



# TRANSFORMING YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE INTO A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

BY ANGEL ONDO

## ANGEL'S "DO'S"

**Listen:** I can't say enough about how people need to listen to their customers. However, it's more than just the words they are saying we should pay attention to but the tone in the voice or the pace at which they are speaking. **Listen.** Are they upset, confused or unsure? Listening is the key to understanding your customer needs.

**Probe:** Ask questions and more questions. Effective probing is necessary and required if you are going to **get to the heart** of what the customer needs. Do they need to place an order, is there an issue with a previous order or is there something else they just aren't sure how to ask?

**Take action:** Tell your customer what you are going to do. Don't waste their time with all the things you can't do but focus on what you can do. Customers are not interested in hearing about company policies or rules you have to follow. **They only want to know what you can do for them.** Find those things you can control and do those things for your customers. They will thank you for it.

**Follow up:** If you promised to back with a customer **DO IT.** Nothing speaks volumes to a customer more than doing what you said you would do. This shows you truly want to resolve their issue.

## ANGEL'S "DON'TS"

**Interrupt:** This is a bad thing in general conversation but definitely not smart when dealing with your customers. If a customer is trying to ask a question or explain a situation let them finish their thoughts. **I know this is hard for some people.** You want to jump to the solution or make an assumption on what the customer needs. A large amount of time will be wasted if you don't take the time to get to the heart of what the customer is asking.

**Blame Game:** If you are attempting to resolve an issue for your customer, blaming others will make you and your company look bad. **Take ownership for the situation and apologize for it.** I am not saying you personally are to blame but telling the customer you are sorry for the situation or you understand how frustrating the issue may be is highly effective. However, telling a customer some department or group of people are to blame is cowardly. Keep the issues simple and stick to the facts. Blaming gets you know where quickly.

**Taking it personally:** This is a tough one. If someone is yelling at you or saying, "you did this or that", it can be hard to take. **Keep calm and listen.** Wait for the customer to finish their thoughts and go from there. If a customer becomes verbally abusive you are within your rights to politely tell the customer, you will not be able to help them if they continue to behave in that manner or use certain language. This is always a 50/50 shot on how the customer will respond. The hope is always the customer will realize they need to keep things professional.

**"Can you hold please":** This can be effective when you need to sneeze, cough or ask someone else a question. But always **be sure to ask the customer** if you can put them on hold and if they agree give them some idea of how long you will be gone. Nothing can escalate a seemingly normal interaction quicker than putting a customer on hold for a lengthy period of time. This could turn what would have been a normal interaction into one you would rather not have.

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