



# The Customer Communicator Web Extra



## Reliability will be this rep's legacy

One of the most important attributes that a customer service rep can have is reliability — the rep who can be counted on to show up every day and on time, and to be ready to handle customer calls when needed is very valuable. That would make Carolyn Shore, a recently retired customer service representative for Miller's Supplies at Work in Lorton, VA, even more valuable than most.

"You could count on Carolyn to be here on time, schedule vacations ahead of time and almost never call in sick," says Marta Stowers, customer service manager. "And that's a big deal here."

But in addition, on those infrequent occasions when she was sick, "she would call her manager, then she would call to change her voicemail to make sure that it referred customers to somebody else, then she would call the sales reps that were assigned to her and let them know what might be pending with their accounts, and then she might even call customers who were waiting for her to get back to them," says Stowers.

As a customer service rep for Miller's Supplies at Work for 16 years, Shore says, "I've talked to some customers a zillion times, so you begin to remember their phone numbers, and yes, I have called customers when I knew I was going to be out sick. It was not required of me, but it was something I felt I needed to do."

Miller's deals primarily with corporate accounts, and Shore's day-to-day job was to answer the phone and take in orders via phone, email, fax, or directly from one of the sales reps assigned to her (four sales reps and their customers were

assigned to each customer service rep). "Her job was to make sure that customers got the right prices and the right things, and to troubleshoot anything that might go wrong with the order — incorrect shipments, missed orders, or replacement orders for something that's been discontinued," says Stowers.

Shore also dealt with customers when they were short-shipped, when orders were misdirected or filled incorrectly, and for other mishaps. On those occasions, "you would just try to deal with the customer's frustration, apologize, and do what you can to make the customer happy," Shore says.

"Besides always being able to count on Carolyn, she was a great teacher. She taught new reps when they came in, and she was always available and helpful when other reps had questions," says Stowers. "That and her overall customer service personality were great features that we will miss."

For her part, Shore will miss the camaraderie with coworkers, and especially the customers that she had built relationships with. "You might hear from some customers every day, and others every week, but you look forward to talking to them, and I will miss that," she says.

