

CUSTOMER SERVICE POINT



EXCELLENT UPSELLING & CROSS-SELLING

Erwin Steneker
Rachael Gerkenmeyer

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An Introduction to Cross-selling and Up-selling

In the world of customer service, up-selling and cross-selling is becoming an increasingly important aspect of many call center jobs. And for good reason, as these examples show:

- Dutch savings bank Spaarbeleg has “increased sales by €10 million on 2 million calls [and] profits by several € millions after implementing cross-selling and up-selling activities and supporting systems – Customer Success Story....Spaarbeleg, DataDistilleries (2001);
- “Successful up-selling and cross-selling initiatives have enabled our Mid-market and Speciality divisions to perform well. In the Mid-market division, 31% of new license sales of the MAS90 product came from the Peachtree customer base, whilst in the Speciality division, 21% of FAS (Fixed Asset Management) new license sales were made to customers from our Mid-market division.” – Sage Interim Financial Results 2002, Sage Group (2002);
- “A property and casualty insurance company recognized that its predominant channel – agents – were less effective at meeting customer key buying criteria. This insight and knowledge of the channel cost differential (approximately 12% of revenues) compelled the firm to shift business to the call center away from agents, and implement a cross-selling strategy using the lower cost call center channel.” – Selling in tough times, Thomas G. Knight (2002);

- “It costs five times more to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing customer. Encouraging existing customers to spend more can have a dramatic effect on company's profit margins.” – Solving Insurance Business Problems Using Statistical Methods, Anup Cheriyan (2006);
- “In 2005 the Wholesale Banking activities focused on increasing cross-selling and strengthening client relationships. This contributed to a strong deal flow, including a number of landmark deals, particularly in the Benelux.” – ING Group net profit rises 25.3% to EUR 7,210 million in 2005, ING Group (2006);

When you take into account this extra turnover and profit that companies can make by offering additional products and services to already established customers, it is easy to see why it's at the very least encouraged if not required.

So what does this mean for customer service representatives like you who are working in a call center?

You will have to learn how to successfully offer these additional products and services, whatever they may be, without making it seem like a forced sale but all the while gaining the additional business by being persistent.

Let's take a first step by **defining** what cross-selling and up-selling actually is.

What is Cross-selling?

Cross-selling offers the opportunity for companies to make additional profits by selling services or products that a customer doesn't already pay for.

Take a cable company for example: they conduct business with customers whom subscribe to cable television plans, but if they can get these customers to obtain Internet service or even phone service with their company, they secure additional income. Now if they can successfully cross-sell their services to a large quantity of their customers, their profits will more than likely increase by at least half.

Many times, the company will “prime” customers for the cross-selling efforts they will encounter when calling into a call center for service related questions or issues. This is done through commercials meant to begin the process of the cross-sell, along with a number of different ways such as postal mailings and even posted signs throughout a community.

This ensures that a customer is ready to listen when the services or products are offered by a customer service agent as they already have an idea of what these additional features are all about.

What is Up-selling?

When it comes to **up-selling**, it’s a bit of a different ball game than cross-selling. While it does involve offering additional services and products to a customer, it is usually **not in addition** to what they already bought, but **in place of it**.

A perfect example of a business that is excellent at this type of selling is a fast food restaurant. McDonald’s offers value meals to customers, and upon ordering the meal a customer is asked if they would like to make the size of the meal a “super” or larger size.

Another great up-sell is to offer customers a higher calling plan than they already subscribe to with a cellular phone company.

These types of up-selling work on the same premises as cross-selling, as it is intended to increase the profits of the company offering the services and products. But instead of offering additional features, higher priced features are offered in place of what a customer may already be paying for.

Where do we go from here?

There are many different techniques that can be used in both up-selling and cross-selling which can help you to become successful in your efforts in this type of sell.

Because not everyone is a salesperson per say, you may shy away from this type of work before knowing what it is really all about.

