



Customer service is a mainstay in every company. If the organization cannot meet the needs of the client after the sale, the company will not survive.

This is a reality that every company must face. That is why Customer sales and Service positions are so important and can be an opportunity for an individual to get his/her foot in the door.

Do you have the personality, the character to handle this type of role? If not, you need to look at other strategies to finding a job.

# Customer Sales and Service... A Path to getting Hired

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## Customer Sales and Service... A Path to getting Hired

### Customer Sales and Service - Who's Hiring?

**Customer Sales and Service** positions are part of the main fabric of many companies. Without a good customer Support infrastructure, companies would lose clients to their competition, which is the last thing an organization wants especially in these tough times. Traditionally, [Customer Service](#) representative Positions are entry level jobs that many companies use as a base level to bring in new talent.

Once the employee has proven himself, the company can provide opportunities to other positions within the company. This is a great strategy to develop if you are very interested in getting into mid-level to large company, especially if you are just embarking on a new career as a recent graduate.

Do you have the personality and tough skin it takes to be a Customer Service Representative? If so, how do you tailor your resume to be Customer Support oriented?

Profile of a Customer Service Professional - Customer Service positions are highly competitive, but also can be lead in to a better position within the company. If you are considering a position in customer service, you are likely to have the following Character Traits:

- *Great Listener*
- *Stellar Phone Presence*
- *Desire to Help People*
- *Dedicated Problem Solver*
- *High Degree of Patience*
- *Communicate solutions to Customers*

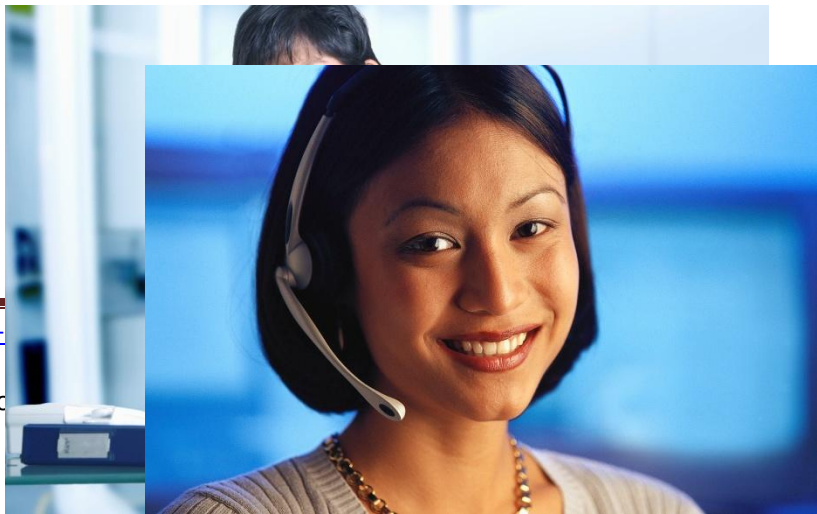
#### **Great Listener -**

Customers love to vent. They want you to physically feel the emotional angst they are going through at

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that moment in time when you pick up the call.

A Customer Service representative needs to have the patience to listen to the issues and problems before jumping in with a solution. As a great listener you will immediately be a credible resource to the person on the other end within 30 seconds. Take the time to hear what they have to say before jumping in with your resolution. If you interrupt the flow of the information coming in, the customer will immediately sense you are not paying attention and become even more irate and ask to talk to someone else, which is the last thing you want to have happen.

**Phone Presence** - As a Customer Service Representative, you will most likely be on the phone 90% of the time. Having the ability to speak articulately and pronounce words so that you are clear and easily understood is a crucial in this role. A representative that cannot get their point across to a customer when they need help will only frustrate them further. Now that you understand the [basic traits of a Customer Support Professional](#) you need to create a resume focused on these customer service traits. Your resume needs to shout out to the world your willingness to help people, to be a patient calming influence when customers are screaming at you over the phone. **[Build Customer Loyalty](#)** through Stellar Service!

**Desire to Help** - A Customer Support Representative needs to have the fundamental desire to assist others. To understand their issues quickly and provide solutions that will make them feel that the company cares about them, no matter what the issue is. If you do not have this basic character trait, then a customer support position may not be for you.



