



27 Creating commitments to your customers

What is a commitment statement?

A commitment statement is a simple expression of the promises you make to your customers about what you are going to do for them if they use your service. A commitment statement will normally be no more than one page of clearly articulated points about your business and the value you offer. It could be expressed in any number of different ways. Here are some example headline introductions.

- The secrets of x Business's great service.
- The top ten reasons to use x.
- The seven reasons our customers love us.
- Our special commitments to you are...

Why is it important?

It is important to capture the essence of what you offer your customers. Business owners often walk on water for their customers but never tell a soul about it. Your commitment statement is a way of communicating all that is really special about your service. Your statement will highlight what matters to your customers and is most likely to motivate them to buy from you. Once you have articulated and communicated your promises, consistent delivery is vital.

Your challenge

Your challenge will be to dig deep and find out what your commitments actually are in the real world. Your satisfied customers know what they are, but do you? You can be so close to your own business that you can end up taking the things you do for your customers for granted.

Your challenge will be to extract from the people that use your service what it is that they really value. You will need to recall conversations with customers when they appeared particularly pleased with something you did for them. Find testimonials and thank you letters and read them. Notice what stands out. Remind yourself of some of the problems your customers have had and how specifically your service has provided the solution.

What makes a commitment statement successful?

Your commitment statement must be genuine and expressed in a way that ensures your customers believe in you. Each statement needs to be honest, real, deliverable and meaningful to your customers. You must convey value quickly and simply. Your commitments should solve problems for your customers and provide answers to the questions they have inside their heads before they buy from you.

Your customers need to be able to look over your list of commitments and think ‘yes’ I want to do business with these people. If they do that, then you have been successful.

Sample commitment statements

Car service garage with onsite car parts retail outlet

The secrets of x’s great service.

- We are completely honest and truthful with you.
- We find solutions for your individual vehicle problems.
- Our knowledge of what is required can save you money.
- You get a quick and simple explanation.
- If we haven’t got the part we will source it or make it.
- All car parts are tried and tested so we know they work.
- We deliver to our trade customers quickly.
- Car service – we will pick you up and drop you home locally.
- If you need help at short notice – we jump!
- You get modern technology with old fashioned values.
- You can rely on us 110%.
- We care about doing our absolute best for you.

A virtual personal assistant

Seven good reasons to use our service.

- We set you free from the paperwork pile.
- You get the expertise of an experienced PA at a fraction of the cost.
- We do the detail – you do what you are good at.
- We keep the high standards that your customers expect.
- As perfectionists getting your job done right is a must.
- We listen and respond to your priorities.
- We always seek the best solution for you.

CREATING A COMMITMENT STATEMENT – SPECIAL RESPONSE CHECKLIST

- ▶ Make a list of all the special things you do for your customers that you don't tell anyone about.
- ▶ Ask your staff to do the same.
- ▶ Choose some of your best regular customers and conduct a short telephone survey. Choose a person to conduct the survey who is able to extract from your customers the essence of what motivates them to use your business. Here are some sample questions:
 1. What do you expect when you use a service like ours?
 2. What would make it exceptional in your opinion?
 3. What are some of the reasons you use our service?
 4. What motivated you to use our service in the first place?
 5. What problems have we solved for you?
 6. What do you think we do really well?
 7. In terms of continuing to use a service like ours, what is most important to you?
- ▶ Use this information to create a list of up to ten major benefits.
- ▶ Be succinct and honest.

How to use this information

Once created you can integrate your customer commitment statement into your

- website
- sales brochure
- sales letter
- post sales package
- banners or posters at exhibitions
- sales conversations with customers.

***Think customer commitment statement
and shout about your values***