

The Other Customers

We've covered a good chunk of the rude people. Not all of them, mind you—some of you just keep on surprising us—but the previous situations are the most complained about by employees. Don't believe me? Google “bad customers” or “customer's suck” and see for yourself.

If you're reading this and saying to yourself, “This is ridiculous; I do some of those things and that does *not* make me a rude customer. This writer is just too sensitive” remember what I said above: these are *the most common complaints from employees*, which means, it's not just me. The problem is *you*.

Accept, embrace, move on, and for the love of your Deity, better yourself or one day you may be walking to your car after being a sucky customer and have an eraser thrown at your head. If this happens, and you've read this book, well...you can't complain, now can you?



And now, let's cover some of the other types of customers. Sucky customers are not strictly the rude; they're also the annoying, the weird, and the just plain scary.

Flat Out Annoying

Hand me that magazine so I can smack ya with it.

You know the type. The kind of person who doesn't necessarily *mean* to make you want to run your head into the wall. It's not their fault. They were probably just born that way. But that doesn't stop you from wishing you could molest their brain with a mallet. Here are some examples so you can decide if you're an annoying customer. Some of these can also be categorized elsewhere, so you might see repeats.

Be Specific

That's not pronounced "pacific" by the way.

Unless you're asking for something obvious like, "where's your milk?" then we probably don't know what you mean from just one word descriptions.

Do not ask me "Where's the oil?" and expect me to know what you're talking about without asking questions. There's all kinds of oil. Motor oil? Cooking oil? Baby oil? Let me know what kind of oil you're looking for. And don't give me the lazy eye or look at me like I'm missing brain cells when I ask "What kind of oil?"

I had one woman come up to me and ask, "Where's your cards?"

Okay, easy, I think. She wants to know where our greeting cards are.

But then she says, "Deck cards, where's your deck cards?". Only it didn't sound like that. She had a very strong Southern accent so it sounded like she was saying, "Duck cards."

I'm thinking, *Duck cards? What the hell is a duck card? Ducky cards? Like...greeting cards for someone who's had a baby recently?* I start to open

my mouth to ask her if this is what she means and I guess she saw the dumb look on my face and finally clarified by saying “Playing cards.” She sounded annoyed.

I’m sorry, lady...had you said “Playing cards” from the beginning, I could have helped you a lot sooner. Don’t get annoyed with me because you can’t be specific.

Be Ready

- **Tax exempt?** That’s fantastic. But have your card ready or know your number so we can put it in the computer. We don’t have a magic button that says “Tax Exempt” that will automatically take your tax off without putting in a number. We have to type your information into the system to make sure people aren’t trying to screw us over and just get a free tax day.
- **Writing a check?** Please have it filled out before we ring your stuff up. My mom used to

get her check ready before we even went into the store. She would leave the total blank, of course, until she knew what the total was, but it was a lot faster to just have to write the totals in on the check than having to do that *and* fill out all the other stuff while people have to wait in line behind. It was a good idea she had and I recommend everyone do it. And, please, to make your checkout time is faster, and to do us a favor, make sure your checks have your phone number on them, and have your driver's license ready.

- **Have your money ready.** If you want to make sure you pay with exact change, please have your coin purse or a handful of change ready to count. Please have your bills easily accessible. No one wants to have to wait while you dig inside your purse to find money. We already covered this, so please review that section if you're still unclear.

No Debating

“Like, omg, the president is *so* stupid.”

Keep your Religious and/or Political thoughts to yourself. Why people want to try and debate with cashiers and other associates is beyond me. They don't know these people, yet they go up and talk to them like nothing they say will be offensive. If you absolutely believe the cashier is interested in debating with you, then ask them first if they like talking about these subjects, and find out what side they're on. Then *cautiously* debate with them, don't just start throwing harsh accusations around or declaring your love for a certain political party as if you're standing on a mountain and shouting it out.

People just start rambling about their love or hatred for the current President, or about Believers and non-Believers without knowing the person they're talking to. Most people I know, co-workers and friends, hate it when strangers try to start a debate with them.

If you want to damn the President or talk about why you do or don't believe in God, save it for

someone else. The grocery store is *not* your debate class. That's what groups and the **intarwebz** is for.

Don't Be a Comedian. Don't Be a Magician

How 'bout I shove that magic coin up your....

If you have a joke or magic trick...we probably don't care. Harsh, I know, but we don't know you and didn't ask to be shown a trick or told a joke. If we wanted any of that, we would go to a club or anywhere else they entertain that kind of stuff.

We get people every day who think they're funny. The classic line "Are you working hard or hardly working" followed by a laugh that resembles Santa's *ho ho ho!* gets really old. Seriously, people...like we've never heard that one before.

We have one older gentleman who comes into the store every week or so, and each and every time he comes in, he brings out this "magic" coin and starts flipping it in the air and asks "Do you know what this is?"

Now, the first time he did this, I was polite, smiled, and asked, "What is it?"

“It’s a woman’s coin! Now you see it,” he does something that makes the coin disappear, “now you don’t! Ha ha ha! Do you get it?”

Though I found it slightly offensive considering I’m a woman and I don’t feel the need to spend money like it’s going out of style like that (in fact, I’m a tight-ass who hates spending money), I laughed. I humored him. I was beyond nice, probably annoyingly so.

