



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 1, 2022

Contact: John Tschohl  
(612) 382-5636  
Email: [john@servicequality.com](mailto:john@servicequality.com)  
Web: [www.customer-service.com](http://www.customer-service.com)

Note to Editor: Feel free to use all or parts of this news release. John Tschohl is also available for personal interviews.

## **CALL CUSTOMERS BY NAME**

By John Tschohl

For most of us, one of the sweetest word we can hear is our name. When someone calls us by name, it connects us. That is true no matter the situation. It's especially true when we are making a purchase, whether it is a cup of coffee or a car. The price we are paying is incidental to the transaction.

Only a handful of U.S. companies, however, understand the power of calling customers by name. Three that come to mind are Amazon, Apple, and Delta Air Lines. There is no reason for other companies not to do so, too.

I have found that there are three reasons that employees don't use customers' names. First is fear; they are afraid they will mispronounce the name. Second is indifference; they tell themselves that it isn't important and that they are too busy to learn and use a customer's name. Third is a lack of training; they don't understand the importance of using customers' names and don't have the tools they need to do so.

You can help them by training them and by including several role-playing scenarios in that training. When meeting a customer for the first time, an employee should

smile and introduce himself by saying, “Good, afternoon. I’m Charlie, and I’ll be helping you today. What is your name?” As Charlie goes on to talk with the customer, he should use the customer’s name during the conversation, which cements it in his mind.

If you are greeting a returning customer whose name you remember, you can say, “It’s nice to see you again, John. What can I can I help you with today?” It’s also important to use customer’s name when they pay for their purchases. Most people pay with a credit card. Look at the name on that card, and then thank the customer. Say, “John, thanks for your patronage. I hope to see you again soon.”

When an employee greets loyal customers by using their names, it makes those customers feel valued and increases their loyalty to your business. It also differentiates your business from your competitors, something that is of increasing importance, especially given the state of our economy today.

Let’s say you own a restaurant. It’s not unusual to have at least 10 restaurants within a 1-mile radius, which means customers have several choices when dining out. Deciding factors for customers include the quality of your food, price, good service—and employees who address customers by name.

Much too often, customers feel as though they are just numbers. The last time you checked in for a flight with an airline, did the agent hand you your boarding pass and thank you by name? It’s a simple thing to do since your name is clearly printed on your ticket. The same is true when you go through security at any airport. You are required to present your identification, yet no one calls you by name.

I’ve been flying around the world for business for more than 45 years—usually in business class—and spend approximately \$200,000 a year for those flights. And yet I recall only four times that the lead flight attendant has called me my name, which is readily available by looking at the passenger manifest.

On the other hand, while flying from Germany to the United States on Delta Air Lines, the captain came out of the cockpit, stopped by my seat, addressed me by name, and chatted for a few minutes. It was the first—and only—time that has ever happened, and it made me feel important and valued.

Using a customer’s name adds a personal touch to the service you are providing. It gives you a competitive advantage—and it doesn’t cost you anything. When you use customers’ names, you are showing respect and letting them know that you value them.

For more information on John Tschohl and the Service Quality Institute, visit [www.customer-service.com](http://www.customer-service.com).



John Tschohl is the founder and president of the Service Quality Institute—the global leader in customer service—with operations in more than 40 countries. He is considered one of the world’s foremost authorities on all aspects of customer service and has developed 17 customer service training programs, including Remember Me, that are used by companies throughout the world. His monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge at [www.customer-service.com](http://www.customer-service.com). He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.