray background, containing 11 empty white ovals arranged in a grid-like pattern. The ovals are intended for users to write down their impressions.

Based on the 11 impressions, your customer will make 3 decisions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# The 10 & 5 Rule

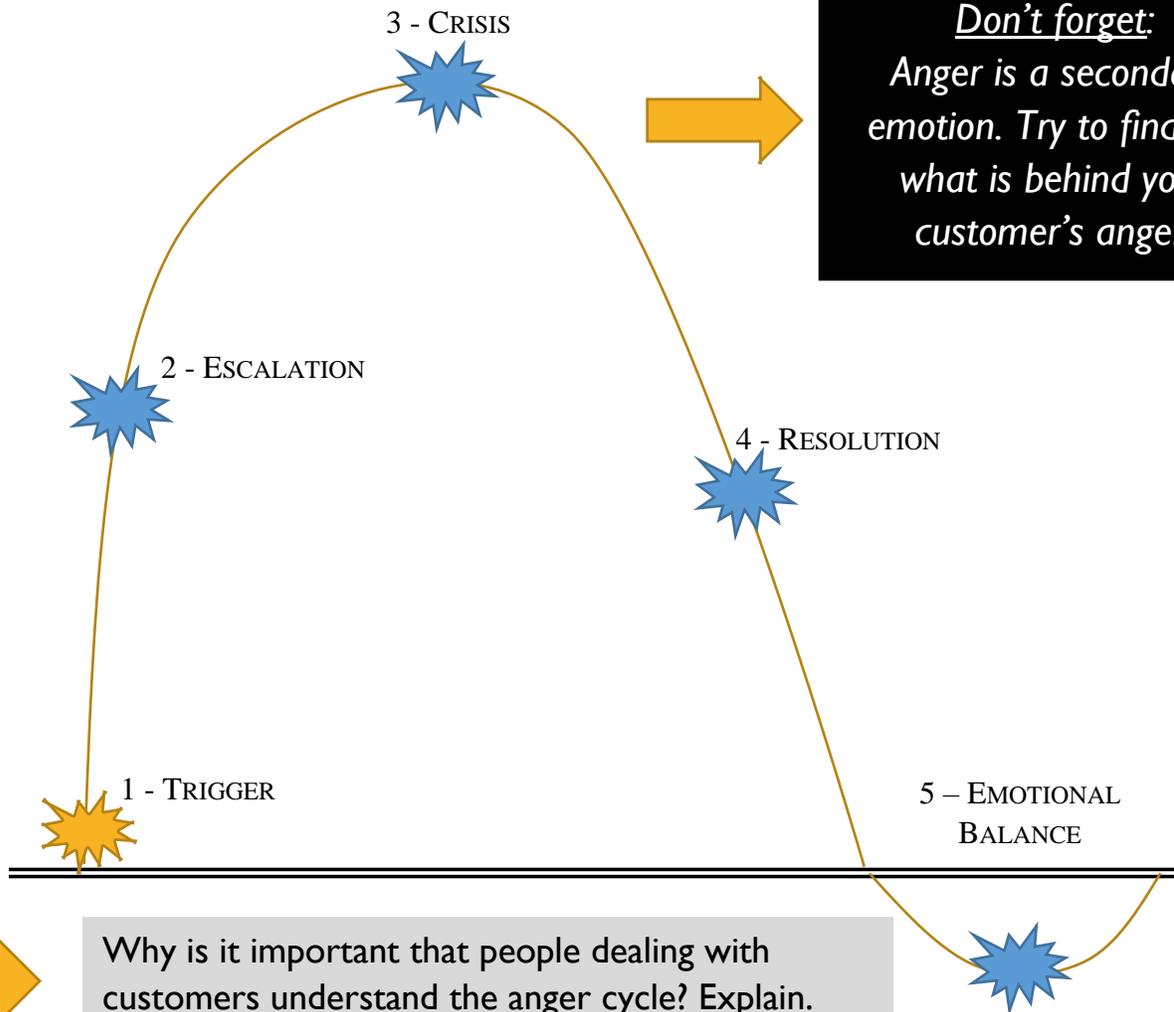
The 10/5 Rule, also known as the 'Zone of Hospitality' is a well-known guiding principle for extending courtesy to customers. Companies like Disney, Wal-Mart and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel use it. What is it?

As a customer service representative: at 10 feet away, we should:

At 5 feet away, we should:

# The Anger Cycle

\*Adapted from "Delivering Exceptional Customer Service, Ingrid Vaughan, Encore"



Why is it important that people dealing with customers understand the anger cycle? Explain.

