



The Six Steps To Service Recovery

Leader's Guide

IMPROVING THE WAY YOUR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATES WITH CUSTOMERS.

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About Telephone Doctor Customer Service Training...

Telephone Doctor is a St. Louis based customer service training company that offers products and techniques designed to improve the service skills of customer contact employees. Nancy Friedman, our founder and president, presents this program. Through videos, DVDs, CD-ROMS, web-based courses, books, audio programs and instructor-led workshops, Telephone Doctor has helped tens of thousands of organizations increase revenue, improve customer satisfaction ratings, and reduce employee turnover. For additional information, please visit www.telephonedoctor.com.

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The Six Steps to Service Recovery

The Goal of the Course

If you're in the business of serving customers sooner, or later you're going to experience challenges where your company, your product or your service comes up short. What do you do when something goes wrong? How do you solve the problem? And, most importantly, how do you recover?

Objectives:

In support of this goal, participants who have successfully completed this course will have demonstrated, through written and/or verbal exercises, the ability to:

- learn and demonstrate understanding of The Six Steps to Service Recovery;
- gain insight into how to correct problems while taking proactive steps to help manage the customer's feelings through the use of **The Six Steps to Service Recovery**; and,
- apply the correct techniques to assure future business despite the problem that occurred.

The long-term value of this program creates a need to utilize the content in a variety of different uses. The following outline is based on a more traditional approach of showing the program in its entirety, then participating in discussions. Additional uses include:

- One Key Point at a time during a staff meeting.
- Use a single segment as a buy-in activity. ٠
- Individual Key Points can be used to add another dimension to other training programs.

Training Outline:

The Six Steps to Service Recovery

I. Introduction to the Topic (See "The Goal of the Course" page 3) (Approximately 3 min.) A. State the goal of the course in your opening comments. B. Include the class objectives. II. Getting Acquainted (see "Tips for Trainers" pages 6-7) (Approximately 15 min) A. Introduction of trainer. B. Use an icebreaker activity or buy-in activity. C. Administer: Before-and-After Skills Inventory. (Can be found in Participant Workbook.) III. View Program: The Six Steps to Service Recovery (23 minutes in its entirety) IV. Application of Key Points (Approximately 45-60 min) A. Ask discussion questions provided in Leader's Guide. B. Participants complete accompanying workbook pages.

What is Service Recovery

- a. Every company serving customers will experience challenges where the company, the products or your service comes up short.
- b. Dissatisfied customers take their business elsewhere and they tell many other people along the way about the bad experience.
- c. Service recovery is more than fixing the problem. It's a combination of correcting the difficulty and taking proactive steps to help manage the customer's feelings to reverse damage that may affect future business.
- d. If the customer is pleased with how the problem was handled, they'll likely remain a customer. If they're dissatisfied with their treatment, or how your organization resolves the problem, they'll go to your competition.

Step #1: Respond rapidly

- a. The right time to begin Service Recovery is as soon as you're aware a problem exists.
- b. Any delay normally only irritates the customers even more it usually amplifies anger.
- c. The sooner the problem is addressed, the easier it will be to smooth out.

Step # 2: Take ownership

- a. From a customer's point of view, he/she should only have to explain the problem one time to get it corrected.
- Each time a customer retells the story, they get angrier and are more likely to take business elsewhere.
- d. Taking ownership usually saves the relationship/sale.

(7-10 min)

(7-10 min)

(7-10 min)

(7-10 min) a. Customers can sense an insincere apology. b. An apology needs to be delivered with sincerity each time. You may need to do it several times a day, but it's probably the first time the customer has heard it. c. "Sorry 'bout that" is heard by customers as being flip and insincere. d. Service recovery goes down the drain with the slightest hint of insincerity or boredom.

Step #4: Solve the problem

Step #3: Apologize sincerely

- a. You need to solve the problem, not substitute one problem for another.
- b. Going the extra mile is solving the problem and is part of service recovery.
- c. Being a double-checker and looking for positive alternatives are an important part of this step.

