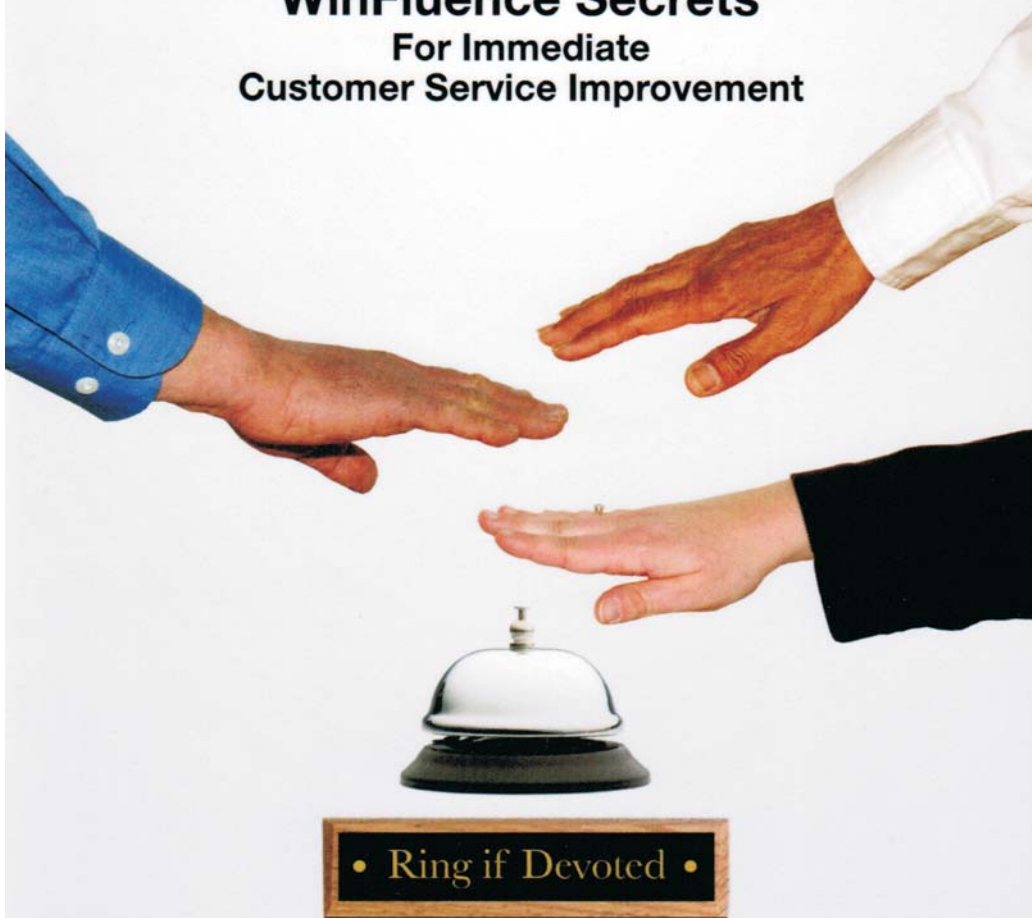


CREATE DEVOTED CUSTOMERS

WinFluence® Secrets
For Immediate
Customer Service Improvement



DR. DENNIS ROSEN

Create Devoted Customers: WinFluence® Secrets For Immediate Customer Service Improvement

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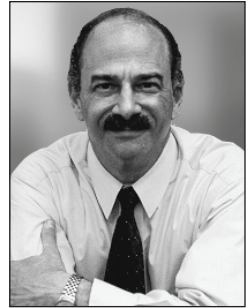
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For information on Dennis' keynotes, training and educational materials, please visit: **www.winfluencesolutions.com** or call **800-804-4034**.

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Create Devoted Customers

An Introduction

What you have in your hands is yet another book on customer service. There have been many books written on the topic. Why do we need another one? You would think by now, we would have it all figured out—give customers what they want, make them happy, etc. It's no mystery. This book could be just a terrible waste of paper (save the trees!).

Well, if we've got customer service all figured out, why do so many customers think that service is so bad? Why don't businesses improve their service in some way that is meaningful? Why are so many books written and speeches given on the topic? The reason, I believe, is that most businesses don't really understand what customer service is.

To say that customer service is satisfying the customer isn't helpful. What does it take to satisfy the customer anyway? Is customer satisfaction even enough? Other books say we have to go the "extra mile" and "wow" the customer. So how does one do that? And can your business afford it? My hope is that you will find the answers to these questions for your business in this book.

So who am I to write about the topic? I haven't owned a retail store known for its service. I'm not a CEO who turned a large company around by improving its service. But I am a consumer. . . and a marketing professor. . . and a professional speaker and trainer. . . with a Ph.D. in psychology. (Not looking for a medal here—just given you the facts.) I teach university courses in marketing and service. I study consumer decision making and decision processes. And I've consulted with firms on sales and service issues for over 20 years.

