

How to Anticipate Lousy Service



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Most Indian companies believe in delivering mediocre service irrespective of industry, size, age, brick-and-mortar or online. All of us have experienced this with our cellular service provider, car service, bank or grocery shop.

If you listen closely each time you get lousy service, you can pick up some hidden words that keep coming up. These words aren't uttered by service representatives. When you 'hear' these unsaid words, you will know that the service provider is about to take you down the frustration path.

We have all heard stories of isolated great service moments, the most hallowed one being that of a premium retailer who has a no-questions-asked return policy. Then there is that airline that went out of its way to replace a shirt and trouser for a passenger on whom a stewardess

spilt a drink. In some smaller ways, we have all experienced something that goes above and beyond our expectations, even if it is as a result of a complaint or service request, e.g., a complimentary meal or an upgraded room.

Now, what about the other extreme — where we get horrible customer service? Such as when one ordered groceries on a mobile app and end up chasing that order for three days. Or when one sends one's car for regular service and it comes back with a bigger problem that hadn't existed before. In total contrast to the benefits of great customer service, a poor service will lead to customer defection, erosion of sales and consumer forum cases.

Horrible service experiences will not leave a customer's mind for ages. If one really thinks about, and analyses, the horrible service experiences one has had in the past, one will find that there are some common traits they all share. For instance, the service provider never tried to apologise or show empathy towards your situation. He or she was not thinking for the customer and solving his or her issue.

So, how can we know in advance — at the beginning of our service



Quality has a quantity of its own

experience — whether we are going to have a good or lousy experience? Try to listen to seven key words, none of which will be said to you openly. These unspoken seven words from the service provider will tell us if we are going to get lousy service or not: 'how to get rid of this problem.' 'Hear' this line and you know you're in for trouble.

Essentially, you will find that most service providers somehow want to kill the problem a customer is bringing up, instead of looking at it as a service issue that needs process changes. This is also because of the failure to take up the right measures for strategic service objectives.

So how do we spot these unstated seven key words? You will find these words hidden in some of the common statements lousy service

providers make:

- ▶ Please send your complaint to our corporate office with purchase proof.
- ▶ This division is not responsible for the issue you have.
- ▶ Please go to our website or call our toll-free number to register your complaint.
- ▶ Our office in the city alone can handle this, so you need to go physically there.
- ▶ We will send the technician sometime next week.
- ▶ We cannot take your complaint on the phone as all our people are working from home because of Covid. So please send a detailed email.

If you hear any of the above, or similar, phrases from your service provider, you know it is time for you to be firm with them and protect your interests. You have paid them for the service and you need to get the value for the same. The least they can do is make some serious effort in resolving your issue. Next time when you do business with any service provider, watch out for similar phrases that hide these seven unspoken words.

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