Step #5: Managing the feelings

- a. Managing the feelings is the core of service recovery.
- b. It is correcting or closing the gap between the customer's expectations and the perception of what they experienced.
- c. Don't argue, be defensive, shift blame, rush your customer, or tell them how they feel.
- d. Do admit error again (if necessary), listen actively, have and show empathy, build rapport and give something extra.

Step #6: Verify satisfaction

- a. Ask probing questions to assure the customer is satisfied.
- b. When there's less than complete satisfaction, ask follow up questions to achieve complete satisfaction.
- c. Often it's a small detail that prevents total satisfaction.

Recap of Service Recovery Steps

- a. Respond rapidly
- b. Take ownership
- c. Apologize sincerely
- d. Solve the problem
- e. Manage the feelings
- f. Verify satisfaction
- V. Before they Go
 - A. Select method of review.
 - B. Use the Call To Action commitment activity (see page 18)
 - C. Ask participants to complete your evaluation of the session (if used).
 - D. Distribute Service Recovery Desktop Reminder cards to participants.

Note: The total length of this class is approximately:(2 - 2.5 hours)

(All Telephone Doctor programs can be made into several length sessions. From showing the video or DVD – a mere 30-minute program from takeoff to landing - or as much time as you need, up to a full day program)

(7-10 min)

(7-10 min)

(7-10 min)

(Approximately 10 min)

(Approximately 10-12 min.)

Tips for Trainers

In order for participants to receive the maximum benefits from this course, here are some tips for success.

Assemble Learning Resources

- 1. Locate the DVD: The Six Steps to Service Recovery.
- 2. Use Participant Workbooks; this will greatly enhance the training.
- 3. You'll need:
 - A. A TV and DVD player or computer with DVD capability.
 - B. A flip chart or white board and markers.

Create a Comfortable Physical Learning Environment

- 1. Choose a comfortable, well-lighted room with good TV sight lines and no distractions.
- 2. Arrange straight tables in a U-shaped set-up, or use round tables. Either way, it is important that each participant be able to make eye contact with other participants.
- 3. Use name tents or nametags for class participants.
- 4. Encourage note taking by using designated pages in the Participant Workbook, or supply pencil and paper.
- 5. Schedule breaks every 1¹/₂ to 2 hours (maximum 4 hours or as needed).
- 6. To assure participation by all participants, we suggest a maximum class size of 25.

Create a Comfortable Psychological Learning Environment

- Introduce yourself. Give the participants a brief sketch of your background, your experience, and how you 1. relate to the training subject. The more comfortable the participants are, the more effective you will be in facilitating their learning.
- 2. Allow the participants to get comfortable with each other. Use self-introductions or icebreaking exercises to get the group relaxed.
 - A. The participants can use your introduction as a model, which will help them overcome any natural reluctance to talk about themselves.
 - B. Divide the class into groups of two. Give each pair of participants about five minutes to interview each other. Each one, in turn, introduces his or her partner to the group. This will speed the process of getting the participants to function as a group.
 - C. Multiple sources for icebreaker exercises exist. Visit your favorite bookstore or local library. A great book jam-packed with activities: The Fun Factor: Games, Sales Contests and Activities that Make Work Fun and Get Results, by Carolyn Greenwich.
- 3. Acquaint the participants with "housekeeping" items. Advise the participants regarding the important features of the training environment (e.g., location of restrooms and lounge facilities, breaks, etc.).

Tips for Trainers (Cont.)

4. Establish clear goals. The specific learning objectives for this class are included in the Leader's Guide. Keep in mind that the clearer the participants' understanding of their objectives, the more likely it is that they will achieve those objectives.

