

Lesson 4: Client Etiquette: How to Keep Them Coming Back

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the lesson you should:

- understand the important protocol of client etiquette
- understand attitude and appropriate behavior both toward clients and other staff members within the business
- understand what the client wants and how to fulfill that need and desire

Chapter Summary:

Social business etiquette has the power to make or break your business. A new graduate who doesn't understand the rules of etiquette when dealing with both clients and members of the staff will have a very difficult time building their business, keeping clients interested in their services, and creating a pleasant work environment. Knowing your business is not enough to succeed. Relationships with those you work with and understanding how to effectively interface with clients is crucial.

Resources you may want to explore:

1. *Business Etiquette, Third Edition: 101 Ways to Conduct Business with Charm and Savvy* by Ann Marie Sabath, available on Amazon.com
2. *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie, available on Amazon.com

- **What six things do clients never want to hear about?**

1. lifestyle issues
2. personal problems
3. financial issues
4. sexual orientation
5. religious beliefs
6. political beliefs

Steer clear of these topics because they can agitate, anger, or offend a client and you are then far less likely to see them return. Stick to talking about the client and *their* business needs. People love to be in the spotlight.

- **Is it acceptable to discuss the personal lives, finances, and work ethic of another employee at your company?**

No! It's always better to refrain from denigrating others in front of a

client. Choose to speak positively about your company, your products, and your services and avoid personal topics about other co-workers.

- **What are the four things clients want from you?**
 1. **Kindness and respect:** They want to feel they are the most important person to you and to the business from the moment they enter to the moment they step out.
 2. **Consistency:** Clients also desire and deserve consistent service. They want to know that every time they work with you they will experience the same level of expertise and follow-through as they did in their initial encounter.
 3. **All of your attention:** Customers want you to focus entirely on them. They are paying you and in return they expect you to give your time, talent, and consideration. They don't like it when you chat with co-workers or talk on your cellphone when you are supposed to be assisting them. No one likes being ignored, especially those who are paying you.
 4. **A professional, caring, and positive experience:** Make sure you treat customers well all the time, every time.

Review Questions:

- What six things do clients never want to hear about?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
 6. _____

- Is it acceptable to discuss the personal lives, finances, and work ethic of another employee at your company?

- What are four things clients want from you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Homework:

Write your personal creed and promise to your craft concerning your behavior choices toward clients and other staff members. Read your personal creed to the class.

Class Activity:

Brainstorm things that you can do to make your clients' experience memorable and provide them with quality service. Develop a powerful top-ten list with others in the class. As a class discuss things you've seen in business environments that have been less than appropriate.

Additional Information:

Contrary to common perception, customers will *not* go almost anywhere just to save a buck. If you want to avoid being passed over, stop trying to compete on price alone. What your business needs to stand out is better customer service and satisfied customers, but it can't be the simple please-and-thank-you variety. Aim higher. Strive for fabulous, standout, outrageously great service to set your business apart from the crowd.

Fun Facts:

When researchers asked customers how far they'd be willing to drive for excellent service, 80 percent said they'd travel four or more miles and nearly half said they would drive 10 miles or more for the right combination of price, quality, and customer service.

Notes:
