

Thought for the day – 3

‘Encourage your customers to complain’

What?

Actually invite complaints?

Certainly!

Remember: only about a quarter of customers at the very most who are unhappy with you will actually let you know. The rest will let all their friends know about it and start buying from someone else. However, if you could encourage this missing 75 per cent to bring their problems straight to you, you would have a chance to solve them and you would probably keep their custom.

Don't fool yourself that just because people don't complain they're happy.

Try this exercise: ask ten different people to name an example of poor or indifferent customer service or salesmanship that they have experienced in the last ten years. When they have finished describing their example, ask them simply, 'What did you do about it? Did you complain?', the answer for most of them will probably be 'Nothing'.

How do you increase complaints? Put comment cards everywhere, free phone numbers on everything and talk to customers, ex-customers and non-customers at every opportunity. Make opportunities – hang around – phone them – write to them – anything – just get more complaints.

Oh yes, and act on whatever those complaints tell you and don't forget to say 'thank you' to customers who do complain – consider it as free management consultancy!

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This thought has been taken from Graham's book 'Companies don't succeed, people do!' Graham delivers outstanding sales training – click [here](#) for details of some of his programmes.

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