



Make Miss Manners proud

An attitude of courtesy and respect will go a long way toward improving departmental cooperation and making a more positive and professional impression on customers.

Are “courtesy” and “respect” important words in your customer service vocabulary? Is showing respect to customers and coworkers something for which you hold yourself accountable? If not, they should be, says JoAnna Brandi, a customer service coach and consultant.

In fact, she suggests that customer service reps ask themselves the following questions to get a clearer view of how to improve courtesy and respect in their organizations.

- How and where do courtesy and respect — or disrespect — show up in our work with customers and coworkers?
- What efforts do we make to ensure that customers feel respected?
- What can I do to show courtesy to coworkers and to let them know that I respect them?
- Is there a way in which we can measure respect? Can a question about respect be added

to customer satisfaction surveys or can we make it a part of our call monitoring process?

- What should respect look like in our department? What specific behaviors might be involved?
- What can we do as individuals to build and support a culture of respect in the customer service department?
- Are there things going on in the department that tend to erode respect? What are these and what can we do about them?

Brandi suggests that customer service reps and their managers engage in an ongoing conversation about courtesy and respect — and about how it can benefit customers and coworkers. She adds that, “In a world that is increasingly rude and abrasive, your organization can stand out by delivering a high level of courtesy and respect to every person you come into contact with.”

