

# How to communicate with customers

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Learn how to communicate well with customers and deliver great customer service to develop trust so that you can build loyal customers.

Customers are core to any business. If you develop strong interpersonal skills, you can maintain good communication with your customers and build lasting relationships.

Happy customers will become advocates for your business. They promote and recommend your business. But, they are also more forgiving when things don't go to plan. Follow these steps to help you improve your customer service.

## 1. Communicate well with customers

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### Build a relationship

Take the time to be professional and personable with your customers. Get to know them and take note of what they're telling you.

### Listen to customers

Active listening is a skill like any other, and you need to practice it. Stay involved in the conversation and make sure to ask clarifying questions if you're not sure you understand something. It can also help to rephrase what your customers tell you and repeat it back to them to clarify. This can make a good impression and ensures that you understand what your customer is saying to you.

### Use analogies

Analogies are great to explain complex or technical issues or descriptions. If you've built a good relationship with a customer, pick examples they'll connect with. You'll be able to explain your product or service in a way they immediately understand.

### Develop customer service standards

Internal customer service policies, standards and benchmarks ensure that your employees communicate with your customers in a consistent way. This gives you peace of mind that your staff provide the same good customer service each time customers interact with your business.

## Resolve disputes quickly

Customer complaints will occur, but if you can handle them professionally and quickly, you will build strong customer relationships.

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[Learn strategies to deal with disputes.](#)

→ HOW TO RESOLVE DISPUTES

## 2. Choose the best way to communicate with customers

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The more you communicate with your customers, the more likely they will remember you and your business. You need a communication strategy so you can determine which communication method is best for your business and your customers.

### Make a phone call

If you're a service-based business, touching base can be a great way to keep your business at the front of your customers' minds. You don't have to try and sell your customers anything, you can use this opportunity to build a strong relationship.

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[Find out how to comply with the requirements of the Do Not Call Register when calling customers.](#)

 AUSTRALIAN SECURITIES & INVESTMENTS COMMISSION

### Send a newsletter

Newsletters are a great way to let your customers know about any promotions or success stories. You can also share personal milestones or experiences, which help you build rapport with your customers. Make sure you have your customer's permission before sharing success stories.

### Spam Laws

There are rules when sending electronic commercial messages to your customers. Before sending your messages, you must make sure that:

- you have permission from your customers to send them commercial electronic messages
  - you include a way for your customers to unsubscribe or opt-out
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[Learn more about spam laws.](#)

 AUSTRALIAN COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA AUTHORITY

## Ask for feedback

Surveys allow you to ask your clients for feedback on the products and services you offer. You can find out their thoughts on your products and services, and what you could improve on or add to your offerings.

You could offer an incentive to encourage survey responses, such as:

- free movie tickets
- product discounts
- free one-on-one session with you

Make sure you ask open ended questions to give your customers a chance to have their say. These questions can provide you with feedback you can action on.

Most importantly, follow up on the information you receive and do something with it.

## Engage on social media

You can use social media to post special offers, information about new products or services and general announcements. Keep in mind that social media works best when you use it to build connections, relationships and rapport with your customers. You shouldn't use social media to simply sell to your customers.

Social media is crucial in today's world. However, you must also recognise the risk. You have limited control over what your customers may post about your business. Make a plan to handle any enquires or negative feedback.

# 3. Deliver great customer service

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Good customer relationships are at the heart of great customer service. Whether you're interacting with a long-term client or a first-time buyer, developing a strong rapport is an important part of building good customer relationships.

## Face-to-face customer service

If you have a physical, bricks and mortar business, to help you develop good customer relationships:

- Greet your customers as they walk through the door. Ask them how they are or how you can help them.
- If your customers have to wait to be served, it is helpful to have someone greeting your customers and letting them know how long they should expect to wait.
- Make sure you check in with your customers while they're in your shop. This also gives them a chance to ask any questions they might have.
- Know your product. In a face-to-face business setting, if you're able to immediately answer any tricky questions from your customers can help build trust and credibility.

## Online customer service

If you run an online business, or interact with customers over the phone or email, our tips can help you develop good customer relationships:

- Answer emails promptly. A general rule is a 24 hour turnaround. If you know that you take longer to respond to emails, it can be useful to publish your expected turnaround time on your Contact Us page on your website, or even in your automated email responder. This can help to manage your customers' expectations.
- Consider a live chat service. A live chat service allows you to communicate instantly with your customers and help answer their queries. This service may require extra staff or monitoring, but many can switch on and off during certain hours.
- Consider adding a 'request to call' option on your Contact Us form. This may allow customers to request a time and day they would like to receive a phone call from you. This could allow you to gather specific information about their request before calling them back.
- Keep a log of any phone interactions you have with your customers. Write down the date, time and any issues discussed. This information can be useful to refer back to when making contact again.
- Publish important information about your business, like your mission statement and your business history, on your website. This information helps your customers understand your business and its values.
- Add a feedback form to your website. This will allow you to collect valuable information about your service and may provide you with insights for new product or service ideas to grow your business.

## Read next

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[Find out how your customer communications contribute to your overall marketing plan.](#)

Find out how to understand your customers with market research.

⇒ WHAT IS MARKET RESEARCH