**Dedicated Problem Solver** - The reason you are in this position, is to listen to the problem being conveyed by the customer and offering solutions to those issues, quickly. Chances are, the company has given you the necessary training, knowledge and processes to fulfill this



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obligation. Your job is to execute the process based on the training and information you have. In addition, you will have a support system of supervisors and knowledge experts that you can draw from if needed.

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**Patience** - Another important character trait that is difficult to master is patience and empathy. Having the patience to listen to the customer and work through each call is a critical factor to keep your own head when others are screaming at you over the phone. It is easy to get caught up in the emotions being forced upon you, causing premature burn out. Having the ability to be a calming influence can help relieve the stress the customer may be feeling at that time.

**Communication** - The art of Communication is a learned skill that customer service representatives need to become more aware of as they develop over time. It is easy to tell a customer that you can help them because that is what they want. Telling a customer "No" is a difficult task, but can be done with respect and sincerity.

In conclusion, [Customer Sales and Service](#) roles are allow about what is important, the customer! No business can survive without this little fact. This is truly an entry point in any company that can land you a job!



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### Customer Sales and Service - What You Need to Know About How to Be Successful!

Every position in the company has an impact on the way the client perceives the corporation. Client Service Representatives are on the front lines of assisting the client in creating a positive experience. Without the necessary tools, process and training, the client service area will struggle in trying to deliver superior service.

**Customer sales and service** positions can be a difficult.. If the company does not value the client or what it represents, client service representative positions will be in constant flux as turnover rates will increase. The client service area is an important advocate and can provide good insight into the issues that clients bring to the company. With that being said, if the client is ignored and treated as a necessary evil, the company support representative will struggle and the company will eventually perish.

To be successful, the organizational climate and culture must be instilled with the mindset that the client is number one when it comes to product reliability, service and respect. If the client is handled with care and respect, the client will be a loyal and ongoing revenue stream and source for new business.

Being a Service Representative within a client care organization that values the client and everything it represents, will set the stage for a healthy environment. This will drive upbeat attitudes throughout the business that will transcend back to great client experiences. Turnover rates will be minimized as personnel will feel empowered to do their position and client satisfaction will increase.

If you are looking for a position inside the company's client care organization, your success within the company is driven not only by your own attitudes and abilities, but the company culture. Much like the small business owner, larger companies need to identify with the client and listen to what the client is saying about the products and services it provides.

If the company fails to keep up with this part of their business, clients will lose their reason to be loyal and move their business elsewhere. In today's economy, corporations large and small cannot afford to lose clients. Those

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that do, will certainly be put out of business within a short time period. Client retention is a key strategy to surviving in a recession as new clients are much harder to find.

Managing the client with the support of the entire organization is much easier as client care teams will have the tools, processes and education they need to be successful. Happy clients go a long way in the longevity of a business. An important factor when deciding if a company if a company can survive long term is its attitudes and culture toward client satisfaction.

In *conclusion*, Customer sales and service positions are not easy but they can be rewarding if you know how to make the customer happy. Success is obtained through managing the customer expectations.

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### Anatomy of a Customer Service Job Description

Job descriptions define a needed position or role within an organization that must be filled with the best qualified individual(s). It creates an understanding that the duties of this employee are well thought out and articulated to create a hierarchy or organizational matrix to which other jobs will connect.

Companies will classify jobs that an employee will perform and be compensated. Based on the rules and characterizations of the job description the company manager and employee truly understand the duties associated with the position.

There are many ways to write a job description so that candidates can associate specific skills and experiences for the purpose of creating a potential match. Once the concepts of creating job descriptions are understood, it is possible to create a resume version that aligns specific abilities and knowledge to the job description being advertised.

Job descriptions are typically focused to capture the essence of the job position, duties and responsibilities for a potential match to occur but allow for some interpretation by potential candidates. The fundamental breakdown of a job description can follow a consistent flow, style and format.

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Let's examine two sample job descriptions for a **Computer Support Representative**:

### **Computer Service Representative (1)**

- Supports computer users with installation of hardware/software and networking components to meet personal computer needs.
- Diagnoses and troubleshoots problems with individual or multiple computer systems in order to maintain proper functioning; resolves issues including contacting and assisting vendors.
- Conducts diagnostic reviews and produces error reports as requested by customers in order to identify and correct any problems.
- Assists with computer studies, projects, and implementation of policies throughout area of assignment.
- Assists in the design and development of standardized operational management reports in order to identify issues or monitor computers.
- Researches, analyzes, and provides hardware/software quotations, ordering information, and other purchasing information to users to assist in purchasing necessary equipment.

