

Customer Service

By Bob Osgoodby

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I recently had a problem, and called my ISP (who shall remain unnamed) for help, because I could not connect to their service. I let this ride for a day, in the event they were having a problem, but the next day when I still couldn't get connected, I gave them a call.

After listening to their computerized message, which told me everything except how to brush my teeth, I finally selected the appropriate option. I was given the approximate hold time, (which I appreciated) put them on the speaker phone and went about other things I was doing.

After 15 minutes or so, I was connected to a customer service rep, explained the problem and was put through a series of things to try, which I did. None of them worked. I was told that my software had become corrupted, and I would have to reinstall the software from my Windows CD. I explained that I could connect to other services and the problem was only with their service. No matter, I was told I would have to reinstall the software. I couldn't immediately put my hands on the Windows installation CD, so he told me to call back when I did.

Unable to find it, I called my daughter and she had a copy. I picked it up the next day and called back. I asked for the customer service rep I had talked to and was told he wasn't in the office I was connected to. Seems he was housed in Tennessee and now I was talking with someone in California. I told this rep I was instructed to call back for instructions on how to reinstall the software.

This one told me to turn off my computer and then restart it. When it still didn't work, he told me he couldn't do anything. Now this guy barely spoke English. Not satisfied with his answer, I asked to speak to a supervisor who told me the problem would be referred to their research department and someone would call me back within 48 hours.

Two days came and went with no call back, and I figured #1 and #2 didn't really know what they were doing so I tried again. This time I got a very pleasant person (#3) who took the time to listen to my problem, and she solved it "lickety split". She not only solved the problem, but displayed a real caring attitude which the previous two did not.

Now, it seems that many companies staff their customer care department with warm bodies, give them a trouble shooting book (you can hear them turning the pages) and then try to get rid of you as

quickly as possible so they can handle their next call.

This never ceases to amaze me. They spend millions on advertising their service, send out trial CD's by the train load, and then staff their primary customer contact, with incompetents or people that don't give a fig about problems their customers are having. It seems that they really don't care if they lose a customer.

If you are in business, either you must be a #3 or have one working for you. Never forget - the sales department gets customers, but the customer service department keeps them.

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