---

---

---

---

---

*Stage 1 notes, thoughts, & ideas:*

# The Anger Cycle

*Stage 2 notes, thoughts, & ideas:*

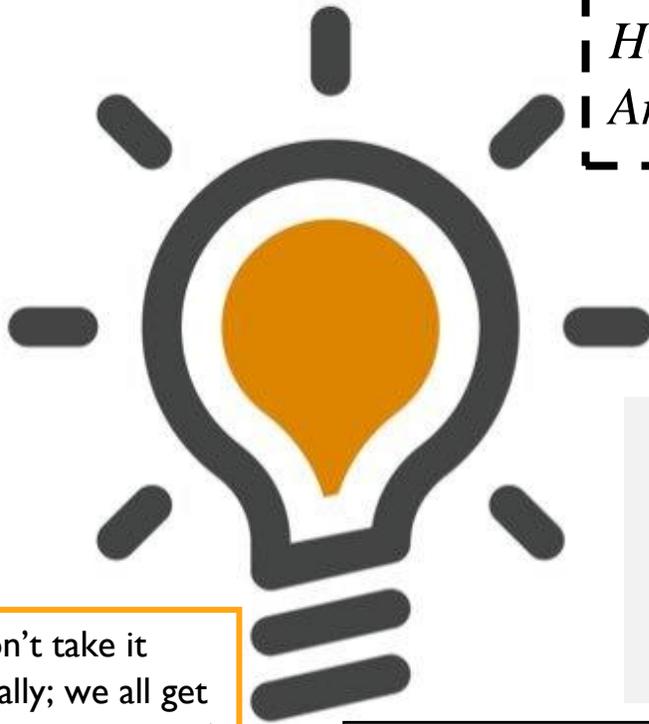
*Stage 3 notes, thoughts, & ideas:*

*Stage 4 notes, thoughts, & ideas:*

*Stage 5 notes, thoughts, & ideas:*

# The Anger Cycle

\*Adapted from "Delivering Exceptional Customer Service, Ingrid Vaughan, Encore"



## *Helpful Hints for Dealing with Angry or Upset People*

Flip the situation in your mind: consider the position a challenge rather than a problem.

Don't interrupt or offer advice; sometimes that person just might want to vent.

Thank them for sharing their concerns.

Don't take it personally; we all get frustrated sometimes!

Listen and take notes the entire time.

Apologize assertively & genuinely if you've made a mistake.

Tell the upset person what you CAN do by using positive phrasing.

If you've promised them you'll do something, follow up!

Try to find common ground or solutions you can both agree on.

DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT!

*Do you have any other ideas on how to deal with angry or upset people? Jot your thoughts down in the space below.*

# The Pickle

\*Bob Farrell, Give 'em the Pickle and They'll be back!, 1998

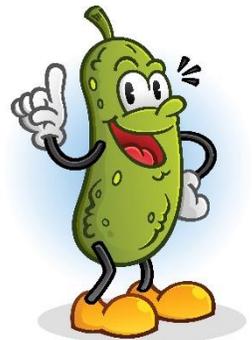
➤ **Service**: Make serving others your #1 Priority!



➤ **Attitude**: Choose your attitude.

➤ **Consistency**: Set high standards and stick to them.

➤ **Teamwork**: Look for ways to make each other look good.



What is that little something extra  
you can do to make people happy?

**AS A UNIT:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

**AS AN INDIVIDUAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

# Delivering World-Class Service

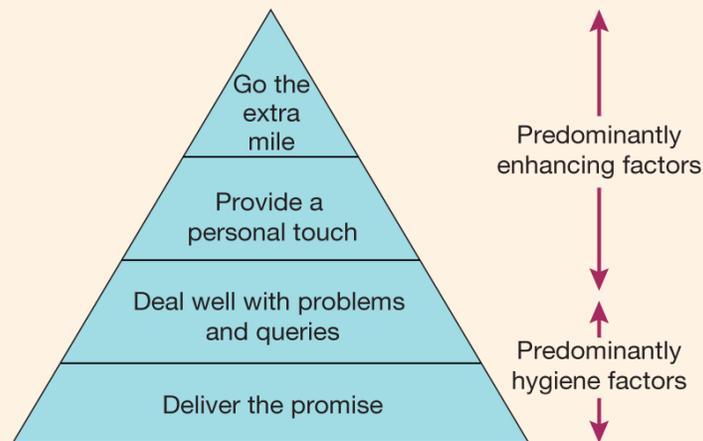
**What is a world-class organization?**



*It's an organization who has a reputation for providing excellent service. This high level of service is better for an organization, overall, as it leads to higher revenues, lower costs, lower customer and staff turnover, thus greater profit in for-profit organizations. Everyone wins!*

