



How Your Employees Can Solve Customer Problems

business customers customer experience

Summary: Decision trees help employees handle customer issues. We have six tips to use this tool successfully.

A mature leafy tree makes as much oxygen seasonally as 10 people inhale in a year. With as many as 6MM trees on average planted in the US each year, that is a lot of oxygen! Trees sure are useful. Another tree many companies use is a decision tree. Today we discuss how these decision trees can help your customers.

Many banks construct decision trees to help their employees solve customer problems. If the problem is A, do this. For a problem in category B, do that. You reward them when they help a customer quickly.

But by doing this, are you helping your employees solve customer problems or just teaching them to be efficient? Here are six tips to successfully use decision trees and empower your employees at the same time.

1. **Hire problem solvers.** You don't want script-readers, obviously. Look for people who are interested in your product, patient, good at communicating, and interested in solving problems. Your customers will be happy that they called for help.
2. **Give space to solve customer problems.** Every company has rules, as well as things that people can and can't do in their particular roles. Look for ways to give your customer service representatives the freedom to fix problems without finding a manager to sign off on everything. An example of this is a lost debit card. If the debit card didn't arrive, the customer service person should be able to cancel that card and overnight a new one without getting a manager's okay to use the fastest shipping service.
3. **Encourage active listening.** Your customer service employees will hear the same problems over and over. Sometimes customers may be annoyed or even angry. It's just as important to hear them out as it is to quickly solve their problem. It is important that representatives learn to listen to the whole story, then summarize it and repeat it back to the customer. That practice helps nip misunderstandings in the bud and helps people feel heard.
4. **Remind them of balance.** Of course, you want your customer service representatives to be kind and polite, show empathy, and be sympathetic to your customers' problems. At the end of the day though, the reason they are calling is to solve a problem. Remind them that chatting too much with customers potentially takes time away from other customers. It is a fine balance that good customer service reps can usually find.
5. **Deliberately share solutions.** Some representatives may come up with particularly good solutions to frequently presented issues. Others might be working on knotty, unusual problems. Set aside regular times for the team to meet and share ideas. The best solutions can go viral while multiple minds work on a fix for more complicated or difficult situations.
6. **Reward people for solving problems.** Remember to tie incentives and recognition to solving the problems. It is easy to use efficiency metrics such as time spent on each call. But, your customers will ultimately reward you for rewarding your employees for solving their problems.

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