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### Computer Service Representative (2)

#### Purpose

To provide technical and functional support by phone, in writing or in person to XXX end users on technical problems to include installation, problem resolution, end-user training.

#### Responsibilities

- Serve as a technical resource and the main point of contact for technical or functional issues with supported systems to include computer and printer hardware, operating systems, and preferred applications. - Troubleshoot, research, and resolve technical and functional issues using all available resources and following internal procedures. - Utilize call management system to track and escalate technical or functional issues according to procedures.

**Computer Service Representative (1)** is a basic listing of responsibilities and duties in a bulleted format. This format gives basic information on what this job entails, but provides specific duties that spell out exactly what the company expects.

**Computer Service Representative (2)** gives more information in a structured format. [Outlining a job purpose](#) role sets high level expectations before detailing specific duties to perform. It also gives more definition to the duties to be performed, tools to be used and types of problems the candidate will expect if they accept the position.

When viewing job descriptions, it is imperative to fully understand the position being defined and create a resume and cover letter to align skills and experience to fit the job being applied for.

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### Build Customer Loyalty

Businesses are driven by the needs of their customers. Many companies perish because they cannot align their product or service to the needs and wants of the customer. Outstanding Customer Service is an evolutionary process that must be entrenched in the company culture or the customer will go elsewhere.

Customer service is a natural feedback mechanism that many companies have ignored over the last several years. As more attention was placed on acquiring new business, many organizations were satisfied to lose some of their client base customers as new ones were plentiful and always walking in the door.

Over the past decade, customer satisfaction suffered immensely as upper management reduced internal resources and implemented automated phone systems and/or outsourced the function to other countries. With those strategies came customer frustration and eventual erosion of their business.

The tide is changing, now that many companies struggle to find ways to attract new customers. [Customer retention](#) is a key strategy in today's businesses with more value being placed on the customer experience. The client is again becoming a highly valued commodity as CEOs realize how easy it is to lose customers to competitors.

Customer support organizations are increasing their staffs to adjust to the more customer-centric model. Many job seekers can now find Customer services and support areas as a way to get back into the workforce. The opportunity to land a Support position is a key strategy that many unemployed workers can focus in on to become employed again.

Offering and adhering to the concept of superior customer service, a candidate can leverage this into an opportunity to get their foot in the door of small and large organizations. The customer sales and service functions are usually an entry point within the company that can be a launch point for migration to other areas of the organization.

In summary, if a candidate is looking for ways to get placed into an organization and can sell their skills to provide outstanding customer service

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the prospects of landing a job are much more favorable. The ability for a company to retain customers is key to growing their customer relationships and as part of that model, the employees that can align themselves to this mindset will go along way within that same company.

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### Why Marketing to Customers is like Picking Low Hanging Fruit

CEOs and upper management know that marketing to customers is a key channel strategy that can positively impact the bottom line. Unfortunately, many organizations do not execute this area very well and fail to effectively market to clients after the initial sale. Instead, most businesses spend significant resources in building traditional sales organizations searching for new prospects to close business.

When done correctly, customer marketing can generate new opportunities, repeat business and add revenue to the bottom line. Large and small businesses depend on their customer relationship strategies to retain long term customers, but not all companies utilize their customer base for new marketing and sales opportunities.

With the help of [Customer management systems](#), companies can track every customer touch point from sales, delivery and into post sales support. These tools can be instrumental in helping to develop targeted marketing programs and channel strategies for new product lines and services. This can create “Starburst Opportunities” that can add value to the client and increase revenue for the company, a true win/win situation.

Because customer information is already available, and the rapport already established, this approach can be a much more profitable sales channel. Your marketing dollars needed to sell to an existing customer can be far less expensive than trying to sell to new prospects through traditional methods. Customer marketing is not a new concept, but is not explored as much as it could be.

In summary, marketing to customers is like picking low hanging fruit and a sound strategy to employ. In addition, if your organization utilizes a customer relationship management system, you have a repository of customer marketing data that can be leveraged to create drive new business to existing clients.

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### 3 Critical Personality Traits you need to get one of those Client Support Jobs

Client service centers are an entry point to many companies that hiring managers use for their internal talent pool. Client support jobs require a unique blend of personality traits that can lead to other opportunities and open other doors in the company.