Involve the Participants

- 1. The corresponding Participant Workbook provides a Before-and-After Skills Inventory. The Before-and-After Skills Inventory has a dual purpose. It can be used as a pre-test/post-test exercise or as a buy-in activity. Using this inventory sets the stage for immediate involvement.
- 2. Choose the vignettes that best meet your needs. Decide the viewing method that works best (start/stop, all inclusive, minus the review segment, etc.).
- 3. When using the Participant Workbook, there is a variety of ways to complete the questions.
 - A. Divide the participants into two groups, assign each group a page, and have the group prepare to discuss one or two questions from each page.
 - B. Prior to class, instructor selects most pertinent questions to be completed during class.
 - C. Assign homework to participants to complete remaining questions. Be sure to let participants know when you expect the completed assignments.
- 4. Verify participant understanding by asking questions. Make the participants do most of the work. Resist the urge to take over. Facilitate - but don't dominate. Ask guestions, coax answers, and encourage give and take.
 - A. Encourage involvement of participants by beginning questions with phrases such as:
 - 1) "What did you think about that?"
 - "Tell me what you just saw."
 - 3) "That was interesting; what was your take on it?"
 - 4) "What were your initial impressions?"
 - 5) "How did that make you feel?"
 - 6) and, don't forget "How do you think the customer felt?"
 - B. Reduce participants' apprehension by positively reinforcing their comments with statements such as:
 - 1) "That's interesting; tell me more about what you mean."
 - "I hadn't considered that angle yet."
 - 3) "Okay, thanks for sharing that with us."
 - 4) "That'll be one of the things we need to consider."
 - 5) "I really like your insight."
 - 6) "That's sure a unique perspective. Who else has some ideas?"
 - C. Reward participants for their enthusiastic participation. Prizes are always coveted. And, of course, candy (preferably chocolate) always works!

Before and After Skills Inventory

Before watching the program "The Six Steps to Service Recovery", answer the questions below to the best of your ability. Don't score your answers yet. At the end of the course, complete the second part of the Before and After Skills Inventory and then score both your "Before" and "After" responses. You'll find the correct answers on page 19 of this participant workbook. The difference between the 2 scores will show you how much you've improved.

			Before	After
1.	Serv	ice Recovery is a fancy way of saying, "fix an order that's gone wrong." T/F		
2.	An u	pset customer is easier to work with if:		
	Α.	You give them time to calm down and think rationally.		
	В.	You use email rather than face-to-face contact.		
	C.	You smooth the problem over right away.		
	D.	Face it; there may never be a "good" time.		
3.	Letti	ng management know about problems early on may help save time and money. T/F		
4.	Wha	t is the ideal number of people to handle a "problem"?		
	Α.	A team including management and technical support.		
	В.	Only one.		
	C.	As many as it takes to fix the problem.		
	D.	Someone on the next shift.		
5.	The	more often a customer has to tell his/her story; the calmer he/she will be about it. T/F		
6.	"Sor	ry 'bout that" is:		. <u> </u>
	Α.	A common apology, accepted by everyone.		
	В.	Is a good way to calm the customer because they'll relate it to the old TV show and laugh.		
	C.	A good start.		
	D	Perceived as insincere and should be avoided.		
7.		atisfied customers often take their business elsewhere and usually tell a lot of r people along the way. T/F		

LEADER'S GUIDE

			Before	<u>After</u>
8.	Тур	ically, if a customer is dissatisfied with the way a problem is handled, they'll:		
	Α.	Moan and gripe but eventually get over it.		
	В.	Shrug it off as "one of those things."		
	C.	Take their business to your competition.		
	D.	Hold out for a "freebie" and then cheer up.		
9.		tomers are impressed if you use a lot of company jargon. It shows you know product. T/F		
10.	You	can expect to spend the majority of your time:		
	Α.	Handling the feelings of your customer.		
	В.	Asking questions to demonstrate how well you know the product.		
	C.	Filling out paperwork.		
	D.	All the above.		
11.		ing a customer " I know exactly how you feel" gives them confidence that 're listening to them. T/F		
12.	lf a	customer feels you're not sincere about helping them, they'll likely:		
	Α.	Call your supervisor and report you.		
	В.	Curse you out and really make it a bad day.		
	C.	Call everyday until they get what they want.		
	D.	Take future business elsewhere.		
13.		stomers understand if the schedule of your company comes before their venience. T/F		
14.	Cus	stomers often look for something "extra" after a problem occurs because:		
	Α.	They want something extra for their time and inconvenience.		
	В.	People are basically greedy and they like getting things for free.		
	C.	It's a way of distracting them from the problem and calming them down.		
	D.	It's easier than listening to them whine all the time.		
15	. Th	he best way to verify you've done a good job for the customer is by asking. T/F		

Answers to Before and After Inventory On pages 8-9 ITEM CORRECT NUMBER RESPONSE

1.	F
2.	С
3.	т
4.	В
5.	F
6.	D
7.	т
8.	С
9.	F
10.	Α
11.	F
12.	D
13.	F
14.	Α
15.	т

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What Is Service Recovery?

