

# EXCEL

Quarterly Customer Care Newsletter

Issue 01: July, 2013



*Paul Graham, Security Officer, Warrens Branch, greets a customer.*

## The Customer Experience starts at the door and at Republic we open with a smile!

The Republic brand is well known across the Caribbean for exemplary banking and a keen sense of social responsibility but how do we maintain our fine service at every step of the journey? Ask Paul Graham, one of our dedicated staff members who meets and greets our customers face to face every day.

According to Graham after ten years of service at various branches, he is currently settled at the Warrens branch where he continues to make his mark as a courteous and team-driven employee.

In a telephone interview with Graham, we asked for his advice on how to treat a customer.

“First thing, you have to know your job and the products offered. Always be polite to customers, have empathy.” He says that you have to know where some customers are coming from in order to help them as “some people are incapable of properly expressing themselves and saying exactly what they want, so you need to know your customers in order to provide them with relevant information.”

### How does he do it?

*“It’s just me!” he says with an honest cheer about him.*

“You should always remember you’re at work and impressions are remembered...good or bad they are remembered all the time and you just need to be yourself.”

Thank you Mr. Graham and thank you to all members of staff who carry with them the spirit of customer care in everything they do.



# Follow-Up Sales Leads Like A Bloodhound

Why do bankers give up on a potential sale so easily? If someone says, “I will think about it,” does this mean you should call them back or would you treat it as a dead opportunity? There is one thing I learned by watching a fox hunt –the dog does not give up! The dog keeps on running and trying to find the fox until the fox is found. Too often we stop our chase before it even gets started.

**Here is what a banker sales bloodhound should [do]:**

- 1) Know your customer.** Before a potential customer leaves your office you should know who they are, what relationships they have with you, and make sure you verify their phone number and email address. It is sad to say but phone numbers and email addresses change frequently and most likely your records are old or inaccurate.
- 2) Hand out a business card.** Before they leave your office, hand them your business card. In fact hand them two business cards just in case

they need one for their spouse. This is why you have business cards. This year your goal should be to go through as many boxes as possible.

- 3) Send an email.** Directly after the customer leaves your office, send an email! You just verified the email address, so send them a quick email and say thank you for stopping in and you look forward to talking with them in a few days. If the email bounces, call them up and re-check the email address. You must have written it down incorrectly.
- 4) Follow-up like a bloodhound.** Don't stop until you get a final answer. Maybe is not a final answer. We will think about it is not a final answer. Yes, I would like to make an appointment or No, we are no longer interested is a final answer.
- 5) Follow-up again.** Lastly, let's say a few days go by and you do not hear from the potential customer. Now is the time to be creative in your approach. Call them back and this time, use a servicing approach. Here is an example:

*Hi Mr. Smith, this is Jane from Your Bank. We talked a few days ago about refinancing your home equity line of credit. The reason I am calling is that I may have forgotten to provide you with one other important piece of information about refinancing your loan. I noticed that you do not use our mobile banking product. Well, with your new line of credit account, you will be able to access this account from our mobile banking application.*

This simple follow-up call provides one new nugget of information for your prospect but it also provides you with a valid reason to talk with them to gain commitment. Don't let a week go by without contacting them again. Bloodhounds don't give up. Bloodhounds want to win. Don't you want to win? Sure you do. Stop letting business go to your competitor and start following up like the banking sales professional you really are.

Find full article at: <http://www.quest-analytics.com/sdarticles/sdarticle201304.html> on 15/07/2013.

# Transforming Mistakes into Valuable Lessons

## Synopsis of a customer complaint:

One customer, after being swayed to give Republic Bank a try on hearing of our good reputation, was disappointed with the service offered. After applying for a joint credit card and a small loan, the customer found it very difficult to get in touch with the assigned Loans Officer and throughout the process had to call persistently without any of her calls being returned. Additionally, miscommunication among the staff led to a situation where the customer was told her loan had been approved and on calling for disbursement instructions was told that her loan had in fact been denied, after she had “conducted [ her] business accordingly”. Though the customer was promised an investigation into her matter she never received a telephone call after her report. As a result the customer accused the bank of having a lazy and carefree attitude.

## Resolution:

The customer was contacted, an apology letter was drafted, and members of staff tried their best to resolve every mistake that had been made. In turn, the members of staff involved were able to identify their weak areas throughout the process such as miscommunication among each other, uncertainty with who should follow-up with the customer and the mistake of telling the customer the loan was in the process of being approved by another department. Further, the staff was able to re-design and improve some of their mechanisms for dealing with the disbursement process. For example, Sales Officers will now be instructed to call customers and at least confirm the approval and outline the next steps before an official handover to the disbursement clerk. This is just one of the initiatives taken by the branch in question, toward ensuring accountability at every stage of the loan disbursement process. Great lesson learnt!

## Three Tips:

- The faster a problem is resolved, the higher the satisfaction level stays.
- Turn Complaints into Opportunities to improve!
- Remember the three P's of customer service- professional, proud and proficient!

# Building Customer Loyalty in Tough Times

AT THE MOMENT, THE BANKING INDUSTRY AT LARGE is faced with a “crisis of confidence” among its consumers, which is threatening customer loyalty, according to David Albert, vice president, GfK Customer Loyalty, New York (a division of GfK Custom Research North America).

Since customer loyalty is essential for sustaining and growing business, banks today need to repair and strengthen customer loyalty in order to achieve both short and long-term success.

