



EASY STEPS

To The Perfect Greeting

One of life's oldest clichés is also one that's difficult to deny: **You never get a second chance to make a first impression.** In a sales environment, this first impression is tantamount to success.

According to Princeton University, **it takes just one-tenth of a second for a person to judge you** and form a first impression. This initial meeting impacts every aspect of your relationship with them and determines if you make the sale and how you will be remembered subsequent to the transaction. In other words, if you impress, you'll likely be mentioned to other potential customers.

If you continuously focus on these 7 simple steps of greeting people in business or professional environments, **your sales will increase and your customers will sing your praises to others.**

1 STAND TO GREET

Or come around from behind the counter. Rising from your seat upon meeting a person is a gesture of welcoming, respect and confidence. In many circumstances, you can't leave your position from behind a counter but your body language can still project that gesture of closeness. Even a tiny step forward or slightly leaning in toward the customer indicates you are interested in understanding their needs and satisfying them.



2 MAKE EYE CONTACT

Looking someone in the eye lets them know you're focused on what they're saying and value their requests. Eyes that wander indicate disinterest and lack of respect.

Your gaze should be warm and engaging, with a generous dose of empathy and appreciation, not so intense it intimidates, and not vapid and lifeless.



3 SMILE

Much like eye contact, your smile is all about sincerity. We all have our fake smiles we display when we jokingly pose for pictures but we all have genuine ones that are so amiable and charming you can almost feel the deep and tender emotions behind them.

Flash those pearly whites and you can almost hear the heartstrings of your customers being tugged.

4 VERBAL GREETING



Nothing beats verbal recognition when a customer enters a business. It's a tricky area of customer relations as it's easy to overdo it, and a significant number of greetings are ignored, no matter how warm and sincere, because many customers are multitasking on their phones or simply focused on the task at hand and oblivious to their surroundings.

A simple, sincere hello is a good start, followed by an inquiry of, **"How you doing today?"** if you receive acknowledgment. If you sense they need assistance, gently offer, **"May I help you find anything?"** Avoid long, canned greetings that sound rehearsed and insincere. Remember that your main goal is to build rapport and confidence with your customers.

5 OFFER A HANDSHAKE

Not all business situations are appropriate for handshakes but in restaurants, bars, service-oriented businesses, upscale retailers, car dealerships, etc., **a handshake displays respect and sincerity** in your efforts to meet customer needs.



Use your whole hand, not just your fingertips, and grasp the customer's entire hand firmly, but gently. Keep in mind the gesture is an age-old expression of mutual value and appreciation, simple and authentic.

6 GIVE YOUR NAME

Sharing your name with a customer indicates you want to build trust; you don't tell someone your most personal, identifying moniker unless you're interested in establishing a connection with them. Again, not all circumstances are conducive to name sharing but most are and divulging such basic information immediately puts customers at ease and more comfortable in asking for assistance.

The reason so many businesses require employees to wear name tags is so customers can identify them if they need assistance during their visit. Telling them your name strengthens that bond.



7 ASK THE CUSTOMER'S NAME

The next logical step in building customer relations is asking for customer names. After you've divulged your name, the customer is more amenable to sharing theirs. **When you know each other's names, you've established a personal connection, a business friendship of sorts.** However, as the old children's saying goes, "That's my name, don't wear it out," is applicable in these scenarios. Make sure you don't overdo it and intersperse their name only occasionally in your interactions, keeping the tone of the conversation natural and casual.

