



Building Successful Customer Relationships

October 2011 – NECA National



Successful Customer Relations

I. The Cost of Customer Service

- A. Customer acquisition cost is the cost associated with convincing a consumer to buy your product or service, including research, marketing, and advertising costs
 - 1. Your BD professional
 - 2. Your estimators
 - 3. Cost of the bid
 - 4. The length of time for courting the client
 - 5. The interview/presentation
- B. Customer acquisition can be 700% more costly than keeping one
- C. Businesses which boosted customer retention rates by as little as 5% saw increases in their profits ranging from 5% to a whopping 95%

II. Customer Service Guidelines

- A. From the customer's point of view his or her job is the only one we have
- B. Early bad news is better than late bad news
- C. All business relationships should be win-win relationships
- D. The customer is not always right and our job is to help him or her understand what we think is right
- E. The most important customer service skill is great listening
- F. Frequent communication conquers customer fears
- G. Communicate progress and good news
- H. Document, document, document
- I. Focus on solving Their problems

III. 8 Rules

- A. Answer the phone
- B. Don't make promises unless you expect to keep them
- C. Listen to your customer
- D. Deal with complaints
- E. Be helpful—even if there is no immediate profit in it
- F. Train your staff to always be helpful, courteous and knowledgeable
- G. Take the extra step
- H. Throw in something extra

Successful Customer Relations

IV. Handling Dissatisfied Customers

- A. Make it easy to complain
- B. Listen to their grievances
- C. Put yourself in their shoes
- D. Ask what they want you to do to rectify the situation
- E. State exactly what you intend to do
- F. Follow up on the complaints
- G. Frame the first three minutes
- H. Never point out a customer's errors
- I. Do not criticize your company
- J. Use common sense—assume they have some too
- K. Know when to involve your supervisor