

## What Is Customer Excellence?

*Excellence:*

*The fact or state of [excelling](#); superiority; eminence.*



There is a lot of talk about excellence in the marketplace today, but how many people have stopped to think about what it means to be excellent. According to

the definition above, it is the state of excelling, superiority or eminence.

It means you are the best at what you do. Being the best is difficult, staying the best in today's competitive marketplace can seem impossible.

To have enduring excellence, you must outperform your competition every day.

Why does your competition want your spot? They want it because the leader in any industry or segment will always have outsized margins and returns. Why do you think Jack Welch only wanted to stay in industries where General Electric could be #1 or #2? That is where all the profit is!

Now that we've defined excellence, let's define Customer Excellence. Customer Excellence means you are the best at making your customers extremely happy about working with you. It means your customers love you more than anyone else in your industry. Your customers seek you out and tell their friends about you. In their eyes, you are the best.

Let's look at the airline industry. It's not a loved industry and it is horribly unprofitable. But there is one shining light in the airline industry – Southwest Airlines. Southwest recently celebrated its 45th consecutive year of profitability.

How does Southwest do it? I wrote a detailed answer to that question in [another blog](#), but delivering excellent customer service is the key driver of their success.

To see the difference between Southwest and their competitors you only need to look at the Net Promoter Scores of Southwest compared to their industry.

The Net Promoter Survey asks customers how likely they are to recommend a product or service to their friends and colleagues. You'd expect the airline industry to score right up there with cable companies. But the industry has some bright lights. Guess who is at the top?

Here is a sampling of the most recent Net Promoter Scores for the airline industry.

- Southwest - 62
- JetBlue – 59
- Delta – 41
- United – 10
- American Airlines - 3

Southwest's score is 50% higher than its closest major competitor (Delta). The Net Promoter Score is a terrific single indicator of customer satisfaction and engagement. The higher your score, the more your customers are telling their friends and family they must experience what you are selling.

Those customers and the people they refer are less price sensitive and buy more often.

What is the value of customer excellence to your bottom line? Here are a few examples:

- British Gas decreased bad debts by 90% and increased growth rates by 30% by moving their Net Promoter Score from 45 to 75.
- Credit Card giant MBNA increased profits 16X by reducing customer defections by 10%.

- For every 1% increase in repeat buyers, revenues can increase by 10%.

And don't forget about forgiveness! One study found that 64% of promoters (those who rate the company a 9 or 10 on the survey) were very likely to forgive the company for making a mistake. Only 11% of detractors would do the same.

We all make mistakes. We all need raving fan customers. Give the Net Promoter Score a try in your organization and see what it can do for you.

If you'd like some help with the process, give me a call at 229-244-1559 or head over to our [Resource Page](#) and check out our free tools to help you get started.

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