

Tips to Build and Retain Customer Loyalty

The key to a successful business is a steady customer base. Many businesses neglect their customer base in pursuit of new customers. However, since the cost to attract a new customer is significantly more than to maintain your relationship with the existing ones, your efforts toward building customer loyalty should certainly pay off.

Below are some tips for building customer loyalty:

- **Be Loyal to Your Workers.** Loyalty works from the top down. If you are loyal to your workers, they will feel positive about their jobs and pass that sense of loyalty along to your customers.
- **Provide Worker Training.** Train workers in the manner that you want them to interact with customers. Empower workers to make decisions that benefit your customers.
- **Communicate.** Whether it is an email newsletter, monthly flyer, a reminder card for a tune up or a holiday greeting card to your customers, communicate your caring and any information they may find helpful.
- **Provide Outstanding Customer Service.** Go the extra mile and meet customer needs. Train the staff to do the same. Customers remember being treated well.
- **Consider Customer Incentives.** Give customers a reason to return to your business. For instance, because children outgrow shoes quickly, the owner of a children's shoe store might offer a card that makes the tenth pair of shoes half price. Likewise, a dentist may give a free cleaning to anyone who has seen him regularly for five years.
- **Maintain Product Awareness.** Know what your steady patrons purchase and keep these items in stock. Add other products and/or services that accompany or complement the products your customers buy regularly. Make sure your workers understand everything they can about your products.
- **Be Reliable.** If you say a purchase will arrive on Wednesday, deliver it on Wednesday. If something goes wrong, let customers know immediately and compensate them for their inconvenience.
- **Be Flexible.** Try to solve customer problems or complaints to the best of your ability. Excuses such as "That's our policy" will lose customers.
- **Know Customers' Names.** Get to know the names of regular customers or at least recognize their faces.



First Sun organizational consultants are available to assist with creating a customized customer service plan for your organization or to assist with other subjects that could affect your workplace. Just give us a call, toll free at **800-968-8143** or in Greater Columbia at **803-376-2668**.

For more information on this and other topics, please see our website at: www.firstsuneap.com.