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Clients are Customers, Too!

By [Gail Zelitzky](#)

Whenever a discussion of growth takes place, the issue of customer service necessarily comes into play. Why? Because, the simple truth is that an organization only grows when it is effectively communicating with and satisfying the needs of its customers.

You can be the best at what you do, but if your billing is inaccurate or late, if you take too long to produce what you are being paid for, if your calls do not get through to you, if you do not return your messages in a timely fashion, if the person answering your phones is not pleasant, if you are not reachable, if, if, if, if... You may be losing clients and not understand why.

Customers are a strange breed. They either love you or they don't. If they did, and now they don't, and you do not know what turned them off, you lose more than that one customer. You lose:

- * Current bu\$ine\$\$
- * Good will
- * Time invested in them
- * Future busine\$\$
- * Their referrals

You cannot love your customers too much!

When is the last time you called a valued customer just to say, "Hi, how are things going?" Have you ever sent out a birthday or anniversary card? Do you offer current customers opportunities to save money? How many times do you reach out to your customers in any given month? Do you email them articles pertaining to their business? Do you think about ways to help them and let them know what you are doing?

It is absolutely true that it's easier to keep a valued customer than it is to create a new one. As with other strategic growth, a firm customer service approach requires planning, focus and implementation. Knowing which areas of your business adversely affect client relations is the start to creating an effective plan.

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Gail P. Zelitzky is the founder and principal of Silver-Robins Consulting, a business performance coaching firm offering both individual and group coaching. Silver-Robins Consulting helps businesses grow by developing and implementing new sales, marketing and business strategies. The end result is greater revenue and profitability. Gail has 30 years of entrepreneurial experience that offers practical, no-nonsense solutions to the challenges faced by small business owners.

In addition to individual and group coaching, business owners can participate in a Business Performance Roundtable, a peer advisory group format facilitated by Silver-Robins consultants, where participants set realistic goals, focus on priorities and gain objective feedback on the business challenges they face. Only one client per industry may participate.

Silver-Robins Consulting also creates custom-tailored seminars to meet training objectives on sales & marketing, customer service, leadership and management.

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