

## Customer service matters a great deal for businesses

By Catherine McLean

Manager, Service Caledon

If good news travels fast, bad news travels faster and farther in the service industry.

In fact, people are twice as likely to talk about a bad service experience. Worse, it takes 12 positive experiences to undo one negative one.

We have to seize every opportunity to satisfy our customers because we might only get one chance to do it.

How do you provide exceptional customer service?

Try the Disney approach.

Disney is considered a leader in providing memorably positive experiences. Why? Exceptional customer service. At every point of contact, customers feel valued. Customer service is a core value embraced by the entire organization of Disney. It is a key element of their vision. They understand the value of service experience, and know that it has a direct impact on the bottom line.

They are famous for providing consistent, exceptional service in everything they do. Their staff understands and emulates their quality standards and service values. It is a requirement.

So what's the take away for your business?

Customer service does not just mean the department that accepts returns and complaints. It should be a conscious effort by everyone in the organization to ensure the customer feels valued at every point of contact.

Ensure your organization has a clear vision for service excellence, and make sure there are explicit guidelines for your staff to live by.

And of course, customer focus starts at the top. Make sure that "customer first" attitude is expressed in everything you do.

In this fast-changing world of technological advances, customer expectations are always changing too, but regardless of how or when they access service, customers will always expect the best.

Try to ensure that, when they walk away, the story they tell is a positive one. And your bottom line will thank you.