Remember that these types of sales are not hard sales, but instead soft sales... more like an offer. This will help you to make this process as painless as possible.

The truth of the matter is this: if you're good at your job as a customer service representative, then you'll be able to easily incorporate cross-selling and up-selling into your daily working environment. After all, it only takes a friendly voice and an understanding personality to be successful at it.

This book will give you the tools you need in order to be a successful customer service agent whom can up-sell or cross-sell anything!

If you can do this, you will more than likely increase not only the **company's** profits, but your **own** profits as well. More times than not a company will offer incentives for successful sales by you, the customer service representative.

If you have gotten this far, don't stop reading now. Learn to become a powerful asset to the company you work for today!

Getting Intimate with the Products

When it comes to being successful in up-selling and cross-selling, it starts with **knowing the product**. You cannot expect to be able to offer anyone something you know nothing about, which makes knowing the product one of the most important aspects of up-selling and cross-selling.

A big part of someone making a decision to spend more money with a company is for them to **know** they are making a **good decision**.

In order for a customer to feel they are making a good decision is to ask questions about the products or services they are being offered, and if you can't answer their questions chances are they will not be inclined to accept the offer.

Finding the Information

Now, in a perfect world your employer will provide you with all of the necessary information you may need to know about the products or services you will be up-selling or cross-selling.

But in reality, you may not be provided with all of the information that will make it possible for you to be successful in your attempts to offer additional products and services to consumers.

In this case, it is important to take it upon yourself to make sure you are fully aware of the details in what you are offering.

You can do this a number of different ways, but beginning with using **company resources** is your best bet. Just because an employer doesn't provide you with the pertinent information doesn't mean that they do not have the information you need.

Inquiring about the information or asking for websites or documentation to get your questions answered can take you a long way and put you a step ahead of others that perform the same job as you.

And in many businesses you'll get noted as an employee that is willing to go the extra mile to perform. **An attitude highly valued by employers!**

Look for Features... and Benefits

Every service or product you will offer a customer comes with its own set of features, which in turn translates into benefits.

When it comes to features and benefits, remember this:

Features don't sell. Benefits do! So it's important to know the difference between features and benefits, and how to learn as much benefits as possible.

Features are the characteristics of the product. **Benefits** are the value these features bring to the customer.

When we think of a sunglass company that just sold you a pair of sunglasses, they may offer you a sunglass case to go with them.

The **features** of this sunglass case are probably apparent, as you can see it comes in almost any color of your choice, it snaps closed with a push button, and it is 9" long and 2" wide.

This translates into **benefits**, and the benefits are simply expansions of the features you are already aware of:

- The color of the case is a feature. Being able to choose a color that you like is a benefit because you can match it with your particular style.
- The push button is a feature. The case snapping securely closed benefits you as the buyer because it will protect your initial investment which is the sunglasses.
- As far as the size is concerned, the small size as such is a feature, but it's also a benefit to be able to safely and quickly tuck the sunglasses away into a bag, suitcase, or your pants pocket without having to worry about damaging them.

Turning features into benefits

When it comes to explaining benefits and features over the telephone, it's important to remember that the customer is not able to actually see the service or product you are offering them, like you would be able to see the sunglass case offered to you.

Because of this you'll need to put yourself in the customer's shoes, look at the product or service as a customer, and determine the features of the offer while then exploring what each feature brings to the table when it comes to benefits.

The features of the product are mostly apparent. You can see most if not all of them by examining the product itself. The benefits are much more difficult to spot, because it involves the customer who actually uses the product.

Here's a simple method to identify benefits (important: do this exercise in writing!):

First, imagine that you're talking to a customer, and you begin explaining this customer the features of the sunglass case, for example the size.

Getting Intimate with the Products

You: "This sunglass case is 9" long and 2" wide."

After this, your imaginary customer responds indifferently.

Customer: "So what?"

So you begin to mention why it should care to the customer:

You: "They're a perfect fit for your sunglasses."

