

The importance of customer service at Enterprise Rent-A-Car

The impact of customer service



Most customers prefer good service to lower prices. Think about all the situations where you are prepared to pay a little extra to get a better or more efficient service. Companies that give these added service benefits are likely to be winners. They have a competitive advantage over rivals.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car believes that customer satisfaction is an investment. It is the equivalent to research and development in a manufacturing company. Customer service is an important part of the culture of Enterprise.

The ESQi results have helped to teach Enterprise what drives customer satisfaction. Three factors have been found to be particularly important. These are:

- i. the attitude and helpfulness of Enterprise employees
- ii. the speed of the transaction
- iii. the cleanliness of the car.



Enterprise uses the information from the surveys to make improvements. For example, they have developed a 'Cycle of Service' training programme. This gives new employees a number of practical tips about how to take care of customers.

Going the extra mile

The ESQi system is managed by a team at Enterprise specially set up for this purpose. The team uses an independent telephone survey company to provide the survey results. Whenever a customer communicates any dissatisfaction on the ESQi survey, the phone representative asks the question 'Would you accept a call?' More than 90% of these customers agree to be called. Branch managers are given details of the complaint and can ring the customer to find out the root cause of the problem. The branch is expected to work out solutions to resolve the complaint.

Another way in which Enterprise has improved customer service is through a system of constructive criticism known as 'The Vote'. Each week members of a branch are asked to rank other members, from best to worst, based on the quality

of their customer service in the previous week and to explain why. The results are published for all to see. Awards are given to top-rated employees. This system of positive criticism works well and very quickly branches with low ESQi scores improve in the performance tables.