



## Practice your people skills

10 common sense rules for excellent interpersonal relationships with customers and coworkers.

While people skills are, in large part, a matter of common sense, they are also a matter of attitude — you have to have a positive attitude to provide a positive experience for customers. And, you do have to know a few basic rules. Below, Nancy Friedman of *The Telephone Doctor* provides 10 common-sense rules for working well with everyone.

**1. "Please" and "thank you"** always have been, and always will be, powerful words. Use them often.

**2. "You're welcome"** is the best replacement for "no problem."

**3. "Sorry about that" is not an apology** — it's a cliché. "My apologies" is much better.

**4. A frown is an upside-down smile.** So stand on your head if you must, but smile.

**5. You cannot do two things at once,** so pay attention to the customer on the phone.

**6. One-word answers are cold and rude.** Be more expansive and friendly.

**7. Learn what phrases frustrate and annoy your customers.** And avoid them.

**8. The old adage, "Don't tell them what you can't do, tell them what you can do,"** applies to most, if not all customer interactions.

**9. Show some enthusiasm for your work** — and for the customer.

**10. And smile** — that needs to be repeated.

