

THE **Customer Service Advantage**™

KEEPING CUSTOMERS SATISFIED

Win the uphill battle with upset customers: How you can satisfy them

■ *A strong plan for getting back on easy street*

For service pros, dealing with upset customers can be an uphill battle.

It may sometimes feel like everything you say or try causes them to give you more resistance.

Make them happy

But you can get up that hill – and make upset customers satisfied again.

Try these steps the next time you run into “uphill” situations with customers:

1. Acknowledge customers’ situations *and* feelings. Use empathy to let them know you’ve heard their story and, more importantly, how they feel about it.

You might say, “I can understand (showing empathy) how you might feel angry. I’m sorry you had such a hard time with that. Now I can help you.”

2. Restate the problem to clarify and confirm just the facts.

3. Solve the problem. Ideally, solve it on the spot because 95% of customers who get that fast resolution will do business with you again.

If you can’t solve it immediately, tell customers what steps you’ll take and how long it will take.

4. Offer something special. You don’t have to give away a gift or a discount. Just tell customers what you’ll do beyond the norm to make sure they’re happy.

5. End with agreement. End the conversation on a positive note, giving customers the chance to agree with the resolution.

6. Set up follow-up. Let customers know when you’ll check in to make sure everything is still all right.

Source: JoAnna Brandi, publisher of “Customer Care Coach,” a weekly training program, and service consultant, is also a frequent contributor to our Shared Knowledge column, www.customerarecoach.com