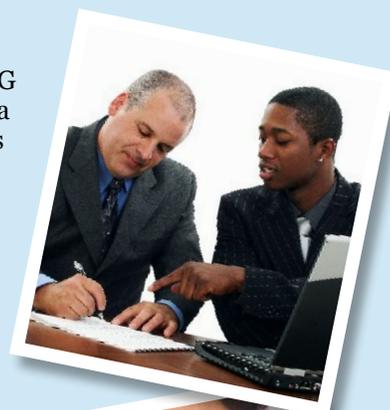
Why is customer loyalty critical? Research shows that happy, loyal customers are 15 times more likely to say that they will add accounts within the next year. They are also six times more likely [to grow their business with their primary bank during the next year.] It is the loyal customers who generate positive word-of-mouth, contributing significantly to customer acquisition, he points out.

To begin the customer retention process, banks must identify the specific features of the customer experience that drive loyalty – key enhancers. Two of the most important “key enhancers” for banks to focus on when providing service that exceeds consumer expectations are:

- **Advocacy for customers.** An increasing number of banks customers are looking for institutions that will look out for them. In both banking and investments, firms that offer a ‘watchful role’ with customers and provide guidance are out-performing the competition when it comes to loyalty.
- **Consistent, courteous and friendly communications.** Studies have shown, especially in tough times, that people want to deal with providers that they feel sincerely care about them. Smiling and saying “please” and “thank you” are important, but customers have to believe you mean it. If you have happy employees with good people skills who treat everyone in the same way and are genuine, you are on your way to building loyalty. Courteous, empathetic employees who are trained to provide the right guidance and support can do that.

Banks that are succeeding in the current environment are increasing their “people skills” training even as money is tight. The result? “Stronger customer loyalty,” Albert says.

Find full article at ABA Bank Marketing March 2011 pg. 3 ([www.gfk.com](http://www.gfk.com))



# A Job Well Done!



## Jamel Richards

This employee at the Broad Street branch has been complimented more than once for his face to face interaction with customers.

*"Mr. Jamel Richards was very helpful to me with my money transfer. I must admit a very clean and tidy person - well dressed. Made my transaction very easy."*

**Ruth Hewitt, 01/02/2013.**

*"Received excellent customer service! Well versed and patient!!"*

**Sheena Baker, 08/02/2013.**

*"Good service with topping up my V.T.M. card."*



## Rasheda Primus

This employee at the Warrens branch was complimented for her caring nature with customers.

*"I congratulate a young lady, Miss Rasheda Primus for the excellent service provided to me during my visit to the Warrens Branch on October 26, 2012. Miss Primus was polite, warm and knowledgeable. It is members of staff like her, who contribute to making customers' experiences truly pleasant and satisfying by consistently providing excellent service."*

**Jeffrey Broomes, 27/10/2012.**



## Dinah Gibbons

This employee at the Warrens branch left a strong impression on a customer who in turn complimented her excellent manner.

*"I recently had the opportunity to interact with Dinah Gibbons from the Loans Department of this Branch. I found this young lady to be very professional and knowledgeable. I was very impressed with the manner in which she dealt with me and I wish to highly commend her for the excellent work she is doing. I am aware that banks operate in an intensive customer service environment and as such good customer service is essential. However it is refreshing when you interact with persons who go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that the service provided is special. This young lady was like a 'breath of fresh air.' I wish to take this opportunity to again highly commend Ms. Gibbons for a job well done."*

**Anthony Benn, 08/05/2013.**

## Quiz Corner

1. What are two of the most important "key enhancers" for banks to focus on when providing service that exceeds consumer expectations?
2. When banks develop their people skills what is the result?
3. Why is customer loyalty critical?
4. When is the best time to send a customer an e-mail and why?
5. You should not let a ----- go by without contacting a customer again.
6. BONUS- how can Republic Bank best avoid a situation such as that outlined in the synopsis of the customer complaint, in its future?

### The Republic Bank Challenge

M W T E X C E L L E N C E B M  
 X S H T D N U O H D O O L B L  
 C H V N E X P E R I E N C E G  
 X U K R Z B J Q C N J F U O J  
 R E S P O N S I B I L I T Y C  
 D J Y S L Z L K P T G D K X B  
 Y T I L I B A D N E P E D H R  
 H L T M U S Z V N A Z N F I Q  
 R D T P X E U R E M O T S U C  
 P E E H V P M P L H R I D R F  
 H R I I V X M P Y X C A U O P  
 O A C C O U N T A B I L I T Y  
 A C N G K L K K X T H I E L C  
 C S Z B P M A B Q O H T U H L  
 P J R H P G U A J E J Y H Q J

ACCOUNTABILITY  
 BLOODHOUND  
 CARE  
 CONFIDENTIALITY  
 CUSTOMER  
 DEPENDABILITY  
 EMPATHY  
 EXCELLENCE  
 EXPERIENCE  
 REPUBLIC  
 RESPONSIBILITY  
 TEAM

*Quiz Corner winners will be drawn from all correct entries submitted on or before July 31, 2013. Please submit entries to Sharon Howell at e-mail showell@republicbarbados.com. Two prizes are up for grabs (\$150 Cave Shepherd cash each). Good luck!!*

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To submit articles or recommendations contact: Brian Charles, Manager - Customer Contact Centre. Tel: 227-2721 • Email: bcharles@republicbarbados.com or Sharon Howell, Marketing Officer Customer Service, Marketing & Corporate Communications Department Tel: 431-1262 -Ext 4022 Email: showell@republicbarbados.com