Your imaginary customer is not convinced:

Customer: "Why do I care?"

You: "It's not bigger than necessary."

Customer: "So?"

You: "You can quickly tuck them away in your bag, suitcase, or your pants' pockets."

Customer: "Aha!"

Bingo!

The indifferent customer is your friend in identifying the benefits of any feature of the product. Just let your imaginary customer bounce back until you can't think of another answer.

Now, repeat, until you have investigated all the features of the product!

In most cases, all the answers you have given are benefits of that particular feature of the product. Not every benefit is equally strong, and some benefits may stick with one customer, and is of no concern to another.

Knowing both the features and benefits of the customer will allow you to be able to portray the information to the customer while painting a clear picture in their mind of exactly what it is you are offering, and why it will benefit them.

Use them on real customers to find out which benefit sells for that specific type of customer.

When your employer doesn't supply it...

If your company **can't** or **doesn't** supply you with the information you need about the products, it becomes a little harder to acquire the knowledge you need. But not impossible!

For example, if you are working for a cellular company and your job is to up-sell higher rate plans to consumers, you probably won't be offered the details of higher rate plans by your employer. So you will have to find them yourselves. The company website probably does a good job of explaining these rate plans for consumers, and there is nothing wrong with using this information to your own benefit.

Another way to get the information you may need is to go talk with the marketing department. Most likely, they can provide you with the information needed, because they too must know the product to do a good job.

Lastly, you can visit a local store who sells your products and getting the information that way.

This may seem like a lot of work for something you shouldn't even have to do, but in the end making sure you know the product will result in you becoming more successful as far as **sales**, and ultimately **career** and **income** are concerned.

Getting Intimate with the Products

Putting yourself in the Customer's Shoes

When we think about all of the things we have been offered as a customer, it can help to make our job easier as a customer service representative. Remembering what did and did not work for us is helpful, but beyond that being able to effectively **anticipate** and **empathize** with a customer can help us to successfully cross and up-sell more than anything.

As we all know, it is never fun to express your concerns with someone, and then having them simply waved away, and the person on the other end of the line is uncaring in our expressions but still bent on selling us something.

Well, you know what happens with those deals...

Pass!

This is the angle you should **never, ever** take when offering products and services to consumers!

Even though no customer is alike, if they have a concern or question that is not addressed first, you **will** lose all credibility with the customer. And without credibility, you'll lose any opportunity to up- or cross-sell.

First and foremost, customers want to be heard. Applying the **LEARN** principle makes sure they are.

Get ready to LEARN

L.E.A.R.N. is an acronym, with 5 easy steps to follow when you handle customer requests and complaints:

LISTEN - Listen carefully to your customer. Don't interrupt, even when you think you know you understand what the customer wants to say (you may be wrong, you know?). If the customer is angry, don't ever tell the customer to calm down, as this will only ignite the anger.

EMPATHIZE - Ask yourself if you would feel the same way the customer has told you they feel. Feel the "pain" of the customer.

ACKNOWLEDGE - Acknowledge the customer's anger, frustration and disappointment, if applicable.

REACT - Decide what you will do to resolve the issue, and tell this to the customer.

NOW! - Do not delay. Take immediate action!

Implementing this skill will give you the tools you need to successfully empathize, acknowledge, and react accordingly.

After you've handled the customer's concerns, she will be more receptive to anything you have to offer.

The following interaction is an example of how to put this skill to good use:

Customer: "I'm concerned about the reception I get, it's as bad as it was with my cable, and I don't want to spend more on something that ends up being practically useless! After a day at the office I just want to be able to watch a good movie. Right now, I only get the same old stuff. And I can't bear to watch it with all the snow!" (*Listen*)

You: "I know how it feels when your favorite show is about to come on and all of a sudden the reception gets bad. It's frustrating to know that you're paying for something that shouldn't create this kind of problem (*Empathize and Acknowledge*).

"I tell you what. Let me schedule a free appointment to have someone come out and get that looked at for you (*React Now!*).

