



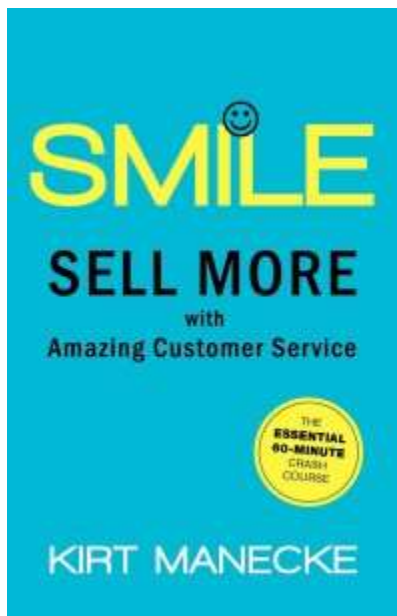
San Francisco Book Review

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Smile: Sell More with Amazing Customer Service

Posted in Business & Investing by editor - December 30, 2013



By Kirt Manecke
Solid Press, LLC, \$15.99, 106 pages

Kirt Manecke's crash course in customer service practices what it preaches. It greets you with bright colors and a warm, friendly smile right on the cover. It provides just enough information and examples -not enough to be overwhelming, but plenty to provide encouragement. For readers in a hurry, essential information is in large, bold print. Brief inspirational quotes from leaders in business authoritatively affirm the importance of each major point. Motivating statistics are set off in shaded textboxes. It even closes with a friendly invitation to visit the website for more information. Everything about the book's content and design shows that Manecke knows what he's talking about with regards to customer service, because he treats his own customers (readers) with exactly the friendliness and respect that he teaches us to provide. This is teaching by example in the very best way.

I will admit to having selfish motives when I selected this book to review. After years of being a stay-at-home mom, where the nickname "Hermit" is not a misnomer, I am entering the workforce in customer service, of all things. I want to do the best work I can, but

dealing with the public is just not something I've ever been comfortable with. What to do? Enter *Smile*. This brief guide includes specific information such as what to do when you're helping a customer and the phone rings so that both customers feel valued. Little details that most people never think about, but yet make such an impact.

“One of the most valuable lessons you can learn from this book is to listen to your customers. Ask probing questions—then listen attentively to your customer’s answers.”

Reading through, I remembered examples of customer service that I've experienced. I've avoided stores where the employees were too pushy and wouldn't just leave me alone to browse. I also remembered being the customer who was ignored for half an hour, eventually walking out on my intended purchase, bringing that and all future business elsewhere. *Smile* presents these and other scenarios with simple and precise solutions that will keep the customer happy and coming back for more. Sometimes all that's needed is eye contact and a smile of acknowledgement, but all too often that doesn't happen. A quick refresher on customer service skills can mean more customers can experience the delight I felt when a busy librarian, rather than simply pointing me in a direction or spouting off a call number, spent nearly an hour walking the aisles with me, helping me to locate materials (books, music, and videos) for a unit study I was preparing for my children.

It really doesn't take a lot of extra effort to provide fantastic customer service, just intentional friendliness. Nothing in this book should come as a surprise to readers. Much of it is basic etiquette: greet people with a smile, say please and thank you, ask questions to know how you can best help and listen to the reply, and leave them with a smile and thanks. It's all simple, but easy to forget in the day-to-day rush. Manecke reminds us that these simple manners are essential to any company's bottom line and shows how to implement them in a purposeful, effective way.