

Lee Milteer's Millionaire Smarts® Coaching Program Outshine Your Competitors with Outstanding Customer Service

Lee Milteer Interviews Keith Lee

I. Only Happy Customers Come Back

Dear Millionaire Smarts® Members,

This month I'm sharing a topic that ALL businesses need to pay a lot more attention to in order to win customers, clients, or patients—and keep them. As a business owner, you want your business to outperform everyone else in your industry. In order to do that, you need to be a serious student of the type of customer service that creates loyal, lifetime clients. In today's world, many companies have really bad customer service. Sadly, society has become so used to bad customer service that it's almost the norm. This month we are going to give you some fantastic tips for improving your team's customer service skills so that your business is one people stay with and brag about!

We have a fabulous expert guest with us, who I have personally had the pleasure of knowing and working with for a long time, Keith Lee. He is the author of *Out Nordstrom Nordstrom, Creating the Best Customer Service* and the book we're going to talk about this month, *The Happy Customer Handbook: 59 Secrets to Creating Happy Customers Who Come Back Time and Time Again and Enthusiastically Tell others About You*.

Keith Lee has had an impressive career, and I'm going to give you a little background about him. Keith is the owner of a 44 year old company called American Retail Supply. American Retail Supply provides retailers with everything they need to run their stores – the supplies, fixtures, displays, point of sale computer systems, and lots more. He actually started managing American Retail Supply in 1981, and became the sole owner in 1993. Since then, about eighty percent of his competition has gone out of business, many of them because he actually bought them out. Now, he's convinced that his happy customer philosophy is the reason he is in business today and growing, even in this economy.

Keith is a retail expert and originally designed these tips for his industry but they apply to ALL industries and businesses. Most of the suggestions we will share this month will apply to your business as-is, but please do adapt them to fit your style and needs.

You might want to write this quote down and have it on each of your team members' desks: "Remember, only happy customers come back." What are you doing in your business to keep your customers coming back?

Keith Lee he has granted us permission to reprint excerpts from his book: *The Happy Customer Handbook*. These excerpts are for your personal use only. No reprint permission is given.

While studying some of the world's best customer service companies in the early 1980's, I determined that creating an Exceptional Customer Service Company was one of the best things I could do to make our company the choice for retailers. Today I am more convinced than ever that providing exceptional customer service has been key to our success, will be key to our continued success, and can make a huge difference in the success of your business.

While a significant amount of the information in this book is my own creation, a large amount originated with exceptional customer service businesses like Nordstrom, Disney, FedEx, Stew Leonard's Dairy, Cabela's, and others.

This book originated as an in-house reference resource for achieving great customer service in our company, American Retail Supply. I then shared the information in the Retail Tips I send to our customers. The response I received was so positive I decided to edit them into a resource for our customers. From that I created this book.

I used to think we were in the business of selling price guns to retail stores. Then I thought we were in the business of selling price guns and packaging to retail stores. Then I decided we were in the business of selling retailers everything they needed to operate their stores.

Now I know what business we are really in.

In the early 1980's I watched Tom Peters and Robert Waterman's video *In Search of Excellence*. The video shows first day cast member (employee) training at Disney World. The trainer at Disney asks the new cast members, "What business are we in? We know that GMC makes cars, and Whirlpool makes refrigerators. What do we make at Disney?" The answer is, We Make People Happy. From that moment on I knew what business we are in, We Make People Happy.

That's why we call the customer service we provide and teach, Make-You-Happy Customer Service.

I'm often asked, "What is the number one thing business owners can do to improve their customer service?" Another question I get is, "Why is customer service so poor?" The answer to both questions is the same.

When I speak to live audiences I often ask this question, "What should you be doing when it comes to customer service training in your business?"

- A. We tell our staff to deliver good customer service. They should know what that is.
- B. We tell our staff to deliver good customer service and give some examples sometimes but nothing formal.
- C. We have meetings about customer service once in a while and tell everyone they should give good customer service.
- D. All new staff gets customer service training when they are hired.
- E. Everyone has gone through our customer service training and they are consistently and persistently reminded about our customer service expectations.

With every audience almost all hands go up for answer E.

We've surveyed thousands of business owners. We ask them: What best describes customer service training in your organization?

