



# Customer Service From the Top

**LESSON OBJECTIVE:** Share some customer service tips from retailers who were the winners of NRHA's 2019 Top Guns award.

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME:** Approximately 5 minutes for the presentation. Use the Additional Discussion section to spend more time on this topic.

**HOW TO USE:** The lesson includes a PDF which you can use similar to the way you would use a PowerPoint presentation. The trainer's notes will offer notes for each slide, but you may elaborate on each as much as you wish.

## Slide 1

### *Introduction*

Providing good customer service is one of the most important jobs we can do. It should be what sets us apart from our competitors. We all know a bit about what it takes to provide good customer service, but sometimes it helps to get a refresher or get a different perspective on it. Here are what three successful retailers tell their employees.

## Slide 2

*Christine Hand, owner of Handyman Home Hardware, 2 locations in Newfoundland, Canada*

Dealing with returns can be a tricky customer service issue. Here are some ways to create a "wow" response from the customer.

- Check your attitude. A customer walking up to the counter with something to return is likely already expecting no for an answer. They may already be agitated because the product they purchased didn't work or wasn't what they needed. Don't feed their agitation with a negative attitude.
- Be empathetic. Don't just quote the return policy. Try to say, "I understand how you feel," and explain to the customer that you want to help, but may need to take certain steps first. If an item isn't returnable, explain why and help them find a solution.
- Find the opportunity. Look at returns as an opportunity to sell something else. Why are they returning the product? Do you have something that will work better for the task? If they're returning a product because they don't know how to use it, teach them how to use it. If the product doesn't work, find one that works.

## Slide 3

*Charlie Gillman, owner and president of Gillman Home Center, 12 locations in Indiana and Ohio*

A few simple rules go a long way to providing great customer service.

- Treat people how you want to be treated.
- Under promise and over deliver.
- Greet customers by name whenever possible.
- Keep open communication. If a customer places a special order, contact them with updates. If someone calls with a question and you don't know the answer, call them back as soon as you know the answer.

## Slide 4

*Mark Schulein, president of Crown Ace Hardware, 18 locations in California, Hawaii and Arizona*

You accomplish great customer service not just with your words, but also with your actions.

- Operate between two goal posts: "Be the customer's hero" and "Have fun." That is where you'll find great service.
- A famous business person once said "A great place to work makes a great place to shop." Do you love what you're doing? What can make this a better place to work. When we are firing on all cylinders, it drives great engagement with our customers. Customers will be able to tell if you enjoy where you work. If you are happy, there's more of a chance they will be too.
- Be a resource to the community. Engage and support the community, whether it's through volunteering, fundraising or participating in events. Be a part of the community around you and support it.

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

- After reading these comments, is there anywhere you think we as a team can improve?
- What are some other ways we can provide great customer service?