"In the meantime, I can get your set up on this premium package which includes the movie channel you wanted, and if you're still having problems with the reception in the next month, give us a call and we cancel the package for you. Sound fair?" (*Up-sell*).

Always remember to **Serve first, Sell second**. Use the **LEARN** principle to handle any concerns the customer has. After this, they'll be much more receptive to anything you have to offer.

Are you an active listener?

The true art to up-selling and cross-selling is listening. You need listening skills to be able to resolve any concerns of your customer, but also to be able to pick up on buying signals the customer may throw at you.

You cannot possibly be successful at using any other skill (besides making sure that you smile) without actively listening.

It is **that** important!

You may be surprised at the amount of times a customer will do your job for you and sell themselves the offer you intended to extend to them!

Active listening is the **key** to determining whether or not a customer is going to purchase.

Putting Yourself in the Customer's Shoes

Active listening doesn't mean just **hearing** what the customer says, it means **understanding** what the customer says.

You may hear things like "I haven't had a good experience with this in the past". If you are just **hearing** your customer, it would be as simple as that. But if you **understand** what they are saying, you're able to grasp the fact that a customer is telling you this is probably because they want you to assure them that they won't need to worry about those issues with the offer you are extending to them.

But without going one step further with the customer through active listening, you will never be able to get over this hurdle. So what is that next step?

The only way to know for sure what the customer is trying to tell you is to actively listen and ask questions to get to the root of their comments.

Without asking questions, you are stuck with a comment a customer makes, and no real understanding of what they are trying to tell you.

So when a customer says they have had bad experiences in the past, you should ask questions such as:

"I'm sorry to hear that! What was it that you had problems with?"

–OR–

"That's too bad, was it the product you had problems with, or the people you were dealing with?"

When you acknowledge their concerns and ask questions about them, it lets the customer know that you actually care about their thoughts, opinions, worries, and all around well being.

In the end, if you are not actively listening to catch these opportunities to ask questions, you won't get very far when it comes to selling your product or service!

Picking up on Buying Signals

Here's another benefit of active listening: If you listen well to your customer, you'll start to pick up on any buying signals he or she may send out.

Examples of some buying signals might be:

"I saw your ad on television, the product looks really interesting."

"I know a friend who has that service, she says she loves it!"

"Are you still offering that one special I heard about?"

Also, any questions pertaining to additional services or products are invitations for you to offer them to a customer. Missing just one buying signal can make any deal a no go.

But don't forget: In addition to carefully listening for buying signals, it is important to actively listen to everything a customer has to tell you. This is the **key to understanding a customer's needs** and offering them a product or service that would be right for them.

Putting Yourself in the Customer's Shoes

More Skills you Need to be Successful

Another important aspect of being successful at cross-selling and up-selling is being able to learn and implement the skills it takes to do the job right. Some of the skills you need come naturally for some, and need to be practiced by others.

The bottom line is if you are good at your job as a customer service representative, you can learn to successfully use the skills needed to cross-sell and up-sell.

Never stop smiling

You've probably heard many times that people can hear it in your voice when you smile, even over the phone.

In fact, nothing could be closer to the truth.

Smiling while speaking to someone over the phone not only communicates confidence and professionalism, but it welcomes the customer into your world as more of a friend than someone trying to sell them something. It puts the caller at ease and opens them up to consider what it is that you're offering them.

In addition, smiling releases **endorphins** into your body. Endorphins are chemicals in your brain that are responsible for giving you a positive mood. As you become more positive, you'll get more confident in your conversation. This makes it easier for you to close a sale.

Ask the right questions

When it comes to discussing offers with customers, you want to get them used to saying yes. This helps to make it more natural for them to say yes to your offer!

Asking questions about things that will surely receive an answer of yes to will make it all that much easier to hear a yes once you ask them if they would like to take your offer. In an example, the questions should go something like this:

You: "I see you have been a customer with us since January 12, is that correct?"