- A. We tell our staff to deliver good customer service. They should know what that is.
- B. We tell our staff to deliver good customer service and give some examples sometimes but nothing formal.
- C. We have meetings about customer service once in a while and tell everyone they should give good customer service.
- D. All new staff get customer service training when they are hired.
- E. Everyone has gone through our customer service training and they are consistently and persistently reminded about our customer service expectations.

Only 2% answer E - How is that? Why is it that everyone knows their team should have customer service training up front and consistent reminders, but almost no one does it?

Here's what happens in most businesses. With the best of intentions, the business owner has a "rah, rah" meeting about customer service, and the service improves for a few weeks, and then without reminders you're back where you started. And it's simple, the reminders don't come because you're a busy business owner and you have lots of other things to do.

But this may even be more amazing. More than 75% of all businesses have no upfront consistent customer service training for new employees.

So the answer to both questions, "What can business owners do to improve their customer service?" and "Why is customer service so poor?" is the same:

- 1. Train your entire team to deliver exceptional customer service.
- 2. Consistently and persistently reinforce your customer service expectations with your team.

To start, your entire team needs to get trained with your exceptional customer service expectations. This is the "rah, rah" training I talked about above. But it can't stop there. You need to consistently and persistently reinforce those expectations. Zig Ziglar says, "Repetition is the mother of all learning." But learning something doesn't necessarily lead to behavior change, so when it comes to customer service in your business I tweak Zig's quotation to, "When it comes to customer service, repetition is the mother of all learning and permanent behavior change."

Now that you have your entire team trained and you're consistently reminding them of your customer service expectations, you need to make sure every new employee (team member) gets the exact same initial customer service training that your entire team received.

"Remember, Only Happy Customers Come Back"

-Keith Lee

THE COMPETITION IS ANYONE THE CUSTOMER COMPARES YOU TO

I learned this from Disney. One of the ways people experience Disney is by telephone. Disney gets thousands of calls every day. Many of the calls are from the same people who call businesses that are known for their great telephone service. Businesses like LL Bean, Cabela's, and FedEx.

So when the same people who call Cabela's or FedEx, or anyone with superior telephone service, call Disney, Disney understands that they are being compared to the service people get when calling Cabela's or FedEx. Disney then does what they need to do to "compete" with FedEx's telephone service.

So the lesson is, don't just think of your competitors as the businesses that sell the same things you do. Think of the competition as anyone who deals with your customers in any way. Learn the best practices from anywhere you can, determine how you can use them in your business, and implement them.

Here's an example of how we did this in our business. Many years ago, we did what everyone in our industry did. When we got an order for a stock item it shipped two to four days later. I happened to call Cabela's to get some fly fishing supplies and they said the order would ship that afternoon. So, thinking of what I learned from Disney, I said to myself, "We need to do that," and we did. Today if an order is received within 30 minutes of our FedEx pick up, it ships that day.

To find out more about Keith Lee, go to www.keithlee.com.

Homework from Lee:

As I mentioned above, please mold these suggestions to fit your business—they are applicable no matter what industry you're in.

Second, I encourage you to take the time to analyze the customer service training you've given your team. Have you trained them on customer service at all? Are you regularly reminding them of customer service best practices? Remember that out of sight is out of mind. If we aren't paying attention to the service our team is giving, it can be easy for them to forget and slip into undesirable customer service habits.

Your Mindset and Performance Coach,
Lee Milteer

P.S. As a gift to our Millionaire Smarts® Members, our expert guest author, Keith Lee, is offering a FREE copy of *The Happy Customer Handbook*. Simply go to www.TheHappyCustomerHandbook.com and submit your information to receive a free paperback copy of the book, *The Happy Customer Handbook: 59 Secrets to Creating Happy*

Customers Who Come Back Time and Time Again and Enthusiastically Tell others About You.

P.S. #2 Remember to take advantage of the resources on your Millionaire Smarts® Membership page. Each month, we provide you with digital copies of the reports and transcript, an MP3 of the call to download to your mobile devices, information on our featured expert guest and links to free gifts & helpful resources, and supplementary content from our team of expert faculty coaches—who include Dan Kennedy, additional reports from me, Phone Sales Doctor Chris Mullins, Health and Fitness Coach Joe Carabase, Leadership Coach Kevin Eikenberry, Newsletter Guru Jim Palmer, and Sales Coach Steve Clark.

Plus, our new feature: we'll be providing a *Quick Download Link* where you can quickly and easily download the online content. We want to know, do you like this new feature? Please send your feedback to millionairesmarts@gmail.com.

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