



## **MBA 694 Customer Service**

### **Course Description:**

Businesses often consider customer complaints as a necessary evil, a nuisance that goes with the conduct of their daily business. What is lacking is a true appreciation of how to deal with disgruntled customers and to use customer complaints as input that would help the company improve its performance and gain an edge over its competitors. In short, a firm must respond strategically to complaints in a manner that allows the firm to keep its customers and acquire new ones.

In this course, we attempt to reach the following objectives:

- To understand the concept of customer service and its dynamics and how successful firms engage with their customers and build relationships to gain customer loyalty.
- To understand the relationship between customer complaining behavior and customer satisfaction; the absence of complaints does not mean none exists or that customers are satisfied.
- To understand how to deal with difficult customers and to develop an effective customer service recovery process. Companies will fail their customers at one time or another; how they deal with it is key to their successful recovery and retention of their customers.
- To understand how firms can develop a proactive culture and methodology for receiving and handling customer feedback, including complaints and to use that information to meet customer needs and gain their loyalty through improving the firm's service and performance, gaining a differential advantage over competitors.

### **Course Structure and Assignments:**

This course will utilize a combination of class discussions, case exercises, and some lecture on the topics of customer satisfaction, customer complaints and creating long-term customer value and loyalty. Please make sure to have read the assigned material prior to each class period. The required readings are posted online on Moodle.

Because of the short duration and format of the course, students are required to attend the entire weekend class and will miss the portion of the grade for participation and cases for

any period of the class they are not in attendance. The students will also submit a final written project a little over two weeks after the course completion.

**In-class Case Assignments:**

1. No returns or exchanges without a receipt: Encounter at the retail store
2. The Medical Examination
3. A Patient’s Experience with Hospital Services

**Tentative Class Schedule**

**Friday**

Understanding Relationship Marketing  
Customer complaints and satisfaction issues  
Case 1: No returns or exchanges without a receipt:  
Encounter at the retail store  
Required readings: 1, 2, 3, 4.

**Saturday**

Turning Customer Complaints into a Competitive Advantage  
Case 2: The Medical Examination  
Case 3: A Patient’s Experience with Hospital Services  
Required readings: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

**Sunday**

Tracking Complaints, Customer Satisfaction Audit  
Challenges Facing the Organization in Adopting a Customer Service Orientation.  
Required readings: 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

**Grades are weighed as follows**

3 cases (15% each)	45%
Class participation	25%
Final written project	<u>30%</u>
Total	100%

**Course Grade Assignment**

93-100%	=	A
90-92%	=	A-
87-89%	=	B+
83-86%	=	B
80-82%	=	B-
77-79%	=	C+
73-76%	=	C

70-72% = C-  
Below 60% = D

### **Required Readings:**

1. Are You Taking Your Customers For Granted? [customerthink.com](http://customerthink.com), 2016.
2. Don't Sit on Customer Feedback, [blogs.hbr.org](http://blogs.hbr.org), January 2, 2014.
3. 10 lessons every entrepreneur should learn about customer service. [Lab.getapp.com](http://Lab.getapp.com), April 29, 2015.
4. Customer Service – Making the most of customer complaints: ... [Wall Street Journal](http://WallStreetJournal.com), September 22, 2008.
5. How to Handle Customer Complaints Quickly. [Wikihow.com](http://Wikihow.com), 2017.
6. 10 Tips For Dealing with Customer Complaints. [Forbes.com](http://Forbes.com), January, 2015.
7. Critical Steps to Establish a Customer Service Culture. [Customer Service Manager](http://CustomerServiceManager.com), February 2, 2006.
8. Internal Customers: Do You Know Who They Are? [Profit Minded](http://ProfitMinded.com), April 4, 2013.
9. Customer Satisfaction and Shareholder's Value: The Role of Employee Satisfaction. [European Journal of Business and Management](http://EuropeanJournalofBusinessandManagement.com), Vol 6, No. 13, 2014.
10. Service Recovery: The art of making things right when things go wrong. [Healthcare Executive](http://HealthcareExecutive.com), Jan/Feb 2009.
11. Customer Service Recovery: Apologizing to Customers without Alienating Employees, [Entrepreneurs](http://Entrepreneurs.com), January 3, 2015.
12. Service Recovery: How to Improve Customer Service. [Chartcourse.com](http://Chartcourse.com), 2017.
13. Making the Case for Service Recovery Strategies. [GreetBrook.com](http://GreetBrook.com), 2017.
14. Tips for Dealing with the Bad and Ugly of Customer Feedback. [The Entrepreneur](http://TheEntrepreneur.com), February 2, 2013.
15. 5 Types of Difficult Customers – And How To Successfully Handle, And Probably Change Them, [Smallstarter.com](http://Smallstarter.com), December 28, 2015.
16. Why You Should Invest in Social Customer Service. [Sparkcentral.com](http://Sparkcentral.com), January 17, 2017.
17. Revolutionizing Customer Service. [Harvard Business Review](http://HarvardBusinessReview.com), April 2016.
18. 14 experts on the biggest customer service challenges faced by businesses today. [Sage CRM](http://SageCRM.com), June 30, 2015.

# Final Written Project

Please answer the following two questions based on the discussions over the duration of the course and the assigned readings. The length of your paper should be a maximum of fifteen (15) double-spaced pages using font Times New Roman, size 12. Your paper will be evaluated based on quality and depth of your analysis, how well you integrate the assigned readings into your paper, as well as correct format (spelling, grammatical structure, logical flow, etc.)

Your paper must be turned in, or mailed (postmarked) by **Friday. Hard copy only! No electronic copies please.** After that, a 5% penalty will be applied for each day your paper is turned in late.

1. Analyze the following statement: Some customers just love to complain! We are better off sending them away to our competitors. We keep the good customers and they deal with the bad ones.
2. Discuss a systematic approach for handling customer complaints and the policies and processes that need to be in place in order to handle complaints properly. Identify a business of your choosing and discuss the extent to which they do or do not follow the approach you described in your response to this question.