

# Free for the Giving

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*Expressions Of Excellence!™*



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## **The Best Things in Service Situations are often Free!**

You may think customer service requires a huge capital outlay: expensive training, high-falutin' CRM software and thousands of dollars in expenditures Nonsense! The most important parts of customer service are free.

Here's my baker's dozen list of customer service components that are free:

- Smiling.
- Saying "I'm sorry", "We're sorry," or "I apologize."
- Saying "thank you for your business."
- Saying "thank you for bringing this to my attention."
- Thanking customers for allowing you to fix their problems.
- Listening.
- Sharing important information in a timely manner.

- Giving customers choices.
- Addressing customers by name.
- Making small talk that builds the relationship.
- Relating to customers on a human level.
- Relishing your interactions with your customers.
- Enjoying your work.

### **Skills Inherent and Inherited**

The point is, customer service is about many things, most of them tied to attentiveness, friendliness and empathy. We all have the capacity to employ and deploy customer service to salve our customers' wounds. It's as much a mindset as it is phraseology. The same skills you employed while delivering newspapers, selling lemonade or Girl Scout cookies as a kid, will hold you in good stead as a sales professional. The best things in life really are free. Now pass them on!

The same skills you employed while delivering newspapers, selling lemonade or Girl Scout cookies as a kid, will hold you in good stead as a sales or service professional. The best things in life really are free. Now pass them on!

**Action:** Apply this baker's dozen of tips on a weekly basis this month and see the difference in your customers' response to your service.

Craig Harrison is the founder of [Expressions of Excellence!™](http://www.expressionsofexcellence.com), a full service training firm helping professionals express, engage and excel in the marketplace. He helps organizations tell their success stories, design and deliver great customer experiences and communicate for success. Craig is the author of *Stellar Service: Merge NOW with WOW to Win Customers for Life!* ([www.mergenowwithwow.com](http://www.mergenowwithwow.com)); *Good, Better...BEST!* series of books on communication and leadership; a pocketbook on leadership; three tips booklets; a CD; and hundreds of published articles on sales and service, communication, leadership, excellence and more. He is the founding president, dean emeritus of the Speakers Academy of National Speakers Association — Northern California chapter; and has been adjunct faculty at the University of California Santa Cruz, Silicon Valley Campus since 2001. Craig interviewed John Wooden, "Sully" Sullenberger, and Harvey Mackay, and has been interviewed by 60 Minutes, BBC Radio, and Financial Times of London. He is the past president of the International Customer Service Association of SF Bay Area – Silicon Valley. His clients include Pfizer, McKesson, Plantronics, ATT, headsets.com, US Army, nolo.com, Hilton Hotels and dozens more.

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