

VIDEO 1: WHY IS CUSTOMER DELIGHT SO IMPORTANT?

Welcome to Inbound Certification class number twelve - The Pillars of Delight. My name is Mark and I lead the HubSpot Academy team.

This is the final class in the Inbound Certification. Today we will be discussing why delight is so important to creating lasting relationships with your customers. Let's begin by discussing why delight is so important for any type of business.

Take a look at the inbound methodology. The inbound methodology shows us that customers who are delighted will become promoters of your business, and can help you attract more strangers to your business.

Why would you tell a friend about a product or business? Why do you promote a business or product? Take a moment to think about that.

I bet it's because of trust. If you establish trust with people, chances are good that they will recommend your product or service to their friends and family.

The great thing about trust is you can build it at every phase of the Inbound Methodology. In fact, you can start to build trust from the very first moment someone interacts with your business.

Most businesses spend the majority of their money and time on acquiring customers, rather than serving their customers. As a result, customers sometimes feel left out or unappreciated. You know the feeling: when a business thinks of you as a number, doesn't want to spend time helping you solve your problem or answer your question. It breaks my heart.

What's crazy about this is that it costs far more money to attract a new customer than it does to retain an existing customer. Let me share a story with you...

My wife and I live in a town about 45 minutes North of Boston. About two years ago, we had a reservation at one of our favorite restaurants, Brine, at 8:30 on a Friday night. Unfortunately when we arrived our table wasn't quite ready for us. Now, nobody likes being in this situation -- it's disappointing because A, you made a reservation for this very reason, and B, you're probably pretty hungry and just want to sit down to enjoy a nice meal.

When we arrived, we were greeted by the general manager, Bryanna. The restaurant was packed and she said our table wasn't quite ready and we'd have to wait about 20 minutes longer than expected. However, having thought ahead, she saved us two seats at the bar.



Once we sat at the bar, we were greeted by Neil, the bartender. Neil began to educate us about Brine's new drink specials and how they were made. We placed a drink order, got a few oysters and ordered two appetizers to tide us over.

Bryanna came back over at about 8:40 and mentioned that the table was still finishing their dessert. Naturally, she was very apologetic and asked if we needed anything. We let her know that everything was fine and that Neil was taking great care of us.

Around 8:45, Brine's executive chef, Corey, came out of the kitchen. Remember, it's 8:45 on a Friday night and the restaurant is packed. Despite this, he spent close to five minutes with us, discussing where his favorite ingredients were grown and educating us about his new menu.

He went back into the kitchen at around 8:50, just as our two appetizers were brought out. Much to our surprise, there was a third appetizer as well. Neil mentioned that the chef had heard about the wait and decided to prepare a custom appetizer that wasn't even on the menu.

Bryanna came back right after we started sampling our appetizers, made sure we were enjoying the food and gave us an update: the couple was finally paying their bill. She asked if we needed anything else. At this point we had basically forgotten about the wait, and were having a fantastic time with Corey and Neil.

We finished the apps around 9:05 and Bryanna approached us one more time. To compensate for the long wait, she offered us a champagne toast. We graciously accepted and at 9:10, a whole 40 minutes after our original reservation, we were seated at our table.

But it wasn't the table we reserved. No, it was an even better table -- a very spacious one with great views of downtown Newburyport.

So why was this experience so powerful and relevant to delight? Well, Brine solved our primary goal of eating a delicious meal and then exceeded our expectations by solving a problem that could have ended up with us deciding to eat elsewhere.

In this situation, they followed the three pillars of delight flawlessly. They helped us achieve our goal, solve our problem, and then exceeded our expectations by providing additional recommendations, education, and world-class service. Everyone at the restaurant was working to create a delightful experience for us.

Now the sad thing is that only 8% of companies surveyed said that they currently provide a 'very integrated' customer experience. In a perfect world, everyone would work to create delightful experiences for their audiences, whether they're customers or not.

Tony Hsieh, the CEO of Zappos, says, "Customer service shouldn't just be a department, it should be the entire company." And he's 100% right. Every one of your team members needs to

understand this. It doesn't matter if you're in product, marketing, sales, customer support or anywhere else, building trust and creating delight is everyone's job. It needs to be a team effort and it should be in the fabric of your organization's culture.

But it's not all bad news. More businesses today are recognizing that customer delight is a strategy that they need to focus on. In a recent survey, 58% of companies said that they are just now developing a strategy for delivering an integrated customer experience.

