

a MANA resource for principals and reps

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A close-up portrait of Rick Pierce, a middle-aged man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

College to Sales to Repping

Rick Pierce

Pierce Marketing, LLC

Training the Regional
Sales Manager

Tips for Getting
in Front of
Decision Makers

Use Your Personal
Brand for Prospecting

Principal Focus:
Understanding Reps

Smile —



A First Impression Can Change Everything

BY JOHN TSCHOHL

A genuine smile can change everything — for the customer, your colleagues, and yourself. It's powerful and critical to providing superior customer service.

Why is a smile so important? Because it fosters a positive attitude and forms a good first impression. It sets the stage for everything that follows, and it costs nothing. A smile invites people in. It says, "I like you. I care about you as a person. I value you. I care about your needs. I'm ready to help."

A smile helps you build a positive outlook and attitude that is contagious. When you have a positive attitude, your customers feel more valued, heard, understood and supported in whatever it is they need.

They are much more likely to interact with you and your organization again and are likely to share their positive experiences with other people, which will result in an increase in your customer base. When that happens, it brings with it an increase in sales and profits.

A smile is not only good for business, it's good for your health. In fact, there is growing medical evidence that a positive attitude not only helps you to live a happier life but to live a longer one as well.

Smiling can make you feel better

Research shows that a smile can send a signal to your brain to release endorphins....

both physically and emotionally. Research shows that a smile can send a signal to your brain to release endorphins — which are often referred to as “feel-good hormones” — chemicals in the body that help you relax and lift your mood.

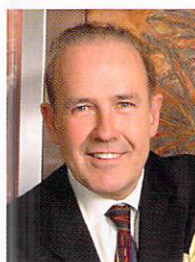
How you look and how you carry yourself are reflections of your internal attitude. Keep your head up, shoulders back, and hands comfortably at your sides. Combine that with a genuine, open smile and you will project self-confidence and a willingness to help your customer.

You are your customer's first impression of the company; make it a good one. How you look is as critical as what you say. When greeting a customer, smile, extend a warm greeting, and be willing to help but don't push. What you say during those first few seconds sets the tone for the customer's entire experience. When completing an interaction with customers, do so with a smile, positivity and information. You might say, “If there is anything else you need, please don't hesitate to let me know.”

Smiles are also important when you're dealing with customers in a

digital world. That means looking directly at the camera and smiling when interacting with a customer via FaceTime or Zoom. It means learning to put a smile in your voice while dealing with a customer over the phone. When texting a customer, choose your words carefully to avoid misunderstandings. It's a good idea to read out loud what you write before you send it to ensure it says what you want it to say.

A genuine and sincere smile — combined with the right words and actions — can also help you head off irate customer encounters. Be attentive, apologize for the situation, empathize with the customer, and provide calm, informative feedback. A genuine smile and the right words and actions can help to calm a difficult situation.



John Tschohl is the founder and president of 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 his book and training program *Coaching for Success*. His monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge at www.customer-service.com. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

It's important that managers and executives recognize the importance of smiles and that they incorporate it into the culture of their organizations. They can start by setting a good example — by smiling at each other, their employees, and their customers.

Whenever you see a customer, even if that customer is 10 feet away from you, make eye contact and smile. How you look and how you carry yourself are reflections of your internal attitude. A smile sets in motion a chain reaction that impacts everything you do — personally and professionally. It sends a physical, welcoming message that draws people to you.

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