



# Making a Good First Impression on Your Customer

**LESSON OBJECTIVE:** Teach employees how to make a good first impression on customers.

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME:** 3 minutes for the video. Add extra time for discussion.

**HOW TO USE:** Show the short video "Making a Good First Impression." In this video, Pat Sullivan, owner of Sullivan Hardware in Indianapolis, shares how he instructs his employees to interact with customers. After the video, you may review the main points and talk about your own store's policies.

**OPENING COMMENTS:** Customers want to feel welcome and important when they come into the store. The first impression you make on them may be the most important impression you make. To make a good first impression, you need to pay attention to simple details such as your body language, dress and what you say.

Main points to review:

- Always be friendly and smile.
- Be eager to help, give direct eye contact and don't roll your eyes or sigh when the customer asks for help.
- Be careful how you respond to customers. Don't give canned answers or try to brush them off as if they're a nuisance. If you need to ask another employee for help, for example, don't say, "This guy needs help." Rather, say something like, "This customer needs assistance in plumbing."
- Discuss your store's dress code. Generally, wear modest clothing that is clean and without holes. If possible, wear shirts with the store's logo on them.
- When answering the phone, personalize your greeting and smile when you answer. It makes a difference in how you sound.
- If you answer the phone and you have to put the customer on hold, assure him or her they won't be on hold long, and follow through on that promise. Let them know what you need to do before getting back with them.

**ADDITIONAL TRAINING:** For more training on selling skills, NHPA members may take the "Selling Skills and Customer Relations" course, available on [www.yournhpa.org](http://www.yournhpa.org). If you are not a member, call 800-772-4424 or visit [www.yournhpa.org](http://www.yournhpa.org).