What does this mean for you and your organization?

It means that you have a huge opportunity in front of you. An opportunity to get everyone at your organization properly trained and focused on delighting customers. There's a massive competitive advantage to be had. So, why is that?

65% of consumers surveyed said that they've cut ties with a brand over a single poor customer service experience. In this case, that's 650 out of a thousand people! Spend a moment thinking about that. We've all been there before.

Here's a quote that really encapsulates why your organization should be focused on customer delight.

Steve Cannon, President & CEO of Mercedes-Benz USA says, "Customer Experience is the new marketing. If you don't have a passionate, committed executive leadership team ... you won't get out of the gate. It's the most important thing we do. We have the most demanding customers on the planet. Customer Experience better be at the top of your list when it comes to priorities in your organization."

That is why delight is key to the world of inbound. Focus on building trust and building out that customer experience.

In the next video, using Steve's advice, you'll learn how to create great customer experiences using the three pillars of delight. Stay tuned.

VIDEO 2: HOW TO DELIGHT YOUR CUSTOMERS.

Delighting your customers is a critical stage of inbound because it's a way for you to take those customers and transition them into promoters.

But how do you delight your customers? It all starts with the three pillars of delight.

Why do you promote a product or service? It all boils down to you trusting that product or service. Therefore, step one is to build trust through every interaction you have with people.

Trust is what will help you retain your customers, build loyalty, and create long-lasting relationships.

We think of customer delight as being something that only happens post-sale. That's false. Sure, it's true that it becomes even more important after someone becomes a customer. At that point, there's more risk or reward to be had.

Ideally, you should be focused on building trust during every interaction you have with a person. Are you focused on building trust pre-sale and post-sale? How are you going to establish and build trust throughout the entire Inbound Methodology? You need to embrace and follow the three pillars of delight.

The three pillars are: innovation, communication, and education. Your entire organization should embrace and follow the pillars to create and sustain delight.

Let's start with first pillar: Innovation. Change is better than the status quo. You should be innovating to serve people with the products or services that they need to achieve their goals and solve their problems. Innovation is applicable to everything from your products or services, to the experiences and the interactions that create your customer's perception.

Innovation doesn't necessarily mean huge breakthroughs. You just need to be focused on improving all of the aspects that make up a customer's experience. From the marketing or sales experiences to the product and support experiences. Inspire and teach your team why it's always their job to innovate, no matter what their role is. Everyone should be challenging their job's status quo.

Take a moment and think about how you're currently innovating to better serve your customers with the best possible experiences and products.

The second pillar that you need to embrace and follow is communication. Personal communication is always better than impersonal. You should be thinking about how to foster personal communication throughout a person's experience, whether they're a customer or not.

Personal communication is critical in helping you build trust with people.. Think of yourself as a teacher, facilitator, and advisor. You play all of those roles and more when trying to help someone understand why they should buy your product or how to use your product.

And finally the third pillar of delight: education. Empowering people is better than ignoring people. You should be educating people to grow their knowledge. Maybe it's education about your industry or product.



Use content as one of your primary educational tools. Think about how you currently educate people. Do you provide enough education? Does the education you provide add value to their lives? Is everyone at your organization helping educate your customers in some way?

Remember, it's everyone's job to delight customers.

Developing education that helps people grow should be part of everyone's job at your organization. Managers should take time to talk to their team members about how they can be better at educating people.

Education is going to help you serve people with the right information to solve their problems, answer their questions, and help them reach their goals.

To further cement this point let's look at a quote from General John E Michel who is a Brigadier General serving the United States Air Force. He says, "If we all have a shared and beneficial outcome in serving our customer, we have a unified place where all our interests converge. Success is not defined by our own personal and business line goals; success is in the eyes of the customer."

The key, here, is, "success lies in the eyes of the customer."

Everyone at your organization should follow and understand how they can apply the pillars of delight, because a customer's experience and their long-term success is formed by every interaction.

An interaction could be a tweet, a phone call, the use of your product or service, or an email. If you think about it, there are probably tons of ways that people interact with you.. All of these interactions can help you build trust with people. These interactions could also be detrimental to your organization if your employees aren't focused on building trust. After all, it's much easier to lose trust than it is to build it.

According to this study, 82% of consumers say the number one factor that leads to a great customer service experience is having their issues resolved quickly.

