



**YOUR
INNER CIRCLE
CUSTOMER
SERVICE SYSTEM**



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WHAT DOES CUSTOMER SERVICE MEAN TO YOUR STUDIO?

Your customer service team has access to key insights into what troubles your customers are facing, their most commonly asked questions and feedback about your products and services.

Customer service teams have the power to turn complainers into brand advocates and help customers fall in love with your business. Based on research, here's how customer service can affect your studio:

- The #1 reason customers leave a company is because they think you don't care about them
- 86% of consumers are willing to pay more if they receive a better quality of service
- 73% of consumers say friendly customer service made them fall in love with a brand
- 55% of businesses claim that improving customer service leads to increased sales

THE 5 CORE COMPONENTS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

Friendliness – the most basic and associated with courtesy and politeness.

Empathy – the customer needs to know that the service provider appreciates their wants and circumstances.

Fairness – the customer wants to feel they receive adequate attention and reasonable answers.

Control – the customer wants to feel his/her wants and input has influence on the outcome.

Information – customers want to know about your products and services but in a pertinent and time-sensitive manner.

SIMPLE ACTIONS = HUGE RETURNS

Presentation is the first step in making positive connections with your dancers and their families, and believe it or not what you wear and how you express yourself has a lot to do with how what you say is received.

This is true both inside the studio (teaching) and in your waiting or reception area. Spend some time designing a uniform (or a variety of uniform options) and clearly set out personal grooming expectations for your staff that communicates your **standards and values**.

On the surface level, great customer service will always begin with the small gestures:

Smiling – there is nothing like a smile and pleasant face to greet a customer, especially if he/she has a complaint. A smile and polite conversation can immediately disarm a disgruntled dance-mom.

Eye contact – always look into your customer's eyes. Directly address customers.

Be attentive – when listening to a customer, slightly lean towards your customer and nod your head to show you are listening.

Tone of voice – always convey friendliness and amicability. Try not to raise your voice in frustration or anger no matter how difficult or a customer may be.

Posture – slumping in a chair or leaning against a wall while interacting with a customer are sure signs you are not giving them your full attention. Your posture should express interest, friendliness, and openness. Lean forward, face the customer and be conscious to avoid distractions so that they know you are interested.

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT DANCE-MOMS

If your dancers or their parents are unsatisfied, it's up to your customer service skills and training win back their support and continued loyalty, and to rebuild a positive working relationship.

1/ Listen

It is of primary importance when dealing with an unsatisfied or complaining customer to listen attentively to his/her complaint, gripe, frustration or grievance. Be patient, attentive, and friendly.

2/ Express you are sorry

"We are sorry for this mistake/problem."

"We are terribly sorry for this inconvenience."

"How can we work to solve this problem together?"

"I can imagine how frustrated you are."

3/ Do not argue or interrupt

This will only worsen the situation, especially if the customer is angry. Let them speak before you try to discuss with him what has happened.

4/ Do not lose your self-control

If you stay relaxed, customers will calm down.

5/ Point out facts

Listen carefully – and write everything down. Do not make any comments until the customer is finished talking.

6/ Admit the problem

If you can suggest a solution, do it. If not tell the customer what actions you will take and what actions will follow. Never make the mistake of promising something you are not able to follow through with.

7/ Involve the customer in problem solving

Suggest the customer alternative solutions, if they exist. Customers appreciate the opportunity to choose the ways of problem solving.

8/ Follow-up

Make sure that the promised measures are taken. If you do not fulfill what was promised and ignore the customer's complaint, the problem will grow.

9/ Give the customer a "way back"

Sometimes customers are wrong. You should let them leave with dignity, without feeling embarrassed.

10/ Be open-minded

From the very beginning you should believe that the customer may be right. Always be open minded toward the customer's opinion, making them feel comfortable and that they deserve to be listened to.

ROLE PLAY EXERCISE

Dealing with difficult customers and conflict in the studio is one of the biggest – and most stressful – challenges you and your team will come up against, and using role play is a very powerful tool in being prepared and confident when a tricky situation arises.

A role-play exercise is where your team acts out an imaginary scenario that closely mirrors a situation that could occur in their role. Come up with 3 scenarios (for example, a disgruntled parent who missed out on recital tickets, or a grandparent who wasn't notified of a canceled class) and observe your team role-play the scenario and solutions.

PROBLEM-SOLVING CHECKLIST

When you listen to the customer's complaint you take responsibility to solve the problem.

- Listen without interruption and with full attention.
- Behave without aggression, and without arguing.
- Do not extend excuses for the problem, and thank the customer for drawing their attention to it and helping solve it.
- Express empathy and full understanding.

Customer service problem solving involves:

- Asking necessary questions to get more complete information and completed picture of a situation.
- Finding out exactly what the customer needs you to do for them.
- Explaining first what you can do, and then gently add what you cannot do.
- Discussing in detail all opinions, and then decide what needs to be done.
- Undertaking immediately what was discussed.
- Checking the result to make sure the customer is completely satisfied.



FROM CUSTOMER SERVICE TO CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Your staff may have the skills and know-how to interact with your customers.

But what **strategies** can you employ to go the extra mile and focus on the customer experience?

This is what will be the biggest factor in making your customers happy before they come to you with problems.

Get personal. Your customers want to feel like they have access to real people, not bots and FAQs. Offer more than just automated email responses, and do not let your telephone prompts or website send them down a rabbit hole. Take full advantage of social media (such as Facebook, Twitter and Yelp) and write responses when your customers post on your page. Post photos and bios on your website. This shows your customers that you are real people working on in their best interests.

Be available. Part of the personal touch is making sure your customers can reach you. Set your service hours for early and late as needed, and set KPI's to ensure all emails and phone calls are returned within 12 hours. This is SO crucial – many studios leave their calls and enquiries unanswered, and driving those customers directly to competitors.

Cater to your customers. Make sure you are fully meeting your dancers' and their families' needs. Consider assigning staff liaisons to specific customers so they can build a relationship. Offer VIP treatment for your regular customers to let them know they are appreciated. What special services might your customers like? You can set up focus groups, interview customers, or run a survey to get ideas.

Create communities. Your customers will feel even more valued if you treat them as valued members of a community. You can bring various customers together in numerous ways, including social media and studio events.

SET YOURSELF UP TO WIN

Here in the Inner Circle we want to take ALL the hard work and thinking out of your Customer Service strategy, so have created 30+ pages of email templates and scripts for you to download and plug into your studio to use today.

CLICK HERE to download our Inner Circle Customer Success Templates