

Quality Hurts

By Peter Tshlias of Dion Neckwear

Dion Neckwear Ltd. is a family-owned, Toronto-based business and a mainstay for well-dressed men for over 40 years. Dion supplies neckwear and formal wear that bears the distinct Dion look and quality on which specialty North American retailers have come to rely. We recently spoke with Peter Tshlias, Chief Executive Officer.

Buying quality hurts *only once*, when you actually buy. **Not** buying quality, hurts *every time*. It may be for the cost to repair something or the disappointment and bitterness of seeing your buy fall short of your expectations, or in the retailer's case, losing the trust (and business) of a good customer.

Nowadays, it is more important than ever to carry "peace-of-mind" products. That is, once the item goes out your door, the chances of it being returned due to a quality problem are minimal. And that is exactly the type of product we specialize in. Our aim is to produce fashionable neckwear that is of the highest quality. The combination of; a hard-working



production team of professional and highly capable people; use of top silk fabrics and materials; consistency in production and our hourly-payment schedule (as opposed to piece-work) reflects our commitment to quality and sets us apart from larger manufacturers and importers.

Unfortunately, quality alone means very little if Customer Service is lacking.

Most of us have come to believe that outstanding customer service is just a thing of the past. Products and services continue to increase in cost. Customer service, on the other hand, continues to decline. Dealing with surly cashiers who

seem to have more important things to do than ring up your sale are the rule rather than the exception. It seems that businesses today have forgotten how valuable customers actually are. Without customers, no one earns a paycheck.

Providing great customer service is not that difficult, is it?

Based on our own professional experience, here are four valuable rules for delivering winning customer service:



Rule 1: Listen!

When customers complain there is a reason. More importantly, it is an opportunity to learn something, so hear them out without interrupting or arguing.

Rule 2: Don't take it personally. Customer complaints are about products or service that did not live up to their expectations. Taking it personally, getting defensive, or getting angry only makes the situation worse.

Rule 3: Offer a sincere apology for the inconvenience. Put yourself in your customer's shoes. Remember what it feels like when something you have purchased did not do the job it was supposed to, or caused an even bigger problem than the one it was supposed to solve.

Rule 4: Never say, "It's not my job or my department or my responsibility." If you work at the company that made the product or sold the service - it is your job! Make a personal commitment to do whatever it takes to fix the problem even if it is not in your job description.

In the end, only those companies with an ongoing commitment to listen and serve can consistently keep their customers delighted.

"If you work just for money, you'll never make it, but if you love what you're doing and you always put the customer first, success will be yours."

Tie-meless jewels.

DION