

# Do you appreciate your customers?

I am sure you appreciate your customers (or supporters), especially when they pay you (or donate) for the goods/services you offer. But do your customers know you appreciate them? How are you communicating appreciation?

If you are trying to establish or maintain a long term relationship with your customers or supporters, you must demonstrate AND COMMUNICATE that you appreciate their business/donations, and that you are not taking the relationship for granted.



How can you do this? There are several ways.

**Reward their loyalty**

Big box stores, airlines, credit cards and any number of other service/good purveyors provide discounts/points/bonuses for frequent customers. Giving customers a discount or something else of value gives them a reason to continue to work with you, and lets you reward their support.

### **Thank them**

It depends on the size of your business, but thanking customers can be done with a simple hand written card, an email, a pre-printed postcard, or even through a personalized email marketing campaign.

### **Accommodate them**

My kitchen sink was leaking, so I contacted my go-to plumber. I sent him an email explaining the situation and asking when he could come to deal with it. He could only fit me in the following week. I wrote him back and said that I would be looking for someone who could come sooner. His response was this:

*Wow, that sucks but ok*

Really? It sucks that I have to look for someone else? You know what sucks? Having your kitchen sink leak. Imagine if instead he wrote this:

“Totally understand. You need to get the sink fixed ASAP. If you can’t find anyone, let me know.”

As it turns out, I found someone to come that day! And fix the leak for a lot less than my soon to be ex plumber, who clearly is taking my business for granted.

### **Notice them**

I’ve been going to a yoga studio for the better part of the last year but around Thanksgiving, I went out of town and had

a couple other obligations. Since I had not been in the studio for several weeks, the studio manager sent me an email with the subject line "Just checking in." It said this:

*Has it been a few weeks since you've been to yoga? Just remember you carry your yoga practice with you wherever you go. In the meantime, here is a 7 minute practice you can do right now in your chair. Don't stay away too long. ☐*

This included the instructions for the seven minute practice referenced.

### **It all requires keeping track**

All these require you tracking your customers/donors. For the yoga studio, this is probably part of the Mindbody software they use. For smaller organizations it may be as simple as a Excel spreadsheet. For bigger businesses, there are many types of customer management (CRM) software available. For nonprofits, there are specific donor databases.

### **Make them feel that you appreciate them**

We all like to feel appreciated. And organizations of all types need to be sure to communicate their appreciation.