

## Improving Your Customer Service For Any Client

By Claudia Cesarotti | November 26, 2018

This entry is part 4 of 4 in the series Effective Customer Service for Writers

As your career as a freelancer progresses, you may start to feel comfortable with your levels of customer service. However, since clients are dynamic, changing humans (just like you!), you'll want to continually work on improving your customer service skills with all your clients.

So far in this series, we've discussed why customer service is so important for freelancers, plus what you can do to handle "positive" clients and the rare "negative" client. Hopefully, you no longer feel that customer service is so intimidating – it's based on common sense and common courtesy.

I hope you've also come to realize... You Got This!

There may not be a word-for-word manual or guidebook out there covering customer service for freelancers, but you don't need one. Even if you've never been self-employed before, you've definitely dealt with people. Customers, co-workers, supervisors... they're all figures in your work life with whom you've had to apply the basic guiding principles that we've talked about in this article series.

You know there's a difference between effective customer service and just being a yes-man (or woman) to your client. You should now realize, too, that it's essential not to treat your client with an attitude of contempt or superiority. Whether they progress from the neutral state to a positive or negative relationship, they deserve your patient attention, guidance, and professional advice. After all, while your clients know their business, you're the expert when it comes to the writing side of things, and they need you to help reach their business goals.

As you reach goals and milestones together, you'll naturally become closer. That said, you never want to let a client cross your personal boundaries... even the most

positive, friendly clients still need to respect the working relationship. And, never forget that when it comes to the working relationship, you're the boss in your business... so feel free to let go of negative clients without guilt.

Customer service is an on-going, practiced skill – and you'll get better at it with time!

I opened this series referencing the wildly successful and extremely wealthy businessman, John D. Rockefeller, Sr. He valued the ability to work with people above all other things... and even with amazing writing talents, you'll quickly realize that the ability to provide good customer service makes you even more valuable to your clients.

I've given you advice on handling the different types of clients. Now, I'd like to close with a few tips on continuing to grow your customer service skills. These are things that I've learned (sometimes the hard way) over my three decades in business, and I hope they'll help you, too:

Don't be afraid to take the lead. Showing your expertise will increase your confidence and the confidence your client has in you.

Always give your best effort. Knowing you've done your part of the project to the best of your abilities helps to keep you open to new future opportunities.

Cut yourself some slack! Customer service is a continuing, fluid process... Perfection not required.

Working on these skills and using these tips does take a bit of conscious effort on your part. Yet in so many ways, the extra effort you put in is well worth your time. Once clients see how professional you are to work with, they will usually follow your lead, giving you more of the positive clients you want in your career.

Clients want to work with people who make it easy for them to do their job and get results. Using good customer service, you'll get more clients who want to work with you for as long as YOU allow the relationship to continue. It's one more way to reach the writing life you goals you want and build the kind of business you deserve.

And now, with your newly acquired skills at hand... Go get 'em!!

