

The single worst communications mistake

The single worst mistake you can make in communications is not living up to your promise (s). Why? It breaks trust.

Sadly, we see it all the time from big companies and small. Like when a wireless carrier tells you that you will have unlimited data, only to cap you after a certain amount. Or when an airline advertises a low price on a fare only to reference some small print saying it is available only at midnight of the day that Jupiter lines up with Mars.

When you continually break promises you create a cynical customer. He or she no longer trusts what you say, and takes what you say with a grain of salt. Cynical customers are not loyal customers.

It goes beyond false advertising though. In business and personal communication, you also can run the risk of losing trust. If you tell your friend you will be at her birthday party and then don't show up. If you promise your client that you will send a document and then you don't.

We've all heard that the most common lie is "the check's in the mail." How many times can you tell someone payment is forthcoming and the check is not there?

When you as a business or you as an individual fail to live up to your promises, you are helping create a culture of mistrust, cynicism and disappointment.

Do you agree? Is there something worse than making your customers/friends distrust/mistrust you or your business?