

Managing Customer Expectations

Written by Steve Marr

Thursday, 11 October 2018 04:01

I've read that "disappointment equals expectations less reality." If I go on a fishing trip expecting to catch 30 salmon a day but only land three, I may be disappointed. However, if I go salmon fishing expecting to catch one or no fish but bring home three, I get pretty excited. The difference is my expectation. Likewise we need to make sure that we manage our customers' expectations appropriately to avoid future disappointment.

When I have done consulting work with clients, I endeavor to match expectations to reality from a time, cost and result framework. An example would be if I'm assisting a business owner in improving the work results of an employee, I explain that in most cases the best you're going to accomplish is a 10% to 20% gain. If this is not the results you require, then you might be better off discharging the employee sooner rather than endure the pain of a long process. I explained that rarely can a manager take a person producing D-level work and raise them to A-level. It is more likely that you can get them to produce at a C-level.

I am involved in a damage reconstruction business that allows me to interface with customers. When a customer has suffered damage from a broken pipe, we may be able to dry the property and make it ready for reconstruction within a few days. However, because the construction market is very hot and it can be difficult acquiring contractors; we are likely three weeks out being able to reconstruct the customer's home. I would love to tell customers that we could get everything done in short order. It might even help me get a job signed. However, it will guarantee a disappointed customer in a few weeks.

When I plan projects I ask my contractors to give me a realistic estimate. In the past I contracted a landscape project to be started and completed within a few months, but the project started about 10 days late. In my conversation with the contractor he explained that the problem was that we had some rain. He had not planned for rain in his proposal, which was highly unrealistic. I was irritated with the delayed start because it affected my overall schedule that I could have adjusted with appropriate notice.

King Solomon wrote, "In the end, people appreciate frankness more than flattery." (Proverbs 28:23, NLT) We may have a tendency to want to overpromise or avoid discussing a potential concern with a customer for fear of losing a job. However, service providers earn Google's five

Managing Customer Expectations

Written by Steve Marr

Thursday, 11 October 2018 04:01

star ratings by under promising and over delivering. They earn one and two star ratings by overpromising and under delivering.

Learn how to manage the expectation of your customers. You and your customer will experience greater satisfaction.

Subscribe to the free Business Proverbs e-mail here: <http://bit.ly/ncixc1>