Constituent Service is Customer Service

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CUSTOMER SERVICE WIN

CUSTOMER SERVICE FAIL
Think of a recent customer service experience.

Rate your experience (0 = poor to 5 = excellent) and briefly explain why.
How do you define customer service?
“...every customer, be it in a hotel or be it in a shoe store, want(s) to have caring attention to themselves. That has not changed. And, in fact, it will never change. ...Every customer wants to feel respected, honored, taken care of properly and advised properly, etc...”

---Horst Schulze, former CEO, Ritz Carlton
“...every constituent, be it a citizen or a stakeholder, want(s) to have caring attention to themselves. That has not changed. And, in fact, it will never change. ...Every constituent wants to feel respected, honored, taken care of properly and advised properly, etc...”
Who are your customers?
CUSTOMER SERVICE ISN'T JUST FOR THOSE WHO FACE THE PUBLIC

IT ALSO EXTENDS TO PEOPLE INSIDE AN ORGANIZATION WHO DEAL WITH EACH OTHER
Acknowledge
What assumptions do you make when you're not acknowledged?
I am always responsive to the expressed and unexpressed wishes and needs of our guests.
24-hour rule
Observe the Nonverbal
Just Acknowledge = Can Defuse Customer

Acknowledge with Empathy = Airline “On Their Side”

Acknowledge Quickly = Customer Goodwill

*How Customer Service Can Turn Angry Customers Into Loyal Ones, HBR, 2018*
How much were airline customers willing to pay for a future ticket with an airline when their complaint was quickly acknowledged?
Understand
Customer Service for Anything
POWERED by ZAPPoS
anything.zappos.com
“In many conversations, people speak past one another. Asking clarifying questions can help uncover the real intent behind what is said. These (questions) help us understand each other better and lead us toward relevant follow-up questions.”

- Relearning the Art of Asking Questions, Harvard Business Review
Three Types of Clarifying Questions

Open Questions
- Allows constituent to explain the issue.
- “How Can I Help You?”

Probing Questions
- To get specifics or additional context.
- “To help me further understand the issue, can you share an example?”

Closed Questions
- For yes or no responses. Good to close the conversation.
- “Is phone the best way to reach you?”
The Funnel Effect

01. Open Questions
02. Probing Questions
03. Closed Questions
What *probing questions* would you ask in order to understand this problem?
I’m coming to the Capitol on Thursday for a committee meeting. My group said there’s a gathering before the meeting and that I should call my rep about it.
How dare the state take away my child’s benefits. They always do this and now they don’t have any help! I called all of the agencies, and everyone says my child and their children don’t qualify and that I have to submit all my paperwork to get their benefits back.
Own The Problem
“We don’t have one person whose role it is to maintain the culture or manage service or our reputation. We believe we are all responsible... Personal ownership by all of our people has led to our success and our company’s ability to persevere even through the toughest times.”

--Blake Nordstrom
What stops you from owning a constituent’s problem?

How can you reduce or eliminate the obstacle?
Self-Care
“I’m curious why you feel that way”

“I’d prefer if we both tried to keep a calm tone while we talked”

“My understanding of what you’re saying is...”
Acknowledge

Understand

Own the Problem
Where can you apply these values in your constituent work?
“The only difference between customer service and constituent service is the way you spell it.”

--Mike Cantwell, district director, U.S. House of Representatives