

Master, who is my customer?

By Bob 'Idea Man' Hooey, AS

Many years ago a young servant came to his master and enquired of him how he should be successful in business. The wise Master said, "By taking care of the real needs and providing value for your customers." The young servant replied, " But Master, who is my customer?"

This plagiarized parable from my Sunday school days illustrates the confusion we all too often have in business. **"Who is our customer?"**

I would contend that we have internal and external customers. Both are important to your success!

External customers are those who would do business with us and allow us to make a profit. Why would it be important to make sure we take care of the needs of our external customers?

Internal customers are those who assist us in making our business successful by playing a part or supplying something we need to be successful. The same question on taking care of our internal customers' needs requires a bit more thought, doesn't it?

Why would it make sense to take care of those who work along side you in your business, or do part of the sales, delivery or installation process?

To your customer, they are the company and each time they encounter one of them, your reputation and referral factor is on the line. Why would it make sense to take care of those who supply you with products or services? None of us work in isolation, do we?

In a pinch when you "just gotta have it!" - whom do you think your suppliers will help? Why?

What can you do to build a relationship that returns that response?

What are you committed to doing to increase your effectiveness in serving your external customers and internal customers alike? When will you implement it?

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