

Customer Service Interview Questions

Did you know?



According to the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics , making a bad hiring decision can cost employers **30 percent** of the individual's potential earnings for his or her first year? That's just one reason why it is important to be prepared for the hiring process before the interviews ever begin.

The interview process can be a bit overwhelming, especially if you are the person doing the interviews and have dozens of candidates to select from.

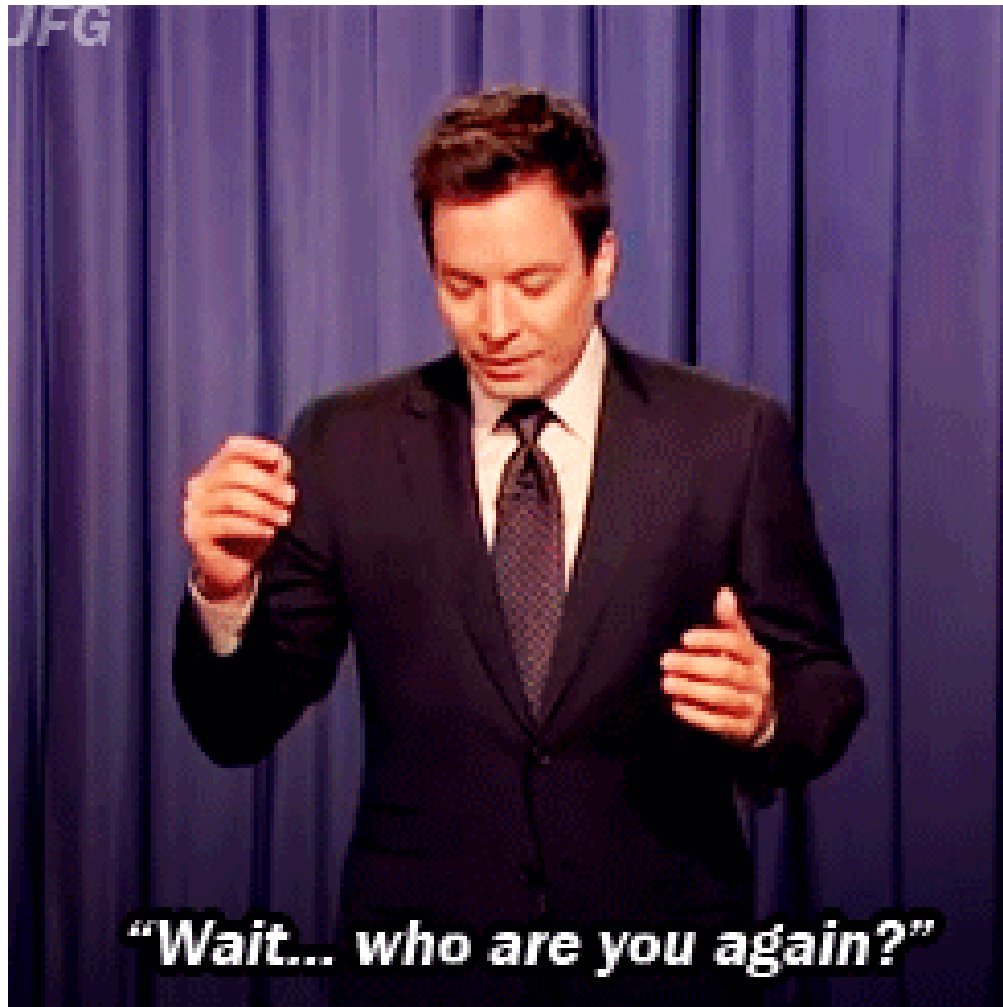
Being prepared and having a game plan will help you weed through the applicants, making it possible to find the best customer service representatives for your company.

Each section in this lesson will help you prepare for interviewing customer service reps by providing:

- A different category of interview questions
- A few specific question examples
- Examples of good answers
- Examples of bad answers

Enjoy!

General, Get-to-Know-You Questions



1. What is your weakness?

Good response:

"I am not very good at [specific thing] and am struggling with [specific thing]. However, I'm working on mastering those skills."

