

CUSTOMER SERVICE: FAIL!

A few weeks back, I went to the Dhanmondi (Rd 2) branch of one of the most reputed international banks. As it was quite early in the morning, there were very few customers and most of them were at the transaction centre. We had some work in the customer service department and as usual, we took a coupon and waited for our turn. But to our surprise, there was only one customer there and only one of the staff members was attending to him. The other staff were not doing any work, but rather, they were chatting with each other and laughing. After some time, one of them got up from her place and then started walking around and enquiring about household affairs of another staff, while the other one got up and left, without even caring about the people waiting for them! We waited for a few more minutes and then my father got up to ask the reason as to why they were neglecting their duties and making their clients wait when they were not doing anything else other than chatting and whiling away their time. He threatened to complain to their senior officials. On top of that, it was 11 in the morning, but the branch manager had not come in yet! Just as my father started to complain, the staff members got back to their desk and asked us to line up again. These people, who are supposed to provide customer service, are, in one way, harassing the people and testing their patience. Why do we really need to shout and point out to these people, who are quite well educated, in order to get the service we deserve? What really is the use of the education and manners when they are not sincere about their job and don't feel the need to fulfill their duties properly?

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Service Feedback DISGRACEFUL

A few weeks ago I went to a boutique in Gulshan 2 with my mother-in-law who happens to be a renowned singer. During that visit, the salesgirls fawned over us and claimed I could choose anything in the store and they would alter it to my size or re-make it if necessary. Pleased with their amazing service, I ordered a *kameez* for myself which they promised to alter and have ready as soon as possible. They said I could pay a small advance and make the full payment when I pick it up later, which is the policy for most boutiques. When I returned to pick up my *kameez* last week, it seemed I had walked into a completely different store. It looked the same, the salesgirls were the same, but the attitude was completely different. Without my celebrity mother-in-law, it appeared they didn't have much interest in me. My *kameez* had not been altered properly and when I asked why, they said "It's meant to be worn like this;" a fact she failed to mention previously. I remained polite and requested that she make the changes I asked for and asked to look at a few more clothes.

It seemed however that they had a problem altering anything I chose, saying uninterestedly, "It will be difficult to change this;" or "The design will be ruined if we alter this;" all the while making me feel extremely uncomfortable and unwelcome. Deliberately ignoring them, I chose three more *kameezes* and insisted they alter them. When I asked how much advance I need to pay, one of them said derisively, "You still have to pay for the one you ordered last time." When I pointed out that they had not altered it yet and that I would pay for it when it's ready, they said, "It's against our store's policy to accept an advance, our customers always pay in full so you must pay for everything you ordered now." Surprised, I asked why they allowed me to pay an advance the last time and they said, "That was different, your mother-in-law bought a lot of expensive clothes last time. Please pay the full amount which comes to Tk_____ or atleast 50 percent. Do you have it?" Shocked, I reached for my visa card (there was a big sign on the front door that said they accept visa and master cards), and seeing this, one of the salesgirls said "*Eije arekta problem, cash aney nai*" (Here's another problem, she didn't bring cash). This was a bit much for me to handle I cancelled my new orders, gave them a piece of my mind and stormed out of the store, without a word of apology from any of them. Sadly, this lack of proper salesmanship is a common problem in this country. Business owners fail to have proper training for their staff to make sure they act professionally and be attentive to all customers alike, which is an integral part of having a successful franchise.

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