

Would you buy from yourself? Conducting an image self-evaluation

"Perception is reality!" This is often the case in business dealings. People like to deal with people they like or trust. People base their perceptions on the image we portray; and that image is enhanced or blurred by how we act or present ourselves.

Take a moment and give some honest feedback to yourself, based on your past 6 months experience in dealing with your customers. The Secret of Effective Customer Service is in being fully aware of how you are perceived in the marketplace. And to being willing to change based on those perceptions.

- Is your image one of honesty and straightforward sincerity? How?
- From the buyer's point of view, would you be considered reliable? Why?
- Could you honestly say your customers received special benefits dealing with you not available from one of your competitors? What? Why?
- In their eyes, would you appear to be an expert in your field? Why?
- Have you been effective in helping solve their problems? How?
- Would you say you handled complaints to their complete satisfaction? How?
- Is integrity one of your watchwords? How does it show in your dealings?
- Other than your business dealings, would you think your customers believe you have their best interests and welfare at heart? Why?
- Do customers look at you as a good reliable source of product or service information? Why?
- Would the majority of your customers continue dealing with your business, even if a competitor offered slightly lower prices? Why?
- What percentage of your customers come from referrals?
- How do you plan to keep yourself and your staff educated and current in your field?
- Describe how you keep in touch with past clients. Results?

The answers drawn from these questions can give you insight into how your career or business is perceived by those who do business with you. Being aware is the first step to building a solid foundation for success and to making any necessary changes to cement that foundation.

Your competitors will know your perception, your weaknesses, and your strengths. Have you taken the time to be as well informed as those who would take your clients away from you?

What will you do this year to change your business to better serve your clients? What will you do to train your employees and co-workers to be more productive on the job? **Customer service is not just a part of your business – Customer Service is your business!**

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