How can you build trust during those interactions? By following this customer delight checklist. Using this checklist will help you resolve people's problems quickly and ultimately exceed their expectations.

Follow the customer delight checklist to ensure you solve all the person's problems quickly. Provide additional recommendations to exceed their expectations and, most importantly, don't forget to be yourself.



For example, a lawn care company received a call from a customer about their lawn being too long. A lot of rain fell that week, so they came over and cut the grass. The lawn looked phenomenal. But, the person who mowed the grass noticed that the customer also had an insect problem. In turn, they recommended an additional pesticide to prevent the grass from dying. Boom, now that's serving your customer. Pretty simple, right?

But that's all it takes. That's how you build trust and exceed people's expectations. Team members should be problem solvers.

Take a moment to think about the last time you had a problem and the person solving your problem effectively followed the points on the customer delight checklist. What did they do well, what did they do poorly?

Then think about when someone completely failed at following the checklist. Think about how much trust you lost with that business as a result of that interaction.

Add (at least) one self-assessment question within the how portion:

- Why are the three pillars of delight so important to embrace and follow?
- The pillars will help you understand how to best serve your customers
- The pillars will help your business build trust with people from the first to the very last interaction
- The pillars will teach you how to delight your customers
- They're not that important. You can delight people by just being friendly.

Start practicing and implementing the three pillars of delight and start changing the way that customers view you.

Next up, learn how to use the pillars and the checklist in more specific, tactical ways.

VIDEO 3: THE SEVEN CUSTOMER DELIGHT GUIDELINES.

Now there are seven guidelines to achieving customer delight. Let's go through each guideline one by one.

You might have noticed that the first three are about your team members. Why do you think that is?

Well, Simon Sinek states, "Customers will never love a company until the employees love it first."

In other words, happy team members will create happy customers. It will be much easier to build genuine trust with people if your team is happy.

Let's dive right in to the first customer delight guideline - delighting your team members. Step one is to build trust with your team so that they can build trust with your customers.

It all starts with hiring - your hiring methodology is critical to delighting your customers. Will this potential new team member fit into your organization's culture?

Your hiring methodology should test for these five things. The person's skills, their culture fit, their beliefs, their past experiences, and their ideas.

Take a moment to think about this right now. Do you have a strong set of interview questions that test for those five things?

Take time to create a set of interview questions that can gauge a candidate's fit for your organization's culture. Ask if they currently use your product or service. Ask why they want to join the company. Ask about their own personal values. Have the candidate meet with multiple people at your organization. Create a workplace culture immersion experience for them..

If possible, get the candidate to experience part of the role before you actually hire them. Have them do a task with a group of current team members. Have them write some code or do a mini-project related to the role they're applying for. Have them take a customer service call while you oversee them. The idea here is to get them to experience what it's like working at your organization.

Culture shapes and creates all of the interactions that happen inside and outside of your organization.

Your hiring methodology is going to help you create happy team members from the start and will develop them into even happier team members. Hiring could have severe negative effects for your organization if you're not focused on hiring the right people.

You need to build a repeatable, consistent hiring process. Hire for character, train for skill.

The second customer delight guideline you should follow is: educating team members.

It doesn't matter if you're in product, marketing, sales, or customer support. It's everyone's job to build trust with people. You need to make sure you properly train your team so they understand why trust is key.

Remember, every small interaction can make a difference. Over time, all of the small interactions will create the larger experience for a customer, and every interaction can either build or destroy trust.

You need to train your team so they're able to build trust with people with a good amount of autonomy. You really shouldn't micromanage a team of any size, let alone a team of 20, 200 or 2,000 people. Trust that you hired your team correctly, and then get out of their way.

HubSpot uses many other tools to educate our team members. If I had to pick the most important item on this list, I'd pick the last one. Everyone at your business should be educating everyone else.

Recently, car manufacturer Mercedes took a step to do just that. They determined that their team was lacking in education, about the cars, the brand, and history. To fix this, they gave team members the ability to drive a Mercedes for a period of time, attend Immersion Sessions to learn about the company and its rich history, and more. As a result, team member engagement has gotten much better and team members are looking at the business through a different set of eyes.

Let's move on to the third guideline, empowering team members.

One of the most effective ways to empower your team is by developing a set of defined principles that will help them operate autonomously.

