

# Life-long Learning

By Harry K. Jones

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"Life-long learning" is a popular trend that continues to offer vast opportunities to all those who recognize its value. It also applies to more than a single segment of your business.

For instance, consider its application in a key area such as customer service and satisfaction. Do your customers know what good service is? Companies that give poor service hope their customers don't know the meaning of good service. Companies that provide excellent service help them find out. Educating customers as well as employees is a key factor in providing service.

There's nothing that makes a company look worse than making excellent customer service the centerpiece of a massive advertising campaign when its employees haven't been trained to deliver it. Continuing education is as critical for your customers as it is for your employees.

Customer education goes way beyond simply giving classes in product service and usage. You and your employees should be educating your customer informally, every day, about what makes your products and services worth having.

Are your employees prepared to do that? Employees who know the quality differences between your products and/or services and those of your competitors can explain them to your customers. Ignorance of your products and level of service is costly for your customers as well as for you. You owe it to your customers to educate them before experience does -- the expensive way.

Finally, make sure you educate your customers in just how far you're willing to go for their benefit. If your employees understand that you are not in the business of merely selling products and services, but rather in the business of caring for your customers' needs, you'll be on the road to success.

Your company philosophy should reflect the fact that you are anxious to listen, be flexible, and respond to your customers needs. If you live by these words, you'll be identified as a customer-driven organization.

Harry K. Jones is a professional speaker and consultant for AchieveMax®, Inc., a firm specializing in custom-designed keynote presentations, seminars, and consulting services. Harry has made presentations ranging from leadership to employee retention and time management to stress management for a number of industries, including education, financial, government, healthcare, hospitality, and manufacturing. He can be reached at 800-886-2MAX or by visiting <http://www.AchieveMax.com>.

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