Why:

This shows the candidate is aware of what needs to be improved upon and is working on it.

Bad response:

"I do not know how to adjust columns in Excel. I am having trouble with Outlook," then lists several other items.

Why:

Listing everything shows self-doubt and lack of confidence.

2. Tell me about yourself.

Good response:

"I have worked in customer service for five years and enjoy helping customers. In my last job I was honored to be a part of a test program that implemented a new tracking system that improved our service rates by 14 percent. On a personal note, I enjoy spending time with family and volunteering."

Why:

This is a quick elevator speech that every candidate should prepare for their interview. Shows they take pride in their work and leaves time for family and helping others.

Bad response:

"What do you want to know?"

Why:

Answering with a question shows they did not come prepared and have little experience.

3. Tell me about a time when you had difficulty dealing with someone.

Good response:

"A fellow employee was always negative and I knew I had to find a way to make working with his negativity bearable. I found common ground between us and discovered we both enjoy watching the same shows. Then, when the conversation turned negative I changed the subject to what happened in our favorite show."

Why:

This shows that the candidate took the initiative to get to know the coworker better and made working with them less difficult.

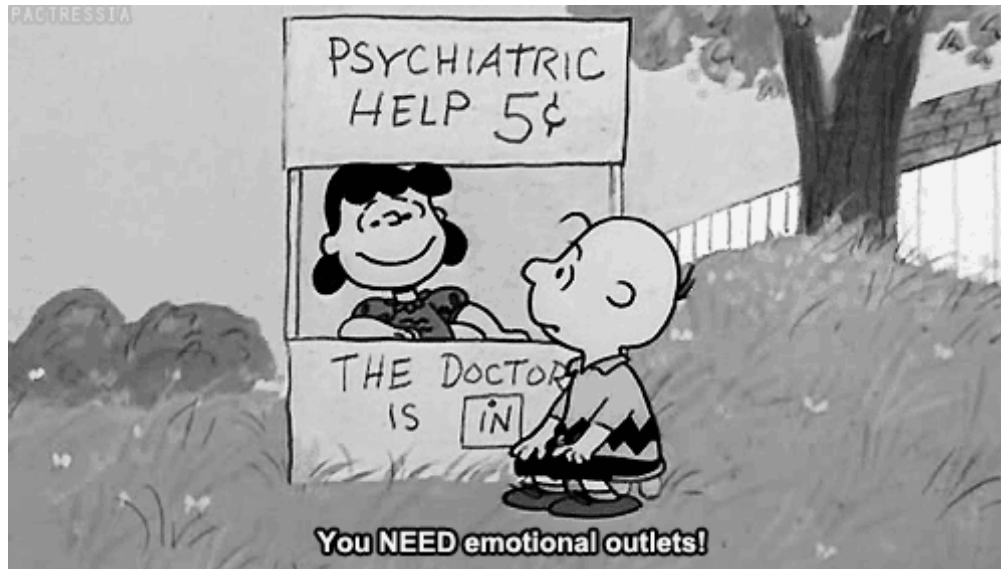
Bad response:

"I get along with everyone."

Why:

This answer is just not true and shows a lack of authenticity.

Behavioral Interview Questions



1. How do you deal with conflict?

Good response:

"I start by trying to determine what is causing the conflict. In my last job there was one person who always got defensive when you would offer advice. I took the time to get to know her and discovered she was overwhelmed both at work and at home. I started working with her instead of just telling her."

Why:

This shows the candidate knows how to deal with conflict and how to solve it collaboratively.

Bad response:

"I avoid it."

Why:

Shows the candidate avoids conflict, which is especially evident in a customer service role.

2. Have you ever had a problem with a previous supervisor?**Good response:**

"There have been times when I have found myself disagreeing with a supervisor. However, I understand it takes an effort from both of those sides to solve a problem. Because I valued my career, I did my best to work through the problem together."

Why:

Shows the candidate values their career and is willing to work on finding a solution before giving up.

Bad response:

"I am leaving my current job because my boss refuses to promote me."

Why:

Shows the candidate is more willing to give up rather than find out why they have not been promoted and work through it.