Develop principles that your team members live by. Principles create autonomy and empower people to make decisions on their own. You should constantly reinforce your organization's principles to your team to help reinforce the fact that team members should always try and solve for the customer first.

Do you have a set of principles that your team believes and follows?

I want to share with you the HubSpot Academy team principles as an example. The Academy team has seven principles that we all believe in and understand. We regularly take time to discuss the principles and how they apply to our work. We even use them to give feedback when one of us might not be doing our best.. By following the principles, we can easily ensure that we're creating the best possible interactions with our customers.

If you don't have a set of principles for your organization or team, I'd recommend you work with them to develop some. The key to successful principles is regularly reinforcing them through conversation and action, so that everyone is using them in their day-to-day.



The last part of the customer delight checklist is to just be yourself. Your team members are the faces of the business so let their personalities shine through. You hired them correctly so set them free. Trust your team and, in turn, they'll build trust with your leads and customers. If you don't trust your team, you'll end up micro-managing them and they'll be unhappy and they'll create unhappy customers.

They interact with most people day in and day out. They are the ones building trust with people at every interaction. Make sure they are empowered to solve for the customer and understand how to make them happy.

By understanding how to delight people, your team will be able to create magic moments for customers. So, what's a magic moment? Well, a magic moment is when a team member exceeds a person's expectations by doing something above and beyond a typical recommendation.

Let's look at an example. In November 2014 video hosting company Wistia ran a campaign called GoProWeek, dedicated to teaching people how to use the GoPro camera to create video.

Stephen, seen here, tweeted at Wistia expressing that he wished he owned a GoPro. What did Wistia do in response?

Well, they bought him a GoPro, made a video with it, and then shipped it to him as a gift. Now I know what you're probably thinking: Wistia did this all for the Twitter publicity. Well, you'd be wrong: Steven only had a couple hundred followers. So was this about publicity, or delight?

For almost nothing, Wistia created a customer evangelist for life. That's all it takes. Wistia listened to their audience, took action, and delighted a customer. Easy, right?

Let's move on to the fourth customer delight guideline: listening.

To create lasting relationships and to build trust you have to listen to people; it's the best way to learn how to provide the best, personalized experience.

Use the 80/20 rule. Spend 80% of the time listening and spend 20% of the time talking.

The second step of good listening is acknowledging. Repeat back what the person just said to make sure you're both on the same page. By doing this, you'll confirm that you understand their needs. At this point you should also display some genuine empathy. The best way you can show this is by using the product yourself and really understanding and feeling the experience.

Social media monitoring is a great for listening to your leads and customers in a scalable, efficient way. You can listen for when people mention specific, key phrases or when people mention your organization or product.



Try to listen for things that will help you build trust. For example, imagine if someone were to Tweet, “Any tips to turn my lawn greener?.” A landscaper who is monitoring social media could respond to the person’s statement with some great suggestions. By doing this, the landscaper instantly builds some trust by answering the person’s question.

You should be measuring and tracking as many of these interactions as you can. Collect qualitative and quantitative data, pre- and post-sale, using manual and automatic methods.

Then, use that data to better understand how your organization can serve your customers through communication, education, or innovative product changes.

There are many ways you can listen, but why listen and collect data? Data improves how you execute the pillars of delight and ensures you’re always challenging the status quo.

I’d recommend you take a look at either Hively.co or Temper.io. They’re great tools that will help you collect data in an automated way and they’re fairly inexpensive. Use them to learn about your content, your website experiences, customer problems or any short answer question you’d like to ask people who engage with your content.

The fifth customer delight guideline is asking.

Go exploring with your customers. Ask questions to learn more about their problem or goal. Maybe you need to learn more about why they’re having trouble using your product, or maybe it’s because you want to know why they’re interested in purchasing from you.

As you further explore their situation I’d recommend you use open-ended questions, typically starting with who, what, where, when, why, and how. Asking open-ended questions will help you learn more about their problem or goal. And remember to ask follow-up questions to dig even deeper. Peel back that onion.

Take a moment to think about how much exploring you do when you sell or service your customers. Is it enough? Are you learning about their whole experience, or just getting to the quickest solution?

As you explore, pay close attention to verbal and nonverbal communication. Look for facial expressions, vocal rhythm, and body language. This will help you better understand the person’s problem or question. Remember to try and document all of these interactions, throughout the process.

These interactions can teach you a lot about your buyer personas, and will help you learn how to serve those people even better.



