



9 Seeing your business through the customers' eyes

What does this mean?

If you want to influence your customers you have to understand and relate to them. When you see through your customers' eyes you experience the world from a different perspective. Imagine you have taken your customers' glasses and you are looking at your business through those lenses. What do you see? Do you suddenly see it all differently? You should. Many business owners find this exercise extremely difficult to do. Be careful that you don't get so close to your own business by running it day-to-day that you stop being able to see things from your customers' point of view.

Why this is important

It is important to switch perspectives from time to time. Making decisions about shop layout, website design, customer communication processes and more becomes a lot easier when you are able to imagine yourself as the customer. You will avoid the classic pitfalls that many people make when they make elements of their service over complicated and confusing. Most people these days want things simply, quickly and easily. If it is complicated, slow or difficult your potential customers will go somewhere else. This is especially true of the internet age which has brought with it choice and speed. Very few have the patience to wait.

Your challenge

Your challenge will be to spend the time taking a look at your business through your customers' eyes and maintain this perspective for long enough to gain some valuable insights.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO? – SPECIAL RESPONSE CHECKLIST

- ▶ Take some time out and close your eyes.
- ▶ Think about one of your typical customers.
- ▶ Describe that person to yourself.

What are they like?

How old are they?

What typically do they do each day?

What is important to them?

What are they looking for when they consider buying x?

- ▶ Now imagine yourself as this person coming along to your business or finding you on the internet.

What do you see?

What is your first impression?

What do you feel?

- ▶ Check out every individual aspect of your business from this perspective. You can enter your website as a customer, you can use your service as a customer, you can pretend to have a complaint as a customer. You can look at your advertising – any number of things. Look at what goes on in your business through your customers' eyes.
- ▶ Note down the things that you see.
- ▶ Try seeing through the eyes of a number of different types of customers.
- ▶ Notice what is different and what is similar.

How to use this information

You can use this information to make changes to your business operations and your marketing. If you do, make sure that you monitor the results of those changes. Notice the impact that they have on your customers. Take time out to switch perspectives as often as you can. It is a skill that you can develop and one that is very useful to your business. Many top business entrepreneurs are very good at this. Think about Richard Branson for example. He regularly takes time out to see his businesses through his customers' eyes.

Think customers' eyes and see more