Do you have the personality and will to stick it out to understand your customer and get them through their issues? If so, you may be able to leverage that skill to create a path to internal job opportunities that are instrumental to the company balance sheet.

If you are considering a position in customer service, you are likely to have the following Character Traits:

1. Intent Listener - Customers love to tell you their story with the hope you will be able to assist them in resolving their issue. They want to transfer their emotions of frustration and anxiety through the line so you can understand their wants and needs.

You will immediately be a credible resource to the client within 30 seconds if you can let them explain their issue and respond in a positive manner. Take time to listen to their situation before jumping in with your resolution.

2. Professional Phone Presence - Having the ability to speak articulately and pronounce words so that you are clear and easily understood is a crucial. A representative that cannot get their point across to a customer when they need help will only frustrate them further. You need to be a patient, professional and calming influence when interacting with customers at all times.

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3. Intense Desire to Help - Client support requires you to have the fundamental desire to assist others. After you understand their issues, your desire to resolve them and satisfy the customer is critical in your success in this position.

In conclusion, [Client Support Jobs](#) can be very challenging, and unless you possess the inherent personality for service to others, it may not be the best fit for you or the company you work for.

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### How to make the Client Service Center the Gateway to other Jobs

Client Service Centers are part of every business and are the main component in their client retention and support strategy.

Without a solid client support team and infrastructure, the business will lose clients and eventually go under. Traditionally, Client Service representative positions are the main door many companies open to new hiring opportunities. If done correctly, your job as a customer representative can eventually lead you to many other opportunities within the company.

Once you have proven yourself in this role, you can make your intent known that you are ready, willing and able to move into other areas of the business. Knowing what the customer wants at this level can be a great vantage point you can use to leverage a new position elsewhere.

This is a great strategy to develop if you are very interested in getting into mid-level to large company, especially if you are a recent college graduate. Here are a few simple things you need to do once you have spent some time with your customers:

1. Understand how customers use your product or service.
2. Identify key areas of your product or service that is causing customers to call
3. Develop a high level plan that identifies these issues and outline a proposal to help the company understand the reason clients are calling and potential options in addressing them.

These three things will set you apart from others jockeying for positions in other areas. Their focus is to land a job to get them better pay. Your focus is to fix an area within the business that may be losing customers and revenue for the company. Your approach will get you noticed and make you a more valuable asset because you are thinking of the bigger picture.

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In summary, [client service centers](#) are an entry point to many companies that hire managers for their internal talent pool. Once you understand what the customer wants, you can leverage that as a way to open other doors in the company.

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## 3 Critical Rules to Client Relationship Development

Develop successful client relationships are critical to long term success of every business. Trying to keep the customer happy is rule number one and as the customer advocate, the client management organization is there to ensure the customer needs are met in a timely manner.

To truly build a rapport with the customer, an ongoing set of rules will apply. Each rule will help the client care organization to cultivate and nurture the client so they will not hesitate to speak highly of the company long after the sale is made.

Rule #1: Respect – Every call that comes into the support desk of client manager's office is critical in maintaining the relationship. Respect for the customer and attention to their needs are important aspects of every interaction. The customer can sense and will react accordingly if the team member does not take their issue seriously or develops a condescending attitude. Sometimes this can be difficult if the customer is demanding and negative, but a good associate can get past that and still convey a positive result in a timely manner.

Rule #2: The Follow up – In most cases, the resolution to the issue cannot be completed on the initial call. It is crucial to follow up and communicate status and an eventual solution when available. If not, the customer will assume the worst and feel that Rule #1 has been broken. Communication is key when working with any person and a strong customer service representative knows the value of keeping the customer in the loop.

Rule #3: Driving a Resolution - Client managers may not always know how to fix the issue and must delegate the task to another person or department for an answer or solution. In either case, the customer advocate must retain ownership and drive the issue through to a solution if it is available. If the

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issue does not have a workable resolution, then the client representative should relay the message back to the customer with Rule #1 in mind.

In summary, [Client relationship development](#) is a long term process and can allow a company to build trust and a strong bond with the customer long after the initial sale has taken place. If the organization does not see this area as a strategic component of their business, it will struggle to maintain client retention and be pressed to find references for new opportunities.

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### What do Client Management Jobs have to do with the Bottom Line? Everything!

