

This low-cost teambuilding exercise is taken from *SkillSharpener: Training for the Frontline*, published by the Customer Service Group.

— **Editor**

**Customer Service Newsletter**

**[www.CustomerServiceGroup.com](http://www.CustomerServiceGroup.com)**

# Just For Fun

## Teambuilding/motivation exercises

### Trainer Overview

Who says customer service has to be serious? It's great for morale to have sessions that are just plain old fun ... and it's also good for teambuilding. Here are three activities you can use whenever you feel the group has been working particularly hard, or needs perking up or a special treat. This training session has two parts. Both can be conducted at one meeting, or you can split it into two separate sessions.

### Part I

#### Materials Needed

Index cards, flip chart and markers. This session requires some preparation beforehand.

1. Take the number of anticipated participants and divide by six. You'll use the resulting number to determine how many individual index cards to prepare. The number you get when you divide is the number of each letter you should have for the word SERVICE. To avoid confusion, drop the second "e" so that each letter is used only once. For example, if you have 12 participants, you will need two S's, two I's, two R's, etc. You should have enough cards so that each participant can select a card.
2. Write each letter at the top of a separate piece of flip chart paper. Under each letter, write the suggested sample word shown below.

**S** service  
**E** equality  
**R** right  
**V** very  
**I** important  
**C** customer

3. Put materials aside for use later in the session.
4. Decide whether or not you want to offer small prizes to the winners.

### Introduction

*Trainer: Use these words as is, or adapt them for your own situation.*

**Have you ever considered what it really takes to do your job as customer service representative? There are many skills you need and much information you must**

have to serve our customers well. We're going to spend the next half-hour in a competitive activity that will be fun and, when we're done, will help us see what it really takes to be a super customer service rep!

We're going to get into teams (or pairs, or singles). You'll each pick a letter from the word SERVICE. When I give the signal to "START," you'll write down as many words as you can think of beginning with the letter you've been assigned that relate to customer service. For example, if you have the letter "S," the word "service" would be on your list. I've started each of the letters off with one word to get you started. Number your words as you write them down.

The goal of this activity is to come up with the longest and best list of words beginning with the letter of the alphabet you've chosen. Be as creative as you can, but remember that every word must relate to customer service in some way. You will have 10 minutes to compile your list. At the end of 10 minutes, I'll call time. Each group (or individual) will post the list. You will be asked to read your words to the entire group. You may be challenged on the applicability of the word to customer service, so be prepared to explain your list. I'll be the arbitrator in cases of dispute. Are there any questions? (If not, let the games begin!)

*Trainer: Have participants pick from the prepared letter cards. Divide participants into teams by having all individuals with a particular letter work together. Assign each group or individual to a separate area in the room. Distribute the appropriate prepared flip chart paper to each group.*

At the end of 10 minutes, call time. Ask each group to post their words. Have groups select a spokesperson to read each list of words aloud. Groups or individuals may challenge whether a specific word is applicable to customer service. Get consensus from group to determine whether the explanation is acceptable. Encourage groups to challenge each other. If you elect to award prizes, select the group with the list with the most acceptable words. (Words challenged by the group and not adequately explained should be crossed off the list.)

## Group Discussion

Using the list of words as a basis for discussion, lead participants to the conclusion that their jobs are important, challenging and rewarding. Ask for a list of skills and knowledge that they need to do their jobs. Chart the responses on a flip chart. After the lists are completed, suggest that each person write their own personal commitment for improving at least one skill or adding new information so that they can perform their jobs more efficiently.

## Part II

### Materials Needed

Index cards, flip chart and markers. This session requires some preparation beforehand. Take the number of anticipated participants and divide into equal groups of two or more. Write the following statements or any other appropriate statement, on individual 3" X 5" cards for distribution to the groups.

**Put yourself in the customer's shoes.**

**Customers are not dependent on us — we are dependent on them.**

**The purpose of a business is to get and keep a customer.**

**The customer signs our pay checks.**

Write a list of the four statements on a piece of flip chart paper for later posting.

## Group Exercise



*Trainer: Use these words as is, or adapt them to fit your own situation.*

**We often speak in simple phrases about customer service. Things like “The customer is number one,” or “Show the customer you care.” These phrases may seem very elementary on the surface, but, in fact, they are complex. Providing excellent customer service requires the efforts of many people working together.**

**This activity will demonstrate the importance of teamwork in taking care of the customer, and it will show that serving the customer is complex and requires thinking and creativity.**

**We're going to divide into teams. Each team will select a statement from the cards I have prepared (hold up cards). Your mission is to draw a picture that best conveys the statement you have selected. You have 10 minutes to come up with the most creative illustration.**

**After the time is up, each group will post its illustration. Then all of us will try to match the statement with the pictures.**

**Then we'll take a look at the team process used to get the picture finished.**

Divide the participants into four equal groups (teams or pairs). Give each group a card with a customer service statement or slogan. Also give each group several sheets of flip chart paper and markers. Suggest they may want to make rough drawings first before re-drawing a large version of their final illustration. Explain that the only rule governing the picture is that no words may be used.

Tell the group that they will be asked at the end of the session to describe how they used the team approach to decide what to draw and who would draw it. While the groups are working, post your flip chart paper showing the four customer service statements.

When time is up, have each team post its picture. Allow two or three minutes for each group to work as a team matching the statements to each picture. Then get each team to identify what statement its picture illustrated. This should move quickly and be fun.

**While drawing the pictures was fun, the real purpose of today's session is to look at how we work together. We're going to go around to each team, asking each of you to review the process you used to come up with your final illustration.**

*Trainer: Here are some questions you can use to generate discussion:*

1. How did a leader emerge?

2. Were a lot of different ideas generated at first?
3. How were the ideas presented? How were they accepted?
4. How did you decide which idea would be your final drawing?
5. How did you decide who would do the drawing?
6. How did it feel when the picture was finished?
7. Is there anything you would have done differently if you could start over again?
8. How can what you learned about working together be carried back to your daily job?

At the end of the discussion, suggest that each individual identify to himself or herself what his/her role was during the team game. Was this role comfortable? Was he or she an active participant? Too active/not active enough? Is there anything he or she can do to become a more productive team player in the coming months? This is something you as manager can work on with each person individually, rather than in group discussion.