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Something has just gone wrong and a customer is not happy because of it. It's a mix-up, a malfunction, or a blunder, and

it doesn't matter whose fault it is. Your reputation is on the line to make it right.

What do you say? How do you say it? What do you do? How do you make lemonade from the lemons you've just been handed? How do you provide what's known as, "Immediate Service Recovery?" Disney does



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Houston, We Have a Problem

it. Ritz Carlton does it. The best of the best in the marketplace do it. How do you do it? The common response to something gone wrong is, "I'm sorry" or even worse, "So what?" Challenges are going to occur. Knowing how you'll recover in those instances must be rehearsed and practiced.

What usually happens? "Sorry, that's how it goes sometimes." "Could've been worse though, right?" When you're the customer, what do you want? An apology? Apathy? Indifference? A babbling, rambling, bumbling dissertation on how we got here?

It's OK to give an apology when you've wronged a friend, but that's not what a customer wants when something goes wrong.

In Asheville, North Carolina when you open the menu at McGuffey's restaurant, you'll see their service mentality printed right on the front cover. "The answer is YES, what's the question!"

It's an attitude, a way of doing business. Promoting an expectation to the customer in an uncommon fashion. A statement of commitment to amazing service, even when things go wrong.

And if things didn't go wrong, but you still want to improve your service to the customer, how about this question on their way out the door. "Was there any one thing we could have done tonight, to make your (shopping, buying, etc.) experience more memorable?" When was the last time anyone asked you that question? Give it a try and you'll stand out in improving and impressing the customer.

The housekeepers at Ritz Carlton are allowed a \$2000 budget to make an amazing service recovery so the guest leaves feeling "wow'ed" every time. It's not just a blank check, it's a responsibility they've been taught as a process of "How to Wow!" and it works.

A recent survey revealed that Ritz has an eight percent "defect" rating. That means for eight out of 100 guests, something goes wrong. A meal, a bill, a room, whatever. But the chances are excellent that those eight will tell more people about their stay at the

amazing Ritz than the other 92, because of how the hotel and its team recovered from the service glitch.

There are hundreds of roles at the Walt Disney World Resort, but there is only one purpose for all of them and that is to make sure that every guest who comes to their "show" has the most fabulous time of his/her life.

And when something goes wrong they don't just say "I'm sorry," they strive to do something amazing for the guest (customer). The cast members at Disney are like a well-schooled, service recovery S.W.A.T. team just waiting for the next opportunity to strike.

How do you provide amazing service recovery? And waiting until the customer crisis arrives is too late to be ready for it. For starters:

1. Let them talk and really listen
2. Acknowledge without Apology ("I can assure you that's not how we...")
3. Don't find fault, find a solution
4. Communicate the process ("Here's what I'm going to do...")
5. Make an amazing service recovery proposal ("What about this?")
6. Promote the recovery to the troops ("Here's how we did it.")

And the last step has to be the first one, make sure the team knows how we'll leap into action when something goes wrong. When the opportunity happens, it's too late for preparation. Know how you will respond.

If you're serious about amazing service recovery, get a book called "Knock Your Socks Off Service Recovery," by Chip Bell & Ron Zemke. If you'd like a list of 10 things you can say during a service recovery encounter, visit www.autosuccess.biz and click on service recovery.

Do something remarkable for the customer.

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