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the difference between an irate caller and the need for service recovery?

Answer:

- Handling the irate caller is controlling the anger connected with the problem and determining exactly what the problem is.
- Service recovery is the next step from handling the irate caller. It covers the gap between the customer's expectations and their perception of what actually took place.
- 2. What is service recovery?

Answer:

- Service recovery is more than just fixing the problem.
- It's a combination of correcting the difficulty and taking proactive steps to help manage the customer's feelings to reverse damage that may affect future business.
- Any company can look good when everything's going well; but when something goes wrong, that's when your true character shows. That's the true test of quality.
- 3. Why do we need service recovery?

Answer:

- If they're dissatisfied with their treatment, or how your organization resolves the problem, they'll go to your competition.
- Dissatisfied customers take their business elsewhere, and they tell many other people along the way about the bad experience.
- If a customer is pleased with how the problem was handled, they'll likely remain a customer.

Step 1: Respond Promptly

Discussion Question:

- 1. When is the right time for service recovery? Answer:
 - As soon as you're aware of the problem. Instantaneously, if possible.
 - Delay only irritates the customer even more. Delay often amplifies anger.

- 1. Respond promptly. As soon as you're aware of the problem. Instantaneously, if possible.
- 2. Delay irritates a customer even more. Delay amplifies anger.
- 3. An upset customer is easier to work with if you smooth the problem over right away.
- 4. Any delay and the customer's sense of importance is affected negatively.
- 5. Customers want justice and they want it NOW.

Step 2: Take Ownership

Discussion Question:

- 1. From a customer's perspective, how many people should it take to correct a problem? Answer:
 - The ideal situation from the customer's point of view is to have only one person to whom he or she needs • to explain the problem.
 - Each time a customer needs to retell a story, he or she becomes angrier, often choosing to retaliate by • going elsewhere.

- 1. The ideal situation is for only one person to handle any questionable situation.
- 2. The more often a customer tells the story, the angrier he/she will get, often vowing to take future business elsewhere.
- 3. End your service recovery by reminding your customer: "we value your business and want you to continue to be our customer".

Step 3: Apologize Sincerely

Discussion Questions:

- 1. What is a critical step to service recovery? Answer:
 - A sincere apology.
 - Too often the apology is someone mouthing words, and the customer can sense it.
- 2. What's wrong with the phrase: "Sorry 'bout that"?

Answer:

- It's cliché. It's insincere. It should not be used as a sincere apology.
- Never use it with a customer. Loose the phrase. It's regarded as flip humor and isn't perceived as a true apology. Your customer can sense the insincerity.
- The slightest hint of insincerity or boredom, and service recovery goes down the drain.

- 1. A critical step to service recovery is a sincere apology.
- 2. "Sorry 'bout that" is perceived as an insincere apology and should be avoided.
- 3. Apologies must be sincere and with understanding of how the problem affected the customer.
- 4. You may have to apologize several times a day, but it's always the first time your customer has heard it
- 5. The slightest bit of insincerity or boredom and service recovery goes down the drain.

Step 4: Solve the Problem

Discussion Questions:

- 1. How does the customer perceive you solving the problem? Answer:
 - It's critical the customer perceives the solution works for them.
 - By going the extra mile to accommodate their schedule.
 - Being interested in their schedule-not yours.
 - Saying what you can do not what you can't do.
- 2. What was the difference between the way the customer service rep first handled the problem and the second way?

Answer:

- In the first encounter, she seemed indifferent to the problem and more concerned about the company's schedule.
- In the second scenario, she demonstrated a concern for his problem and schedule.

- 1. It's critical the customer perceives the solution works for them.
- 2. When solving a problem, customers are interested in their schedules, not the company's.
- 3. Customers want to see you as confident and empowered to solve the problem.
- 4. Customers will perceive you as solving the problem by going the extra mile.
- 5. Say what you can do not what you can't do.