Client Management Jobs are one of the most difficult positions within the company. Customer demands can range from the small helpdesk call to a full blown crisis with the Client manager squarely in the middle. This is the employee who owns this customer and is the main point of contact that must drive the organization to resolve the issue.

Trying to keep the customer happy is rule number one, however, this can become detrimental to the back office organization and the bottom line if expectations are not managed effectively. As the customer advocate, the client management organization is there to ensure the customer needs are met in a timely manner.

However, if customer expectations are not managed properly, the organization can suffer significant resource and revenue loss. Overall, it is important for the customer manager to understand the issues and impact on the back office organization before ringing the alarm bell every time the customer calls.

A delicate balance of evaluating customer needs and their impact on company resources are a skill that must be honed with each new client company acquires. Customer management jobs are important positions within any organization and must be filled with the best qualified individual(s) in order to give outstanding customer care. Companies that understand this dynamic are much more successful in retaining customers and growing their business.

In summary, [Customer management jobs](#) are an important part of every company and should be filled with individuals that have a strong sense of building and managing clients without wasting company resources. This will increase client satisfaction, retention and repeat business which directly affects the bottom line.

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### Is your Customer Retention Strategy driving organization to the brink? When to Say No

Making the strategic commitment to a [customer relationship strategy](#) is an important aspect to the long term success of the business. However, your customer retention strategy and associated policies could be causing your organization to become inefficient and frustrated.

Continually trying to keep the customer happy without properly managing expectations can be counterproductive and even more damage to your business. There are times when saying no to the customer may be a better way to keep them happy and your team from imploding.

Managing the customer is not always about giving in to every demand and sacrificing the company principles and resources where it does not make sense. Managing client expectations and delivering to those expectations is the art of customer relationship management.

Although a customer is critical to any business, it can be a diverse and difficult animal to tame. Customers can make demands on the organization that cause your team to become underappreciated and resent the customer relationship over time.

It is important to service the customer needs but not at the expense of the business and its core competencies. There will be times when promises are made that cannot be delivered upon which will cause more damage to the relationship than if the answer was no in the first place.

In summary, [customer retention strategies](#) are crucial to company growth. All customers want to be able to depend on their suppliers, and for the most part, that relationship will evolve over time as the organization delivers to customer needs and demands. Once promises are made which are out of the realm of the company's business model, the danger of failure increases. When that happens, the client relationship can be damaged and could eventually lead to the customer going elsewhere.

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### Why Customer Relationship Systems can Client Satisfaction

Effective customer relationship systems can enable your company to keep track of multiple client touch points from sales through customer care. Each and every contact can be tracked and logged to create a complete view of your customer.

All companies should make the strategic commitment to a customer relationship strategy that is continually executed from executive management down through the organization from CEO to receptionist.

Customer satisfaction and retention are just buzzwords to many who do not understand the true value the customer brings to the business. If the organization is not continually trained and committed to the idea that the lifeblood of any business is customer based, your company can be leaving money on the table.

A [CRM system](#) places the customer in the center of the three areas of your business:

Sales – Opportunity and contact information is key data that sales managers use to manage sales activity and performance. Effective tracking and management lead to efficient targeting and higher success rates. Every e-mail or phone call logged into the system adds to the level of sales information needed to close deals.

Services – The delivery organization can use CRM tools to track milestones, deliverables and even review contracts. Project managers can develop a matrix of implementation steps to deliver products and services based on expectations. The CRM tool should be able to track project expenses, budgets and provide efficient reporting tools to ensure projects are delivered on time and within budget.

Support – After the customer is up and running, the support teams can document ongoing calls and tie them back to the account itself. This

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information will provide the final view during the lifecycle of the customer and enable a repository of data that can be mined for future marketing opportunities.

In summary, your **Customer relationship system** is an invaluable tool that can provide a 360 degree view of your customer through multiple touch points. Once this information is made available to other departments and analyzed, future products and services can be tailored to meet client needs and increase satisfaction rates.

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## The Three Legs of Customer Relationship Management Systems

An effective customer relationship management system should be entrenched in every business and driven downward through the organization from CEO to receptionist.

Client retention and customer satisfaction are just buzzwords to many employees who do not value the customer. If the typical employee is not continually managed and trained to be customer focused, your company could be losing customers and revenue.

