

Customer Service in the Movies

Discussion & Role-play

Airline & Hotel

Michael Dyer

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Read and Discuss

Sometimes it is just not possible to meet customer expectations because of circumstances beyond our control. This unit looks at how to deal with disappointment and what we can do to manage customer expectations. In this example, the customer's flight is cancelled because of bad weather. In situations like these the customer is going to feel frustrated and possibly angry and a certain amount of empathy is required. You should show the customer that you understand how they feel through your words and your actions. But empathy alone is not enough. You must also show that you are doing your utmost to find a resolution that will satisfy both your customer and your company. When things are outside of our control, we feel powerless, and this can lead to frustration and anger. You can ease this feeling and diffuse the situation by firstly, keeping the customer informed through regular updates, and then, if possible, by involving them in the decision making process. By allowing the customer to make choices, they are buying into the final solution and so are sharing responsibility for the outcome. By showing that you care and working with the customer to find a resolution, you will turn the situation around and later the customer will remember what you have done and appreciate the work that you put in.



Setting the Scene

1. In what ways could you show that you sympathize with your customer's plight?
2. Why do you think it is important to give regular updates?
3. What sort of options could you offer your customer to help them regain control?
4. Have you ever experienced a similar situation? How did it make you feel?

First Impressions

1. Who are the characters in this story?
2. What is the relationship between these characters?
3. Where does this scene take place?
4. What is happening in this scene? Why?
5. What did you find surprising or interesting about the scene?



Customer Service Tips

Discuss how these tips may apply to the situation in the scene

- ☐ Be prepared for stressful situations. Have a thick skin and a sincere expression.
- ☐ Be accommodating and informative. Keep it simple.
- ☐ Exhaust all possible alternatives to find the one that serves the customer best.

Key Vocabulary

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ be grounded | I'm afraid your flight has been grounded because of the fog. |
| ☐ due to | All flights have been cancelled due to extreme weather conditions. |
| ☐ standby | I can put your on standby . If there is a cancellation you'll get a seat. |
| ☐ on the first flight to | I'd like to book a seat on the first flight to London. |
| ☐ deal with | I'm sorry, we're dealing with a lot of rescheduled flights right now. |
| ☐ the best I can do | The best I can do is to get you on a flight first thing in the morning. |
| ☐ miss a flight | I missed my flight . Could you possibly rebook me on a later flight? |
| ☐ not helping | I'm afraid the weather is not helping . All aircraft have been grounded. |
| ☐ affiliated with | Is there another airline you're affiliated with that has seats available? |
| ☐ transfer to | You could fly to Frankfurt and transfer to another flight there. |

Language Point

1. Are you good at dealing with difficult problems?
2. Have you ever had to deal with an emergency?
3. Have you dealt with a difficult issue recently?
4. How do you deal with difficult customers?
5. Do you often deal with...?

What happened?

1. Why can't Brad and Kate get on their flight today?
2. Why won't it suit them to fly tomorrow instead?
3. What is the Radisson?
4. Is Brad pleased that he is being offered a suite at the Radisson?
5. How does Kate feel about the way that Brad is reacting?
6. Is it the ticket agent's fault that Brad is angry?
7. Why does Brad ask if he can be taken to McDonald's?
8. Does the ticket agent handle the situation well?
9. Where are Kate and Brad trying to fly to?
10. What does Kate mean when she asks about affiliated airlines?

Notes

Ad-Lib the Scene

List the key events in the storyline and then ad-lib the scene

-

Perfect Service

Rewrite the video scene demonstrating ideal customer service in this situation

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Mini Dialog

Complete the dialog with words and phrases from the Key Vocabulary list

Emma: Hi. I got stuck in traffic and I just _____ my _____. Can you get me on the _____ available _____ New York? I just have to get there tonight.

Ticket Office: Oh dear! We're very busy today. Let's see what we have available.

Emma: Please, you've got to help me. It's really important that I get a flight today.

Ticket Office: I'm sorry but it's _____ that the bad weather is closing in. There's a possibility that all flights will _____ the snow.

Emma: Don't I know it. That's what held me up on the way over here.

Ticket Office: OK. _____ with our company is to get you on standby, but I think I might be able to get you on a flight with another airline that we are _____. How does that sound?

Emma: Sounds great. When does it leave?

Ticket Office: Well, this is lucky. The flight with our sister company is boarding in less than an hour so there's a good chance it will take off before the weather closes everything down. I'll _____ you _____ that.

Paraphrasing

Rewrite these sentences with phrases used in the dialog above

1. Flights will be cancelled if the weather deteriorates.

2. I was late because the roads were busy.

3. I can put you on a waiting list in case anyone cancels.

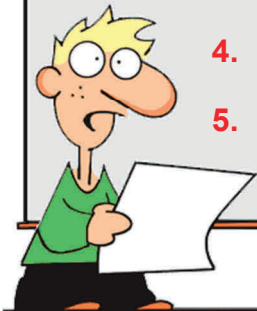
4. Does that sound OK?