Step 5: Manage Their Feelings

Discussion Questions:

- 1. What is the core of service recovery? Answer:
 - Managing the feelings of the customer.
 - Correcting or closing the gap between the customer's expectations and their perceptions is the way to manage feelings.
- 2. What needs to be done after solving the problem?

Answer:

- After solving the problem, we need to work on the human side of it the feelings.
- You should expect to spend more time on feelings than fixing problems.
- 3. What **DON'T** you want to do to a customer? Answer:
 - Don't argue.
 - Don't be defensive.
 - Don't shift blame.
 - Don't rush customers.
 - Above all, don't tell them you KNOW exactly how they feel.

4. What should you DO?

Answer:

- Do admit the error (if necessary).
- Do listen actively. Don't interrupt.
- Do show empathy and demonstrate it.
- Do make rapport building comments.
- Do give something extra, if your company allows it.
- 5. Why give something extra? Isn't what you say enough? Answer:
 - What you say is important, but not necessarily enough in service recovery.
 - The customer is looking for something extra to recoup their time and inconvenience.
 - They are looking for something over and above simply fixing the problem.
 - It doesn't need to be expensive—but it should be something the customer values.

TELEPHONE DOCTOR PRESCRIPTION:

- 1. Managing the feelings of the customer is the core of service recovery.
- 2. After solving the problem, you need to work on the feelings involved.
- 3. Don't tell a customer you know exactly how they feel.
- 4. The customer is looking for something extra for their time and inconvenience.
- 5. The something extra doesn't need to be expensive, but it does need to be something the customer values.

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Step 6: Verify Satisfaction

Discussion Questions:

- 1. At the end of a service recovery, how do you know if you've really solved the problem? Answer:
 - The best way to actually know is to ask your customer. •
 - It helps to give the customer some sort of gauge to use: 1 to 10, with 10 as excellent, etc., or a different choice of words meaningful to you.
- 2. If the answer is not complete satisfaction, what should you do? Answer:
 - Ask a probing question to find out why satisfaction is not complete, usually it's a small detail overlooked. •
 - And the best way for you to find out that detail is by asking. .
 - For example, "What would it take for us to be a 10 . . .?" .

- 1. To know if you've really solved the problem, ask the customer.
- 2. Use some sort of scale for your customer to gauge where your service recovery is.
- 3. Probe to determine what needs to be done to achieve maximum satisfaction.
- 4. It is often a small, overlooked detail that stops the customer from being completely satisfied. Ask and you'll find out.

A Call To Action!

It's great to be reminded of what we know and to be able to learn more about the characteristics needed to provide exceptional service. In order to improve how service is provided to your customers, ACTION must be taken. Based on this program, list the steps you plan to implement to help you enhance your "mindset for service."

1.	
2.	
3	
4	
5	

It's Fun To Be Good!

Review Quiz On The Six Steps to Service Recovery

- 1. Service Recovery is:
 - a. more than fixing the problem
 - b. taking proactive steps to help manage the customer's feelings
 - c. both a & b
- 2. The true character of a company appears when something goes wrong. (T or F)
 - Dissatisfied customers often
 - a. waste your time by whining so much
 - b. take their business elsewhere if they don't feel the problem is handled well.
 - c. are particularly difficult during the week of the full moon.
- 4. A problem should be handled within 3 days of being reported. (T or F)
- 5. A customer complaint is like liquid cement because:
 - a. is easier to smooth over before it hardens.
 - b. it's heavy and usually makes a mess.
 - c. doesn't make sense unless you work for a construction company.
- _____ 6. From the customer's point of view, the ideal situation is to only have to explain the problem to as many people who will listen. (T or **F**)
- 7. When's a good time to use the phrase: "we value your business and want you to continue to be our customer":
 - a. about every 3rd or 4th sentence so they know you're sincere.
 - b. only if they're really mad.
 - c. Often and sincerely . . . most likely at the close of the transaction.
- 8. The phrase "Sorry 'bout that" is:
 - a. perceived as flip and insincere. It is best not to use it.
 - b. always acceptable
 - c.______is a good way to buy some time while you think of your excuse.