Customer: "Yes, that's right!"

You: "I see you prefer to have long distance included in your calling plan, is that right?"

Customer: "Yes, it is."

Asking questions like these simply gets the customer used to saying yes, because in the end that is what you want to hear from them.

Don't overdo this though!

I can remember talking to a young salesman at my home who was following the "Yes" script he had learned at headquarters to the letter. Question after question he was firing at us that we had to say yes to.

We were becoming quite amused during the talk, because it was so obvious what he wanted to do, and he was overdoing it so. I cannot even recall the benefits that he fired at us.

In the end, he was totally stunned we said "No". I guess he was getting more used to our "Yes" than we were!

So it is a good thing to get the customer used to saying "Yes", but there is a point that it just becomes too obvious. Keep it natural.

Get Personable

Let's face it, no one wants to speak to a "sales person" and feel like they are being pressured into something. This is why getting personable is so important.

There is always time to take a minute and ask a customer how the weather happens to be wherever they are calling from. And letting them know how much it rains where you are and you can't wait for summer is a good way to become more of a friend than a salesperson.

Being able to get a customer relaxed and easy to talk to can make or break a deal, so being personable is something you cannot afford to leave out.

This isn't to say you can go overboard, because you can. Not only will your employer find it annoying if you spend 15 minutes on the phone chatting about the weather, but the customer will grow old of "small talk" and eventually end the call without you ever even offering an up-sell or cross-sell.

Make sure you keep the small talk short (hence **small** talk), a simple 30-60 second talk about the weather, kids, or whatever you are **both** inclined to talk about should do the trick!

Provide Complete and Accurate Information

You want to make sure that when customers accept something you offer, they will be satisfied with what they receive. If you do not offer complete and accurate information about a product or service, chances are the customer will call back later down the line to cancel or complain and all of your efforts have been for nothing.

If you don't know the answer to a question a customer has, it's ok to let them know. The conversation should go something like this:

Customer: "What are the specific colors this product comes in?"

You: "That's a really good question Mrs. Johnson! I know the majority of the colors available, but if you can hold on just a moment I will get the entire list of colors available for you."

In this instance, you let the customer know you do not have all of the answers to his question, but you can certainly get the answers for him.

This does two things:

It creates a confidence the customer has in you, because they know you are honest and willing to help them as much as you can.

It also gives you an opportunity to show the customer you will go the extra mile to make sure they are satisfied with the decision they make on your offer.

Anticipate objections, and learn to overcome them

Anytime a product or service is offered to a consumer, objections are bound to be encountered. When this happens, you must learn to overcome the objections in a way that will not offend or put pressure on the customer.

When you continually offer the same products and services as up-sells and cross-sells, you will learn the common objections and be able to offer legitimate and productive responses to these objections.

There will be times when you get an objection you have never gotten before, and in this case you are left to fly by the seat of your pants. But if you implement every aspect of the skills outlined here, including knowing your product you should never have a problem overcoming these objections.

Overcoming objections is easy, but presenting your response to your objections should be done in a non threatening way, while acknowledging their concerns. The conversation may look something like this:

Customer: "You know, I just don't think I can afford to pay a higher fee for my rate plan right now."

You: "Mr. Masterson, I can totally understand your position. Paying more for something when you don't see how it will benefit you doesn't make a lot of sense. Before I let you go, I want to make sure you understand the rate plan I'm offering, and how it will actually SAVE you money because of the overages you are encountering with your current rate plan. Can I take a moment to advise you of how much money you will actually be saving, compared to spending?"

Customer: "Well, if you can show me how I will be saving money, I'll listen."

In this instance, you acknowledged the customer's feelings about spending more money and you reeled them in to hear what you have to say about how your offer will benefit them.

This way of overcoming objections will make the job of up-selling and cross-selling successful more times than not.

Always Cycle Back to the Script and the Close

A question that comes up a lot when thinking about cross and up-selling is what to do once an objection is overcome. You've empathized, acknowledged, and overcome a customer's objection and now it seems like you are at a silent stand still.