5. Oh dear! That might not be possible.

Matching

Connect the two parts of the sentences

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. I'm sorry, but that's... | a. ...short of staff today. |
| 2. It's not helping that we are... | b. ...being caught in heavy traffic. |
| 3. I'm going to be late due to... | c. ...all flights had been grounded. |
| 4. At the airport they found that... | d. ...because he was too busy. |
| 5. He asked me to deal with it... | e. ...the best I can do. |



Conversation Jumble

Work with a partner and construct a conversation using the given words

- A: announcement / I / heard / that / just / an / grounded / flights / be / tonight / might
- B: extreme / afraid / I'm / due / it's / the / to / sir / conditions / weather
- A: well / I / to / can / an / flight / earlier / transfer / ?
- B: sir / time / are / scheduled / to / you / fly / what?
- A: till / not / I'm / but / midnight / now / available / ready / anything / if / is
- B: very / I'm / sir / sorry / best / I / do / put / the / can / but / is / to / standby / you / on
- A: have / will / that / then / do / to
- B: any / it's / if / clear / help / is / weather / the / to / tomorrow / expected

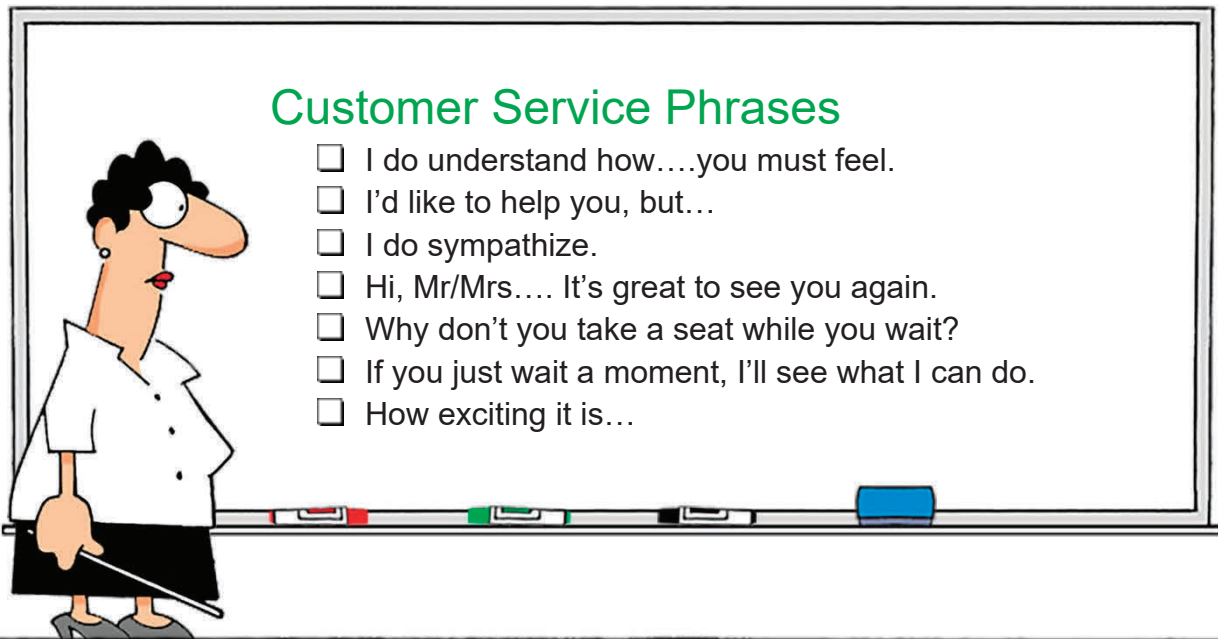
Synonyms

Write a synonym for the given word to complete the sentence

1. His symptoms were very _____. He had to go to the hospital right away. (severe)
2. She kept going even though the _____ were very bad. (circumstances)
3. You are _____ to do a training run today. (programmed)
4. It's a _____ day. The sun is shining and it's nice and warm. (beautiful)
5. That's _____ news! I'm really pleased for you. (wonderful)
6. Do you like this _____ of thing? I prefer something quieter myself. (sort)
7. Losing your temper is not really _____ to sort out the problem. (assisting)
8. If you are going to the party as well can you _____ give me a lift? (perhaps)
9. Our office is _____ with theirs. They are all part of the same company. (associated)
10. I will have to _____ to another train when I get there. (shift)

How may I help you?

Complete the dialog with the most suitable phrases from the list



Customer: My name is Emma Jones. I'm booked on the 11 o'clock flight to San Francisco but I see it's been delayed. Can you tell me how long it's going to be? I have to get there by tomorrow morning. I'm getting married. It's my wedding, you see.

Ticket clerk: _____ I'm afraid there's no news yet.

Customer: Surely you must know something? I'm desperate to get there.

Ticket clerk: _____ worried _____, Ms Jones.

Customer: I don't know what I'm going to do. I'm going to be late for my own wedding.

Ticket clerk: _____.

Customer: Is there nothing you can do? I can't miss my own wedding.

Ticket clerk: _____.

Customer: Oh, thank you. I don't care about the cost. I just need to get there.

Ticket clerk: _____

Which of the following customer service rules does this dialog demonstrate?

- ☐ Looking on every interaction as a positive attitude opportunity.
- ☐ Controlling your biases and judgments so that you treat all customers equally.
- ☐ Showing empathy for the customer's situation to establish a rapport between you.



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