



November 1969

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CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

Should the customers' complaints be satisfied at any cost?

"Cost" meaning here, NOT the subject of money, but the coming to a satisfactory solution of the problem of the "complainer". I think we all know what the word "complaint" means: "Grievance" and "Grumble". Two words which, I feel, we would not like to hear too often in our store or department.

So what are we going to do about it?

Well, I suggest that we consider how we get to know about these complaints. Here are the three main channels of information:-

- (1) By receiving a letter in the post
- (2) By means of the telephone
- (3) By means of seeing the customer in the store or department.

Let's consider the last of the three. First of all, we must take great care that we fully understand the grievance of the customer. If it's a case of the customer misunderstanding the problem confronting her, it is important that we correct the problem straight away. The result we now hope for is a happy, contented customer.

Not all problems can be settled straight away, but as long as the complaint remains outstanding you have someone who is a potential bad advertisement for the company. If you had a large number of such people, store profitability would be affected.

If the source of the complaint comes to you by way of the 'phone, and you cannot satisfy the customer straight away, it is essential that you record her address or telephone number, so that when you have the explanation you can either write her or telephone her your comments.

Last, but not least: when a customer writes in, her complaint must be corrected at all costs. I think it's fair to say that not many people like writing letters, which means that a customer who does write one must be excessively annoyed. Here, once again, we must quickly investigate the source of her problems and reply by return of post, even if it is just to acknowledge her letter.

I feel that we do not always have to give in to the customer's fancies, but that we must show her that we are willing to try and solve the complaint. I believe that 90% of the complaints could be settled easily if this line of action were taken.

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CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS - Cont/d

I strongly suggest that if you have a number of complaints caused through goods purchased in the store that you take one of these three actions:-

- (1) Try and exchange goods
- (2) Order a new item
- (3) Refund customer her money

I feel that if you do not try one of these solutions, you will have a dissatisfied customer, who probably will not shop in the store or department again; and who will probably grumble to her friends about the poor service in the store; which we hope is not correct.

Yes, I do feel that all customers' complaints must be settled at all costs, the various ways mentioned above.

An unhappy customer - A BAD ADVERTISEMENT
 ∴ bad advertisement - LESS BUSINESS

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