## **7 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOMEONE WHO DELIVERS WORLD-CLASS SERVICE**

- Empathy
- Problem-solving skills
- Communication skills
- Patience
- Active Listening skills
- Positive Attitude
- Quick Response Time/Initiative



\*Institute of Customer Service, Johnston, Clark, Shulver (2012)

*To WOW, you must differentiate yourself, which means do something a little unconventional and innovative. You must do something that's above and beyond what's expected. And whatever you do must have an emotional impact on the receiver.*

*–Tony Hsieh, former Zappos CEO*

# Final Reflection

*It's important to have some next steps determined before leaving today!  
Take a moment to consider:*

How does doing your job well (or poorly) affect your co-workers? Explain.

How does your job affect your customers?

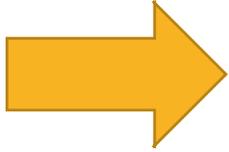
What are two new things you learned today?

What is one new strategies or idea you can implement TOMORROW?

In which areas are you doing well?

In which areas do you need to grow?

## Extra: Customer Service Behaviors



There are so many aspects to customer service that it would be impossible to cover everything. The next few pages titled “Additional Resources,” are great tools for your Customer Service Toolbox. When you have a moment to yourself, look through these additional pages for more great ideas!

### 15 Key Customer Service Behaviors

Below is a list that includes a few more ideas to make you a customer service pro. Do you utilize any of these while working with customers or guests?

Break the ice – Hand out a compliment, talk about the weather, news of local interest, or almost any kind of small talk. Watch for the focused shopper, and use an icebreaker that is focused on the buying decision – anticipate questions, provide additional information, offer suggestion or recommendation (60-80% of retail buying decisions are made POS). When you greet them, they are most likely unsure. Reassure them, ask them questions.

Compliment freely and sincerely – Notice clothing and accessories, children’s behavior (positive), even something they own. Set a goal to compliment and watch the results.

Call people by name – Be careful. Don’t be too familiar too soon (disrespectful – especially with first names).

Talk to customers with your eyes – Make eye contact...shows interest in communicating further...Do this as soon as possible, even if you’re with another customer. Men and women are different in this respect. Longer eye contact with women is more acceptable.

Ask often – “How am I doing?” – Be receptive of people’s comments. It takes courage not only to accept criticism, but to request it.

Listen more than you talk. - Focus on content. Hold your fire until they finish. Work at listening and resist distractions. Be sure to seek clarification from customers to fully understand their needs.

Say “please, thank you, and you’re welcome” – Don’t use “no problem,” “there you go,” or other slang. It is less professional.

Reassure customers in their decision to do business with you – Try to reduce the cognitive dissonance associated with purchase – “I think you’ll look great in that” or “your friend will love that gift.”

# Extra: Customer Service Behaviors

## 15 Key Customer Service Behaviors, continued

Smile – We’ve talked about the importance of a smile in daily activities. Smile with your eyes, not just your mouth. In our culture, it is expected. Work on this if you need to.

Use good telephone techniques – Remember: they can’t see you. You have to express good service using only your voice. Give them your name...Smile into the phone...Keep the caller informed...Invite the caller to get to the point...Commit to the request of the caller...Thank the caller...Let your voice fluctuate in tone, rate, and loudness...Use hold carefully...Use friendly, tactful words.

Reach out and touch them – Make sure it’s socially and personally acceptable. This can be a very powerful form of communication. (i.e., handshake, etc.)

Enjoy people and their diversity – Accept the differences in people and enjoy it. It can be difficult to avoid being judgmental and negative, but it really helps your attitude. Try it for a day....verbal discipline can be a habit that pays off.

Maintain a positive attitude about selling – everyone is in sales, whether that’s your job title or not. You are always selling your business to others.

Watch your dress, grooming, and workplace attractiveness – First impressions can greatly influence a perception of character and trustworthiness. What is appropriate is what your organization considers a level of professionalism they want to convey.

**Are there any other keys to customer service that you’ve discovered?**

---

**Dr. Stacey Smith, Facilitator**

Email: [slgsmith@fhsu.edu](mailto:slgsmith@fhsu.edu)

Phone: 785-628-4696



**FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT CENTER

**Sabrina Gaddis, Director**  
**Management Development Center**

Email: [slwilliam@fhsu.edu](mailto:slwilliam@fhsu.edu)

Phone: 785-628-4124

Fort Hays State University  
McCartney Hall 224

[www.fhsu.edu/mdc](http://www.fhsu.edu/mdc)