Have you ever heard that the first one to speak loses?

Well, this is definitely true in a case of cross and up-selling. But there is one step that must be taken before playing the silent game, and that is to either go back to the required script, or if you are finished with the script or do not have one, ask for the sale. To be clear, the steps would look like this:

- Customer **objects** with a concern
- You **acknowledge** the customer
- You **empathize** with the customer
- You offer additional information to **overcome** the objection
- You continue script or ask for the sale once more

Once the script is complete and/or the sale is asked for, it's time to simply wait and listen for a response. Avoid over-selling a product, as this can encourage further objections from the customer.

Sooner or later the customer will either **accept the offer**, **express further concerns** that need to be dealt with, or **decline the offer** altogether. If you are faced with another objection, simply continue to follow the outlined steps until a conclusion is finally reached.

Keep Stress Out of your Work Life

Any job is stressful, and working as a customer service representative who must deal with many different personalities; some good and some bad, stress can become overwhelming.

When stress gets to be too much it is easy to lose sleep, miss work, and feel depressed. None of these things are beneficial to your work and your life, so if at all possible, it's a good idea to relieve the stress before it gets overbearing.

Some things to help keep your stress meter level are:

- **Take frequent walks**
Making sure to take a quick walk around the block on a 15 minute break and a lunch break during the day will help eliminate muscle stress, that when not dealt with can increase stress mentally as well.
- **Use a stress ball**
Stress balls are fun and even cute most of the time, but they are more valuable than you might think. By using a stress ball throughout conversations you have with customers, you will find it is easier to keep a smile on your face and keep listening to the customer.

More Skills you Need to be Successful

- **Remember to breathe**

Breathing is an everyday fact of life but when we get tensed up, we tend to forget to breathe deeply. Taking the time to take a couple of deep breaths between each phone call will enable you to continue your work in a calm fashion, all the while releasing stress from each call that you take.

- **Stand up and Talk**

After continually sitting for a few hours at a desk, it can get uncomfortable. Make sure you are standing for at least 5 minutes an hour to help relieve stress both mentally and physically, and while you're standing it is most beneficial to sneak a couple of stretches in.

If you're able to keep your stress in check, you'll quickly see much better return on your working efforts.

Added bonus: You live longer!

What to Stay Away From

As much as we'd all like to think it's what we **don't do** that can make or break a deal, there are many things that can create the same outcome if we **do** them.

Up-selling and cross-selling is like an art in many ways, as it takes time to learn how to correctly do it, and it takes practice.

An important aspect of cross-selling and up-selling that, without a doubt, must be incorporated is to know **what** to stay away from, and making sure **that** you stay away from it.

Insecurity kills the sale

First and foremost is how you portray yourself through the telephone. If you are unsure of your own skills or the products and services you are selling, there is no way a customer will have confidence in you and the products and services you are selling.

This means that you must make sure you are not speaking in a low tone, or in a questioning tone at that. Make sure what you tell the customer is in the form of statements, and ones you are sure of.

If you are not comfortable with the products or services you're offering, study them more until you are. If it's yourself that you are unsure of as far as your skills, knowledge, and abilities go, make sure you are doing what you need to do so you can be confident in yourself. Confidence can make all the difference in the world.

Overselling

Another thing to stay away from is **overselling** a product or service. It's natural to want to keep pushing the benefits and features to a customer in hopes they will eventually say yes, but if you go overboard, it can lose the sale.

Stay away from explaining something you have already explained unless a customer asks a particular question about it. If you feel the need to add more value to what you are offering, make sure you are giving new information each time to the customer instead of repeating the things you have already told them.

Ignoring the customer

Another one of the most detrimental things for a sale is not listening to a customer's concerns.

It is **extremely important** to address **every** concern a customer has instead of working your way around it, trying to avoid it.

