Your **Customer Retention** Experts

9 COMMON DIFFICULT CUSTOMER CONVERSATION MISTAKES

(AND HOW TO AVOID THEM)

Mistake #1

Losing focus/getting sidetracked on other issues

Identify the one main issue you want to discuss.

Your main issue could be falling usage rates, low adoption, or low engagement.

During the conversation, stick with your one main issue, even if the customer wants to talk about something else. Let them know you want to address this issue first and that you will address their issue after.

Mistake #2

Being unclear or vague

Before the meeting, write out the one main issue you'd like to discuss and the reasons why.

If you find you're being unclear or vague at any point, you can quickly glance at your notes and remind yourself of the reasons why you wanted to discuss the one main issue.

Mistake #3

Not confirming the customer’s view

The mistake is to move from one part of the discussion to another without confirming you understand the customer’s view.

Write a note to remind yourself to confirm that you fully understand the customer’s view on what you just discussed before you move onto another part of the discussion.

Mistake #4

Giving your opinion too early

If the customer asks your opinion before you've fully explored the issue and you've confirmed the customer's view, say
"I'll share my thoughts with you before we end our conversation, but right now, let's keep exploring."

If you already gave your opinion, you could always say something like
"I'm sorry. Sometimes I get ahead of myself. Let's keep exploring before I give my opinion."

Mistake #5

Not using an intro statement

Ideally, your intro statement should include:

1. a quick greeting
2. a brief statement about the one main issue
3. a specific example that illustrates the issue
4. clarification of what's at stake if the issue isn't resolved
5. how you contributed to this issue
6. your wish to resolve the issue
7. an invitation for the customer to respond

Mistake #6

Failing to check in with the customer's feelings

You can ask something simple like

"How do you feel about what we've discussed so far?" or "**What are your thoughts about how this conversation is progressing?"**

The risk in failing to ask the customer their feelings is that they may walk away from the conversation more upset than when they entered.

Mistake #7

Doing most of the talking

Use your intro statement to help calm your nerves when the meeting starts.

Over time, the intro statement will become a feedback loop to help you remember to calm down and focus. This is one of the benefits of using it.

You can also post notes on your computer or in a notebook to help remind you to take a few breaths to calm your nerves.

Mistake #8

Not watching the time

#1. Rushing to get to a solution

Use the intro statement to set the tone.

Take a breath, calm down, and slow the meeting pace by asking additional questions or by checking in with the customer's feelings.

#2. Running out of time

Set a timer with a 15 minute warning to help you know to wrap up shortly.

Mistake #9

Stop talking

STOP TALKING

If you just asked the customer a question, give them time to respond.

You can practice stopping talking during regular customer calls, with colleagues, with family members, or with friends.

It's uncomfortable at first, but over time you'll see how powerful letting in some silence can be.

Want more details?

Check out the companion article to this guide.

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