Harmless old man, yes. Lonely? Probably so. But, this guy does this *same* trick *every* time he comes into the store. It would be tolerable if he did something different, but it’s the *same* trick. All the time. Over and over. See the redundancy? See how it would be annoying?

So please, save it for the kiddos, save it for your friends and family, save it for the corner to entertain passersby. But leave your poor cashiers and other sales associates alone after you’ve already shown them once.

No Whistling

This ain't Mayberry.

- **For your cashiers.** We've covered this already, but I thought I'd reiterate its importance. We are not dogs; do not whistle for us like you'd whistle for a dog.
- **For your entertainment.** You're not one of the seven dwarves, and even if you were, you aren't working. Sure it may be calming to whistle a merry tune to yourself, but it's annoying to those who are around you and have to listen to it, too. Save it for when you're alone.

No Singing

I don't care if you *do* think you're the next Kelly Clarkson.

This goes along with the whistling for your enjoyment. Our store is not your own personal American Idol. Only 1 in 10 of you has even a *tolerable* voice. The rest of you are horribly off-key and have a voice that sounds like a cat being skinned alive. Do not subject the rest of the store to your wailing, please. You will not be discovered at the Dollar Store. We do not have agents in disguise. Save it for the shower.

Stop Abusing the Service Bell

The bell has feelings too.

Not every store has one anymore (for good reason). But you know what I'm talking about. Those little silver bells that sit on the counter at the checkout that you can "ding" if someone isn't there to serve you right away? Thank God my current store doesn't have one, but my old store did. Oh, the horror...I still have nightmares.

People would come up to the counter and *ding!* “Hello-ooo?” they would call in an annoyed voice because they had waited...FIVE SECONDS! (Oh no!) without service!

I would hear the bell and start walking to the register. They would wait two more seconds and then *ding! ding! ding!* Over and over...and over. Even when they see you coming, they *still* keep ringing it! Or you’d come up and find a small child ringing it over and over with a grin on their face that indicated they knew they were torturing you and *liked* it. Little sadistic hell spawn. And the parents would be a) ignoring it (how is that possible?!) or b) be laughing it up.

“Isn’t little Joshy so cuuute?” the proud mama would say.

And, of course, we can’t be rude.

“Ah, yeah! He’s wonderful, ma’am!”



smilemile

Seriously, folks. It only needs to be rang once. In some rare cases, twice. But wait at least thirty seconds in between rings. And when you see us walking towards you, *stop hitting the button*.

Most retail workers are already insane (it's a side effect after about six months or so of working and gets worse every year, sadly), but incessant ringing of the service bell will make us go more insane than we already are. Bell abusers make us want to take the bell and shove it in their mouth, and then give them a good slap upside the head for good measure.

Put All Your Crap on the Counter

And then kindly step away.

Do not hand us your items one at a time. Place all your things on the counter (but careful not to overload if you have a big order) and let us handle the rest. Slowly handing us each and every item is not only inconvenient, it slows us down and annoys the people behind you.

This happens every now and then but my most memorable experience is the guy who had probably

30 items in his cart and not only wanted to hand me every one of them, but to also tell me how to bag each item. I had a growing line so I was displeased, but I, of course, couldn't be rude and had to let him finish his endeavor and annoying instructions.

No Means “No”

I can get ya a dictionary if you still aren't sure.

This has been covered as well, but allow me to elaborate more since this incident fits more into the annoying category than in the rude category.

If you come into the store and ask for a certain item and my response is “No, I'm sorry we don't carry that” just accept it. Move on with your life; you will be okay, I promise. Do not look at me like I'm stupid. And do not assume my sex has anything to do with a lack of knowledge for the product in question.

Now, if I seem unsure, and my response goes something like “Uh...hum...I'm not sure...no, I don't think so” then by all means, question me. Describe the object. Use hand gestures to help. Ask someone else. But if I give you a quick, flat-out “No” you can

pretty much guarantee that I know what I'm talking about.

Most of the time, the people who do this are men who want to know where a "manly" product is and they think that, because you're a woman, you don't know what they're talking about. Like propane for instance.

I had a guy ask if we carry propane and I said right away "No, we don't" because I know for a fact that we don't. And he gives me this "you're a dumb woman" look and starts to describe propane and asking "are you sure?"

Then there are the people who say in a whiny tone "Are you suuuuure? I *really* need it."

Oh hey! I didn't know you *really* needed it. Let me pull it out of my patooty and give it to you right away. I'm so sorry, customer; I didn't realize you were *speshul*.

Moving? Get Your Own Boxes

Stop being cheap.

I know it's a pain in the arse to move. I grew up an Air Force Brat; we moved a lot. Sometimes we moved ourselves, and no, we didn't buy our boxes. But back then you could go behind a place of business and snag boxes from their dumpsters.

You can't do that at very many places anymore because most places recycle the cardboard instead of throwing it away. This means that people come inside and ask if we have any boxes to spare.

This wouldn't be that big a deal if our boxes were easily accessible and it didn't make a huge mess to go through them. At my store, we have to break down all the boxes and stack them neatly in empty rolltainers. If someone comes in asking for boxes, we then have to go through all the rolltainers, making a mess of the neatly stacked piles.

It takes probably 10-20 minutes just to go through the boxes and find all the types and sizes that the customer needs, and then it takes another 20 minutes trying to clean it all up. That's 40 minutes out

of our work day. I could have stocked a whole rolltainer of chemicals in that time.

If you can afford it, please, please, please, just buy the boxes that U-Haul offers.

