

SOLUTIONS

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Empathy in CS

Are your front-line agents cold, despondent or impersonal when speaking to customers? This lack of empathy convinces customers that your company doesn't care about them.

What is empathy? While sympathy is the ability to relate to another person's emotions or situation, empathy results in a shared understanding of those emotions, a deeper connection. Empathy makes the subject feel comforted, respected and validated.

Ultimately, good customer service is built on a foundation that demonstrates an organization can be trusted. Particularly, that the customer will be treated fairly and reasonably when approaching the company with problems and complaints. Empathy plays a big role in fostering that trust.

There are three main "tones" that your agents display: Empathy, Sympathy and Apathy.

If you've ever listened in on your agent calls, you may have noticed that certain people seem to have a naturally calming voice, or always sound upbeat and positive despite being in a negative situation with a client. These people have sympathetic

or empathetic "tone" in their way of speech that results in good customer interaction.

Let's compare the same phrases said in each way and think about how each makes you feel.

Empathy:

"I know it's not easy. I have faced the same problems myself. Here's how to fix it."

Sympathy:

"I'm so sorry that happened. But I'm afraid there's nothing I can do to help."

Apathy:

"No, there's nothing I can do for you."

Which tone would you want your agents to use with customers?

Empathy makes a connection through a common experience or problem which you can resolve.

Sympathy shows you pity the person, but have no intention of helping them sort out the issue.

Apathy is the complete absence of emotion or caring for a person, place or thing.

The difference between empathy and sympathy is quite clear, with empathy being a more welcome

response in customer service. There is rarely, if ever, an appropriate time for an agent to use an apathetic response. Apathy breeds contempt and resentment, which will never result in a positive outcome for you, your customer or your company.

Empathy is a tool for great customer service that every agent should utilize on a daily basis.

Empathy can be a tool used to help build trust with customers and provides them with reassurance that their problems and concerns are going to be resolved to their satisfaction. Understanding your customer's needs, what they are trying to achieve, and what they are going through is critical to delivering a great experience.

When agents start to build common ground with a customer, genuine empathy can develop from there. By taking a moment to imagine where they're coming from, your team will be better equipped to respond in ways that are respectful and offer appropriate solutions.

Ultimately, the goal of CS is to keep your customers happy. A happy customer is a customer who will keep coming back, ensuring the growth and success of your company for years to come. Empathy makes it happen.

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