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Email Jane with your best and worst customer service experiences and feel free to email for advice.

Customer Service – A Fairytale

Once upon a time, in a land where people prepare for a cyclone by buying copious amounts of alcohol, a lovely young thing had a birthday celebration with friends.

This lovely young thing was a vegetarian and asked the wait person's advice on what she should have. Some time later the meals finally arrived, but low and behold she was served a meal containing meat.

"Excuse me," she said ever so nicely. "Do you remember that we had a conversation about the fact I am a vegetarian? This meal has meat in it." The waiter peered at it suspiciously and then whisked it off the table like a dead rat on the front door mat.

More time passed but still no replacement meal. The young girl waved at the waiter but he was having none of it, rather he ignored her hoping she would just go away. By the end of the night the young girl was still foodless and very unhappy. In fact, she was so upset and angry about her experience that she decided to tell everyone.

"Take complaints on board and when you get them, fix them immediately and fix them properly."

THE MORAL?

Customers may not complain directly to you but when something goes wrong most people tell up to 15 people. If they complain to you, you are lucky.

No matter how fabulous you are at what you do, things sometimes go wrong, but you will be amazed at how things can turn around when you immediately correct the mistake. This is what should have happened:

Young girl: "Do you remember we had a conversation about the fact I am a vegetarian?"

Wait person: "Oh good grief, I will fix this immediately. Please have a bottle of house wine on us while you are waiting."

A complimentary bottle of house wine would have gone down a treat and as a result the happy wine drinking vegetarian would have gone home and told everyone about her pleasant dining experience.

This might have been a random incident with an out-of-sorts waiter, but the damage is irreparable. So take complaints on board and when you get them, fix them immediately and fix them properly. Bill Gates once said: "Unhappy customers are our greatest source of learning," – and look where it got him.



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