- 9. Customers will perceive you as solving the problem by going the extra mile and doublechecking all options. (T or F)
- ____10. In a Service Recovery situation, you should:
 - a. listen actively
 - b. show empathy or sympathy
 - c. make rapport comments (when appropriate)
 - d. admit the error (again if necessary)
 - e. give something extra
 - f. all the above

Before They Go

In order to reinforce the skills and techniques that have been addressed, choose one or more of these reinforcement options.

Choose Methods of Review

- A. A variety of discussion questions are provided in this Leader's Guide for your use.
- B. The corresponding Participant Workbook provides a 10-point quiz directly related to skills shown in the program.
- C. PowerPoint slides are a useful way to reinforce the Key Points made during the course. Notice the Key Points are identical to the Telephone Doctor Prescriptions located throughout the Leader's Guides and Participant Workbooks. More great news! By purchasing the program, *The Six Steps to Service Recovery*, Telephone Doctor grants permission to recreate the PowerPoint Presentation pages in a PowerPoint presentation.
- D. If you are using the *Before-and-After Skills Inventory* to evaluate training effectiveness, instruct participants to re-take the inventory and compute scores to evaluate improvement. Congratulate participants on their improvement.
- E. Take Review Quiz.

Your Finale

- A. Change is more likely to occur if participants commit to implementing skills and techniques discussed during this course. Various resources are available illustrating commitment exercises. We may have included a Call to Action commitment form on page 15 in the corresponding Participant Workbook.
- B. In order to evaluate training success and identify areas to improve, provide participants with the opportunity to make comments using evaluations. This is a prime opportunity to identify future training needs.

TRAINING EVALUATION

Thank you for attending a Telephone Doctor workshop today! Please take a minute to let us know your feelings. Rate the following: 1 - 5 (5 being the best)

 This course was useful & I enjoyed it Material related to my job Topics were clear & easy to understand I will use these skills Please rate the instructor Overall rating for this class Comments are appreciated:		1 1 1 1	2 2 2 2	3 3 3 3	4 4 4 4 4	5 5 5 5 5
Your Name:	Date:					
Instructor:						

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Key Points: The Six Steps to Service Recovery

Step 1: Respond Promptly

- 1. Respond promptly. As soon as it's reported. Instantaneously, if possible.
- 2. Delay irritates a customer even more. Delay amplifies anger.
- 3. An upset customer is easier to work with if you smooth the problem over right away.
- 4. Any delay and the customer's sense of importance is affected negatively.
- 5. Customers want justice and they want it NOW.

Step 2: Take Ownership

- 1. The ideal situation is for only one person to handle any questionable situation.
- 2. The more often a customer tells the story, the angrier he/she will get, often vowing to take future business elsewhere.
- 3. End your service recovery by reminding your customer: "We value your business and want you to continue to be our customer".

Step 3: Apologize Sincerely

- 1. A critical step to service recovery is a sincere apology.
- 2. "Sorry 'bout that" is perceived as an insincere apology and should be avoided.
- 3. Apologies must be sincere and with understanding of how the problem affected the customer.
- 4. You may have to apologize several times a day, but it's always the first time your customer has heard it.
- 5. The slightest bit of insincerity or boredom, and service recovery goes down the drain.

Step 4: Solve the Problem

- 1. It's critical the customer perceives the solution works for them.
- 2. When solving a problem, customers are interested in their schedules, not the company's.
- 3. Customers want to see you as confident and empowered to solve the problem.
- 4. Customers will perceive you as solving the problem by going the extra mile.
- 5. Saying what you can do not what you can't do.

Step 5: Manage Their Feelings

- 1. Managing the feelings of the customer is the core of service recovery.
- 2. After solving the problem, you need to work on the feelings involved.
- 3. Don't tell a customer you know *exactly* how they feel.
- 4. The customer is looking for something "extra" for their time and inconvenience.
- 5. The "extra" doesn't need to be expensive, but it does need to be something the customer values.

Step 6: Verify Satisfaction

- 1. To know if you've really solved the problem, ask the customer.
- 2. Use some sort of scale for your customer to gauge where your service recovery is.
- 3. Probe to determine what needs to be done to achieve maximum satisfaction.
- 4. It is often a small, overlooked detail that stops the customer from being completely satisfied.

Instructor Notes		

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