So you've spent time listening to the person you're trying to delight. You've asked them more questions to better understand their problem or goal. Now it's time to serve them.

Your business's number one priority should be to serve people. Serve everyone, from your website visitors to your team members. Serve people to help them reach their goal, overcome a problem or to just help them in the day-to-day. If you lead by serving others, they will serve you back.

As you've learned in previous classes, personas are incredibly important. Everyone at your business should be able to identify a lead or customer by persona.

Understanding your personas will make it even easier to delight people. Personas can help ensure that your solutions and recommendations are relevant and useful to your customers.

Spend a moment to think about whether or not you exceed your customers' expectations during most interactions.

Finally, the businesses who are the best educators will be the most successful.

Take some time to think about the businesses you love. Think about how much education those businesses provide. I bet the businesses that you love are inspiring you and empowering you with new, relevant, interesting information. The others, well, not so much.

Another great tool you should use to serve and delight people is content.

I'd highly recommend you explore how these five companies create content for their customers.

I'd like to highlight a couple of these businesses, starting with Williams-Sonoma.

Williams-Sonoma does a great job of creating useful content about the different products they sell. They have cooking guides, resources for all ages, and even featured executive chefs, and are clearly focused on educating and inspiring people.

Let's take a look at what Home Depot does to create content for their customers. Take a look at all of their fantastic educational videos, articles and ideas that help their customers maintain or improve their homes. They even have a site for professionals with content specific to their other buyer persona, contractors.

Both businesses are using content to build trust with the people that use or consume their products. They clearly embrace one of the pillars of delight: education.



One more content idea I'll share is to create customer stories. We do this on the Academy team and they're some of the most valuable pieces of content for our customers, but also for people interested in purchasing HubSpot.

HubSpot Academy customer stories are written by the customer directly, which makes them even more powerful and impactful when people read them. I suggest you try to take the same approach if you decide to publish customer stories. Try and get your customers to write them with you. We do some minor editing before the story gets published, but the customer typically does 80% of the work.

And finally, the seventh and final customer delight guideline, following up.

When was the last time a business failed to properly follow-up with you? How did that make you feel?

They might do everything right during the sales process, but when a business fails to follow-up with a customer, they risk losing the trust they've developed.

It's important to be sure that your organization focuses on resolving all of your customers' problems and supports the goals they're aiming to achieve. Also, be sure that your team understands why it's so important to follow-up and how they can use the second pillar of delight, communication, to ensure the person leaves each interaction with the right expectations.

Make sure you're on time, or better yet, early. Over deliver and get back to that customer the same day instead of the next business day. Expectation setting is very important to ensuring you're on-time. It's such a simple thing that can really help you build trust with each person interacting with your organization.

Sometimes you can use reciprocity to help you build even more trust during an interaction or right after an interaction. In this case, when we say 'reciprocity' we mean responding to one positive action with another. It's another tool to use to help you over deliver and create magic moments.

For example, when our customers write stories about their success with our product, we send them packages of fun stuff, like sunglasses, headphones, and leather-bound journals.

One of the most critical times to be on-time is right after someone becomes a customer. I recommend you create some sort of interaction that takes place after they purchase your product or service. One way to do this is with email workflows, where customers automatically receive a personalized email after they purchase. Or, you could set up a process where they receive some type of check-in by phone. You can imagine how that might help build more trust and lasting relationships with your customers.



One final way to follow-up with people and to collect data is to use surveys. As an example, HubSpot has a great integration with SurveyMonkey. It provides us with the ability to collect customer data and learn how we could improve our communication and customer education.

Surveys also teach us about how we can innovate our customer experience processes and our products to ensure we're focused on delight.

Your entire organization needs to understand that you have the opportunity to build trust during every small interaction you have with people. People won't remember every interaction they had with your organization or product, but they will remember the overall feeling it imprints on them.

It's not what you say, but how you make them feel that creates a lasting relationship.

And with that, we've come to the end of this class. It's time to start practicing and teaching others the seven guidelines for customer delight.

Use the guidelines, along with the pillars of delight, to stay focused on creating remarkable experiences that your customers will love.

As a result, people will trust that you're going to solve their problems and help them reach their goals.

Remember every single interaction, no matter how big or how small, is important. These are the interactions that will create and sustain long-lasting, memorable relationships with people. Relationships that people will remember and share.