

# Re:Focus

simple ideas to help you thrive

by Simon Sinek

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## When good service goes bad

I was on a business trip recently and my host was so wonderful. He was polite, he offered to carry my luggage. He offered me a drink and offered to get me something to eat if I was hungry. What wonderful service.

Sitting in the car, I expressed concern that the weather in New York would cause problems with my flight home. "Don't worry," he said, "we'll get you home." Then he went on, "we've never not gotten someone home, we'll make sure you get home."

I appreciated his optimism but unless he controlled the weather and the airlines, there was nothing he could do to guarantee his promise.

Sometimes, in an effort to offer great customer service, a rep or an agent will say yes to everything, not because the answer is yes, but because they are trying so hard to please. This is not actually good customer service, this is just being nice. Excessively nice. In some cases, they will give answers that they are not qualified to give or make offers they are not qualified to make...all in the name of customer service. And how often do we hear stories of a salesman or account manager making promises to a client without checking with manufacturing or the people who have to do the work to see if the promise is even possible? The result in all these cases is always the same: bad customer service.

Good customer service is not always saying yes and is not promising the customer whatever he or she wants simply because they ask. Good customer service is being honest, never promising what you personally can't deliver and then going out of your way to provide the best possible option.

What makes good customer service good is the surprise that you were able to provide a better outcome than expected, not the disappointment that you couldn't do what you promised.