This will only keep their concerns in the back of their mind, and no matter how much valuable information you give them, their initial concerns lay without resolution.

Many times, this will be the decision making factor for a customer.

You need to establish a rule with yourself that you will acknowledge, address, and resolve any and all customer concerns and questions in order to know you did your best in making the sale.

Internalizing rejections

Finally, it's all about the attitude.

No one likes rejection, and when you are in the business of cross-selling and up-selling, rejection can feel like it's your middle name...

It simply comes along with the job, but you have to learn where to leave it.

When dealing with rejection, it can tend to meld from one customer to another through you if you are not careful. This happens because it's so easy to get used to customers saying no, and expecting them to do just that.

When you **expect** rejection, it is heard in your voice and picked up through your attitude. For example, your tone might be taken as rude when in reality it's you just saying "Yeah, I figured you say no. Whatever".

In addition, when you put yourself in this mindset, it is proven that you will lose sales and confidence from customers.

In order to stay away from this deal breaker, it is up to you to let rejections roll off your back before moving on to the next call, because no one else will do it for you.

Tips, Tricks and Techniques of the Trade

In addition to all of the crucial aspects of up-selling and cross-selling that we have talked about, there are some tips, tricks, and techniques you can use to even further your success at cross-selling and up-selling.

Many of these can come into play while utilizing other skills that have brought you here.

Use a Mirror

Because smiling is so important when talking to customers on the phone, a good way to practice this skill and to ensure you are using the skill is to place a small compact mirror near your telephone.

Practice talking to the customer while looking into it. This simple technique will have you smiling with customers naturally and consistently before long.

Nod Your Head

Nodding your head up and down while talking to a customer on the phone may sound silly, but in reality it's all about your mindset.

Just like asking questions a customer can say yes to, nodding your head while talking not only helps you to sound and feel more confident, but it carries through in your voice which gets the customer ready to say yes.

Watch Your Voice Inflection

This is all about the confidence you portray to your customers. When you are talking to a customer while explaining benefits or features for example, you want to refrain from up inflecting your voice.

Everything you say to a customer should sound like a statement, and the end of each phrase you say to a customer should be inflected down in your voice, not up.

Inflecting your voice up while talking to a customer makes it sound as though you are asking, instead of telling or explaining. In the end, this can give a customer the impression that you are not sure you know what you are talking about.

Stand Up and Stretch!

As a customer service representative, you know how tiring and antsy you can get after sitting down for hours at a time while talking to customers on the phone. This can turn into getting lazy while talking to customers, and missing things like buying signals.

To avoid this, stand up after a while! Stretch your legs and your arms while you're talking to a customer. It will help to re-energize you and keep you on your toes so to speak, giving you back the power to successfully cross-sell and up-sell while providing excellent customer service.

Expect a Yes

While you never want to expect rejection, it is **essential** to expect success. While talking to customers and explaining benefits of services or products, always do so while expecting them to say "Hey that makes sense. I'll take it!"

Tips, Tricks and Techniques of the Trade

If you don't expect a yes, chances are you won't get one.
Remember, it's all about your perceptions and your attitude.
Although popular belief is that the sale is up to the customer, it
couldn't be farther from the truth.

In the end, it's what **you do** and **say** that will determine whether
a customer will buy.

How to Improve your Skills

When it comes to improving the skills it takes to be successful at cross and up-selling, there is one thing that beats it all: practice. As they always say, practice makes perfect and it's simply a fact.

Practicing with Family, Friends or Co-workers

Practice makes perfect, so it's no wonder your co-workers won't mind practicing with you. And when it comes down to it, friends and family usually have some fun letting you use them as your guinea pig!

Role-playing is the essence of practice when it comes to customer service and sales. You can practice what you will say and do all you want, but without a "customer" to practice with, it's hard to hone your skills to where they need to be.

A role play is easy, and can be done without taking a lot of time to set up. You can choose to do it over the phone or in person, but if doing it in person it's probably a good idea to have your backs turned to one another to help make the situation as real as possible.