Having a CRM system revolves around three areas of your business:

1. People – If your people do not buy into the fact that clients are the critical lifeblood to your business and treat them with little respect, they will not be customers very long. Training programs centered around customer care should be part of every business. Long term success is dependent upon your people and their effectiveness in resolving issues and managing irate customers.
2. Process – Established processes and procedures in escalating customer issues to resolution is key to client satisfaction. Effective communication during and after the issue is resolved is crucial to ensuring the customer is given the opportunity to provide feedback and help the organization continually benchmark their performance.
3. Tools – Technology can streamline your processes and give your employees a way to efficiently resolve issues and find information in a timely manner. Skimping on the tools will the other 2 areas to struggle.

Upper management needs to support the fact that customer care is not a liability but a crucial part of the business. Without their support in addressing the three legs of the Customer relationship management system, the company will falter in their attempt to maintain high levels of customer satisfaction and retention.

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### Customer Relationship Management Marketing = Starburst Opportunities

“It is easier to keep an existing customer rather than trying to find a new one”.

Companies know their bottom line is directly impacted by repeat business and without it, the business can struggle. Customer Relationship Management Marketing can generate new opportunities, repeat business and most of all, additional revenue.

Whether large or small, each and every business is dependent upon their customer relationship strategy. All companies should be driven by their customer wants and needs, otherwise they can struggle and eventually fail. Aligning client needs with company products and services is critical in client retention and company growth.

CRM systems help track every aspect of a customer through sales and into ongoing support. Many companies fail to utilize their own client base for revenue generating opportunities. Through these systems, marketing other products and services to existing clients can create “Starburst Opportunities” that can add to the bottom line with minimal expense.

For example, you may have an existing client using one of your software tools for a significant period of time. Over time, their usage of the tool increases and history of various support calls come in that has been resolved by another application or service your company offers.

This is a perfect opportunity to call on the existing client to present the new offering. The current relationship is leveraged for a new sales lead that could very well benefit the client as well as the company in a true win/win situation.

In summary, your current customer base is a hotbed of potential sales of other products and services you offer. You already know the client and their wants and needs, so you are ahead of the curve when it comes to building rapport and presenting your offerings.

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### Your Customer Relationship Management should be like Peanut Butter

A strong customer relationship management strategy driven downward through the organization is essential to the bottom line.

Client retention should be one of the core competencies of every business model. The long term success or failure every business is directly dependent upon the customer base it serves. If upper management does not entrench the corporate culture with a sense of loyalty to the customer, the customer will respond accordingly.

Inadequate customer service will yield poor customer retention and poor results to the bottom line. Small business is especially vulnerable to customer demand and if the customer feels their needs are not being met after the sale, will have no problem finding a replacement.

Larger companies who have strong CRM strategies meshed within their corporate culture have developed long term customers that know they can depend on them to service their needs in quality products and services. That trust is not easily established and can take time to build as the client continues to push the envelope of wants and demands.

The customer care organization is the tactical extension of the CRM strategy and should be properly trained, managed and have the right tools to service client needs. Even more importantly, the culture needs to buy into the customer relationship management strategy and understand that execution is crucial to their success as well as the company itself. This needs to stick with every employee throughout the organization, like peanut butter to the roof of the mouth.

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### What is Customer Relationship Management Definition of the Dance

The success or failure every business is directly dependent upon the customer base it serves. Crappy customer relationship management could equal failure. Small business is especially susceptible to customer demand and the bonds established with their clients. Larger companies will eventually falter, but it may take longer depending upon the breadth and depth of their market share.

Managing the [customer relationship](#) is like a dancing the Tango. Each partner depends on the other to look good and effectively working together to accomplish a goal. As one turns and twists, the other must understand the direction and ensure they are there to catch the other when needed.

The relationship can be fragile at first, as each side learns the demands and needs of the other. The customer will lead by plotting the course of their business and depending on the supplier to be there with the goods and services they need at that time.

Managing the customer relationship from the supplier side is critical to knowing when, where and how the customer demands will be met. As they co-exist on the dance floor, each one thrives from the movements of the other. If either partner stumbles, the other feels the effect and may trip as well.

There is a popular saying among business professionals, “It is easier to keep a customer, than to find a new one”. Managing customer demands is a delicate balance of support, communication and long term relationship building to ensure both partners are working together.

If either one decides the relationship is not working, the supplier is usually the one left alone on the dance floor. Customers can find your competition easier than you can find clients. This is why each business should incorporate a customer relationship management definition into their culture and organization for long term success.