

Relating to Your Customers

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Relating to your customer is one of the best ways to keep them coming back. The best way to determine how you can relate to your customers is by asking them questions, but not your typical “How’s the weather,” you want to ask personal questions, “You have a dog, right? Oh, right, a cat – How’s Fluffy doing? How old is she now? You have such great stories about your pets.” Comments like this make people feel good, feel appreciated and understood. If the person had said that they put their pet down, you might extend your condolences and ask what happened, while they may not want to speak about it, they will appreciate the thought. Even if politics is a hot topic, do not respond – political beliefs are for outside of your business time, you could lose your customers over a slip of the tongue.

How do you learn more about your customers? Send out a survey through your e-marketing, or post a survey on your website. Use the results of the survey to determine how many people have pets, what kind of pets, or if they like to travel. This can help you create good conversation starters with your customers that you can share with your staff. Many motorcycle owners have some sort of a trip planned for the summer months; ask them where they plan to go to, or if they plan on coming to any of your events.



The more conversations you and your staff have with customers, the more they feel like you are their friend. Through this business friendship, you create a trust that will allow you to, in general, manipulate them into doing things they may have brushed off otherwise. By inviting the customer to events through this friendship, they will be more inclined to give an honest answer that either they are coming to the event, or they regretfully decline. Even if they decline this time, the more you continue to ask, the more likely they are to show their eventual support for you than if you had no client-relations at all.

You can also use emails to build a stronger relationship with your customers by including a funny picture of an animal, or a nice tropical drink, etc... The customers that have pets will be more likely to find the picture amusing and come in with a funny picture or story about their pet. You might also try posting the picture near the check-out as a conversation starter for the cashier.

Don't be discouraged by the clients that don't react to your tactics, they may be having a bad day, or they may not have any interest in the topic. Chances are that they'll be in again anyhow and maybe they'll be more willing to converse that day.

Determine what you have in common and differences you have with your customers and use this information to strengthen your relationship with them. Be their 'in-house' friend, do your best to remember their names but with a few thousand people coming in and out of the store all the time, don't worry about getting mixed up, most people won't be offended, they'll just correct you and continue on with the conversation.



What did you just call me?