You will want to use a script that is used within your own company, as every company is different and has different scripts, guidelines, and expectations.

If you are not yet working with a company that needs these skills from you, make one up! Simply create a basic product or service you'd like to answer and write a quick outline of what should be said. Basics are all that is essential when role playing, to add things such as:

- **Opening**
An example of an opening script would be “Thank you for calling! My name is _____, how can I help you today?”
- **Body**
This is where all the basics of your service or product offer should be discussed. Pricing, features, benefits, and options should all be here as this is your bread and butter.
- **A Closing**
An example of a closing script would be “Thank you for calling, it’s been a pleasure speaking with you. Have a great day!”

You don’t want to go to much trouble to add anything more than this to a practice script, because in reality your place of business won’t have much more to the script than these things (although the body may be longer, simply because their product is real and there is probably a lot of information to give the customer about it) and the rest is really using all of the skills that you’ve learned in this book.

After all, there is no way to script what a **customer** will say, so it’s almost impossible to script what you would say back to a particular customer.

When it comes time to practice, ask the person you are practicing with to adopt the mind set of a real customer, and request that he or she interacts with you in a serious manner, asking questions and relaying concerns a true customer may have.

In the end, you have yourself a wonderful way to practice your skills which will make it all that much easier when it comes time to putting your skills to work in a real situation.

Create a Skills Tick Sheet

Practicing with friends or co-workers is an excellent way to improve your skills, but most of your practice will come from using them in a real life situation with a customer.

When it comes time to work the phones with customers and offering them additional products and services, it all comes down to live and learn. Some techniques you try on a customer may work once, but may bomb with most customers you speak to.

What you will want to do is keep your own tick sheet.

Simply take a lined piece of paper and write each skill you feel you need to practice with customers down the left side of the page. It should look something like this:

- *Smile*
- *Offer 2 different options*
- *Ask a question after every objection*
- *Acknowledge and respond to all concerns*
- *Etc, etc.*

The tick sheet will be different depending on the guidelines and requirements of the company you work for, therefore your tick sheet may change periodically.

If a company gives you two ways to quote a price for example, you will want to add both of the ways on your tick sheet and try them out to find out which one works best for you.

Do not try implementing every technique you know into the first day or even the first month of working. Start by implementing two skills and using those two until they are either perfected or discarded from your normal routine.

How to Improve your Skills

You can assess whether something works for you by keeping a tick sheet for each skill or technique of using a skill and make a mark every time someone objects to it. If you are receiving more rejections than not, maybe it's time to re word what you are saying. In the end, you should have a nice list of particular phrases and techniques that work for you.

The bottom line is: everyone is different.

A representative whom is up-selling may feel it easy to keep asking for a sale while another agent might feel intimidated. In the same respect, a customer might respond positively to a phrase you like to use, while another is just disgusted by it.

It's all a balance. No one person will ever be able to tell you the exact science to achieve that balance.

By learning the skills outlined in this book, and putting them to work while fine tuning them to work the best for you, you will find extreme satisfaction in the results of your cross- and up-selling efforts.

We wish you great success!

Stay in touch...

After reading the book, you may have been left with a few questions. Or you'd like to stay informed on good customer service. Here's the information you need!

If you have a question!

Well, this is a simple one.

Just ask!

Simply go to the **contact information** page at Customer Service Point at this address:

<http://www.customerservicepoint.com/contact-info.html>

Enter your information, and I'll get back to you as soon as possible. Don't be shy!

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Stay in touch...

- Every once in a while you will find a **help desk software test** of a tool that helps customer support departments. Not a mere rehash of the functions stated by the vendor, but me behind the keys, getting down to the nitty-gritty of the system. This will save you valuable time if you are considering a new tool, and you will stay on top of new developments in CRM and help desk software
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Stay in touch!

At your service,

Erwin Steneker
Marjan Steneker
Rachael Gerkenmeyer

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