I think it's time for us to take a different view of customer service, and that's what this book is about. It won't make you a customer-service expert. There is too much to cover that will be saved for another time. Instead, its purpose is to open your eyes to the common mistakes that businesses make in dealing with the issue. I want to change your philosophy on the topic and show you some of the easy ways of improving your service *right now*. In the process, I will introduce you to a new concept, WinFluence®—the understanding of how our actions can influence our customers and employees to win more customer and win more sales.

As you'll discover in Chapter 1, customer service is a system. So let's start down the road of improving that system. We'll begin by redefining what customer service is and see why you should look at it as "Customer WinFluence" instead of customer service. Then we'll destroy the myth that your objective is developing satisfied customers (it really isn't). We'll clarify a basic component of WinFluence, "need," and find out how to use this component properly to gain a customer-service edge over competition. We'll discover the

proper place to start customer-service-improvement efforts and several easy changes you can make to get immediate results. We'll finish by considering additional components that affect your interaction with your customers.

So are you ready for the journey? Then, on your mark... get set...and come with me!

“It’s time for us to take a different view of customer service, and that’s what this book is about.”

1

You Call That Service?

What is the problem with customer service today? Customers think that service stinks. Businesses claim customers are too demanding and don't understand. While it's true that there are bad customers (no, the customer is not always right), I believe the major problem is with business. Specifically, the problem is with the definition of service used by business and a lack of understanding of what the customer wants.

Most businesses define customer service in terms of physical things like answering the phone by the third ring, having the product available, proper handling of returns or complaints, etc. All of this is good, but it is insufficient. So the purpose of the next few chapters is to clarify what customer service really is, to show you what you should actually be trying to accomplish and to explain how to do it all based on what I call the WinFluence[®] concept.

I'm Sorry. Could You Repeat That?

I said, we're going to work with the WinFluence concept. If you want to change people's minds about things, a good way is to give them a new term they can use to label their new perspective. The label we will use is WinFluence—

winning customers and a greater share of their spending through actions that influence the customer to use us. I like to think of what we want to accomplish as “Customer WinFluence,” instead of customer service. I’ll still be using the term “customer service” in this book, but its goal will be to WinFluence the customer to contribute to our bottom line. To help in this regard, I want to introduce you to some “WinFluence Secrets” that can improve your service. I call them secrets because they involve points that appear to be often misunderstood or simply ignored. Some may seem like common sense, but others represent, I believe, a new view on service, and all are potentially important to your business. The first four are in this chapter. Others will follow.

In Addition . . .

Ask business people what their business does, and they will tell you. “We print books, articles, and directories.” “We provide health care to the community.” “We offer the finest selection of organic foods.” And then, if they are into customer service, they will follow this description with the statement, “. . .and we provide great customer service.” Note that customer service is rarely the first thing they talk about. Instead, it’s likely to come after the word “and.” That’s because they tend to think of customer service as an addition, an add-on, an addendum to their business. And anything that is an addition is, by definition, less important. It’s not the main focus. And as an addition, it is one of the first areas to be ignored or cut if time or money becomes tight. This is a problem and leads to our first WinFluence Secret.

Winfluence Secret #1:

We can't provide great customer service if we consider it an addition to our business.

Customer service is not an addition to our business. It is our business. It is an integral part of everything we do. I define it this way:

Customer service is any action our business undertakes that is designed to meet the needs of our customers.

That is a broad definition. It means that customer service is how we design our products and services, how we deliver them, how we communicate with customers and how we make them feel. It is an integral part of everything we do.

Think about a firm that gets calls from customers with questions about their bills. These customers don't understand what they are being charged for and why. (If you get a cell phone bill that looks like mine, you can relate to this.) The company involved wants to provide good customer service, so what do they do? They add employees to their phone bank to answer questions so customers don't have to wait so long. That's good customer service, right?

Sure. But better customer service would be fixing the bill so it is understandable. Customers would not be frustrated, a result that should positively influence their view of the business. The business would not have to spend money increasing their phone bank of employees. But will fixing the bill occur to them? Apparently not. My bills are still

confusing. See the problem? Businesses tend to define customer service in a certain way that limits their ability to see issues and proper solutions.

And What Is Your Goal in Life?

Many businesses view good customer service as a goal they are trying to achieve. I disagree with that view.

WinFluence Secret #2:

Customer service is not a goal to be achieved. It is a system that must be monitored and improved.

Goals are defined and achieved, and victory is declared. Systems, on the other hand, are ongoing, have to be constantly monitored and can almost always be improved. So rather than viewing customer service as a goal, we should look at it as a *system*. It is a system, involving planning, people and process, that is established to achieve our ultimate goal of winning more customers and a greater share of their spending. Further, it is a system that every business has established, whether they think about it or not. Some have a good one, most don't, but they all have one. If your business has customers (and it had better), then you have a customer-service system *automatically*. The question is, do you really understand that system and how it works with your customers so that it is functioning at its best?

Now, most business owners will tell you that there is a relationship between good customer service and customers coming back. But while business owners say this, many

apparently don't really believe it. Customer-service activities are constantly getting cut. People aren't being trained. The system stinks, and my cell phone bill is still confusing. The truth is that business often looks at customer service as an activity that doesn't directly affect the bottom line in the way that something like sales training can. Emphasis is often placed on its costs rather than its potential contributions. This brings us to our next secret.

WinFluence Secret #3:

Customer service is a potential profit generator.

When done properly, investing in customer service can provide excellent returns. Small investments in service can have a large effect on customers' feelings toward our business. If customers like our service, we are likely to get a greater share of their spending. They may promote our business to others bringing in more customers. Complaints and resulting adjustments can decline. Employees properly trained in service techniques can be more efficient, more motivated, more dedicated and, thus, more productive.

And what happens if our service is poor? Say a couple with two young children moves to a community and needs a dentist. Think what that family is worth over the next ten years to the dentist they select. If one of the parents becomes upset with service received (e.g., staff are not pleasant, appointments are not taken on time), he or she can take the entire family away. And since most people pick their dentist based on recommendations, this family has the potential to advise away other families. Our dissatisfied family and any other families they discourage from

becoming our customers, will now go to our competitors and *strengthen them*. That's a huge loss for our poor dentist. (This really happened to a local dentist I know. You'll find out why it happened in Chapter 17.)

It's in the Eye of the Beholder

I've said that the WinFluence view of service is that it is a system involving planning, people and process. But from the customer's standpoint, service is a perception. When we "perceive" something, our mind is providing an interpretation of it for us. So our customers are constantly interpreting our offerings, actions and communications. They are interpreting what we really mean and if we really care about them as customers—if we are really doing everything we can to help them. In other words:

WinFluence Secret #4:

*The reality of what we are doing
is unimportant to our customers.*

*It's their perception of
our service that is important.*

It doesn't matter how hard we are trying if our actions leave the wrong perception. So we should find out what will positively influence our customers' perceptions of service, determine the costs involved and then put appropriate concepts into action. The next few chapters will lay the foundation for making this happen.

2

So...Are You Satisfied?

Well . . . are ya? Are ya satisfied, I mean with life, work, your kids' behavior, etc.? If you ask most people if they are satisfied, they'll say, "Yeah, I'm satisfied." They may even say they are very satisfied. You probably feel the same way. But does that mean that you couldn't be more satisfied? Aren't there things that annoy you or make your life more difficult than it should be? Are there things you would change? Of course there are. But still, you'll tell people that you are satisfied. Why? Are you lying? Are you too embarrassed? Did you not understand the question? Do you think people don't care? Do you take great pleasure in saying what you don't mean?

Now before you start thinking that this chapter is about self-help, changing your overall personal belief system or dealing with your mental neuroses, let me clarify that is not why we are talking (at least it is not why I am writing). I just want you to see what so many businesses miss. When customers say they are satisfied, they are not—not completely—not in a way that means there is no room for improvement or that they wouldn't change something or that things couldn't possibly be better. It just means that overall, in the grand scheme of things, this particular thing

Business, Customer Service

YOU DON'T WANT SATISFIED CUSTOMERS! **You Want Devoted Customers.** **Find Out How to Create Them!**

"Dennis Rosen's new book, *Create Devoted Customers*, is terrific! It will aid you in committing to and performing the kind of service that will take your company to the next level. So many books just give ideas. This one provides the ideas and principles, the why behind them and the strategies to profit from them. **Don't miss it.**"

Don Hutson, Co-Author, *The New York Times* #1 Best Seller,
The One Minute Entrepreneur

"As a strong believer in customer-driven business that builds relationships, I highly recommend *Create Devoted Customers* by Dr. Dennis Rosen. It shows you how to find low-cost ways to improve service, delight your customers, create devoted customers (or 'apostles') for your business and **positively affect your bottom line.**"

Dr. Tony Alessandra, Author of, *The Platinum Rule*

"If I can find one good idea in a book that can be implemented, it is worth exponentially more than the price I paid. In *Create Devoted Customers*, I found many. **This book is filled with practical ideas** that are sure to find their way into your business." Shep Hyken, Author of, *Moments of Magic*

Free Gifts are inside. Take a look!



Dr. Dennis Rosen is "The WinFluence® Expert." In this book, Dennis explains his 26 "WinFluence® Secrets" to improve service, lessen complaints, motivate employees and bring customers back. He unlocks the secrets to creating customer devotion to help boost your bottom line. For information on Dennis' presentations and materials, visit: www.winfluencesolutions.com.

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