3. How do you handle negative feedback?

Good response:

"I listen and ask if there are any suggestions that could help me improve. I consider what was said and why. Then I look for ways to improve."

Why:

Shows the candidate is willing to accept feedback and use it to improve their performance.

Bad response:

"Negative feedback makes me feel uncomfortable, so I typically try to avoid reviews and high pressure conversations."

Why:

This shows the candidate would not be take constructive criticism and might have difficulty being self-aware enough to critique what is being done wrong.

eCommerce Customer Service Interview Questions



1. What experience do you have in the eCommerce field?

Good response:

"I have been in the customer service industry for fifteen years, including hospitality and eCommerce."

Why:

Shows the candidate has been in customer service for a decent amount of time and worked in multiple areas.

Bad response:

"This would be my first time working in eCommerce."

Why:

Shows there is no experience for the job and did not add any evidence that effort would be made to grow into the role.

2. Have you tried our product?

Good response:

"I have not tried [product], yet, but I saw on the website how [product] can help me get organized I am interested in trying [product] and plan to do so soon."

Why:

Candidate is honest and also took the time to research your company's products.

Bad response:

"No, is that required?"

Why:

Shows the candidate is not passionate about what you are selling.

3. Name one suggestion you made at your last job that was implemented?

Good response:

"In my last job I suggested we create a website for our VIP customers and share special offers. Management tried it for about six months and sales went up more than 35 percent."

Why:

Shows the candidate took initiative to suggest something and knew the metrics for the results.

Bad response:

"Management never implements any of my ideas."

Why:

This negative response shows the candidate lacks initiative and inability to work with authority.

Call Center Interview Questions



1. Why do you like working in a call center?

Good response:

"Mostly because I believe I am at my best when working in a fast-paced environment. I enjoy helping customers find solutions to their problems and help them understand how multiple products can be used together."

Why:

Shows the candidate is enthusiastic about working and understands the demands of a call center.

Bad response:

"Because I do not like working with people."

Why:

Shows the candidate is unaware of the type of role they are applying for.

2. What makes a call center successful?

Good response:

"One that offers helpful service to customers. All agents must be knowledgeable and able to provide effective solutions."

Why:

Shows the candidate understands what it takes to work in a call center and how to help it be successful.

Bad response:

"I guess I would say, answer the phone in a timely manner."

Why:

Shows the candidate has no idea what it takes to work in a call center.

3. What is your typing speed?

Good response:

"The last I tested it was at 45 words per minute."

Why:

Shows the candidate is aware of the metric, and is regularly measuring it.

Bad response:

"Don't know, never checked."

Why:

Shows the candidate is not used to measuring their speed, which may lead to difficulty in the future if your call center is driven by metrics.

Customer Service Manager Interview Questions



1. What do you do to keep your professional skills current?

Good response:

"I do a lot of reading and research about the customer service industry. If there is a class available, I make plans to go so I can learn the latest information."

Why:

Shows the candidate looks to find changes in the industry and if possible, finds the time to receive additional training.

Bad response:

"I wait until I am notified I need more training."

Why:

Shows the manager sits back and waits to be told what to do, not ideal for a leader.

2. Tell me about a time when you had to discipline an employee?

Good response:

"I recall dealing with one employee who never showed up to work on time. It was because her son was having difficulty being dropped off at daycare. I sat down with her and explained the issue. We discovered putting her on a different shift made it easier for her to get to work on time.

Why:

Shows they took the time to work out a solution while disciplining the employee.

Bad response:

"I let HR handle it for me."

Why:

Shows the candidate is uncomfortable with disciplining staff and will likely act the same in your organization.

3. Tell me about a time when you wowed a customer?

Good response:

"Customer was having an issue with a product, so I offered to replace it and pay for the shipping of the broken item. I also offered her a \$25 credit on a future order when we received the broken item back. We had that item in our hands by the end of the week and she got her credit."

Why:

Shows the candidate does everything in his/her power to make the situation right and make the customer happy.

Bad response:

"Um, I'm not sure. What do you mean?"

Why:

Shows the candidate is unaware of industry jargon and may not have the right mindset for customer service.

Let me, let me upgrade you

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