

# 7 TIPS TO HANDLE UNHAPPY

## CUSTOMERS



Every restaurant has the occasional dissatisfied customer. Be prepared to handle the situation in a professional and caring way to keep their business and prevent negative word of mouth exposure that can easily spread twice as fast as positive experiences.

### Tip 1

#### Maintain a customer service mindset

Remain calm. Remind yourself a customer's frustration is with the product or service, not you personally.

### Tip 2

#### Listen to and acknowledge complaints

Allow a customer to explain him/herself fully before speaking. Afterwards, summarize the complaint. Ask questions for clarification and to demonstrate care and concern.

# 12 TO 1



*"It takes 12 positive experiences to make up for 1 unresolved negative experience."*



### Tip 3

#### Empathize and apologize

Validate a customer's concerns by expressing that you understand why they feel as they do, and apologize for the situation.



### Tip 4

#### Arrive at a solution

Either present a solution if you feel you know what can best serve their need, or ask the customer to identify a solution they find reasonable and acceptable.



### Tip 5

#### Offer and reinforce sincere thanks

Sincerely thank the customer for voicing their concern, and assure them you are actively working to resolve it. Go above and beyond – a free dessert or having the manager check in at the table shows you care.

### Tip 6

#### Keep the house calm

If a dissatisfied customer acts unruly, attempt to diffuse the situation by lowering your voice, slowing your speech and using positive body language to convey control. If the customer's behavior continues to escalate, enlist the manager. If you are or feel physically threatened, call the police.



### Tip 7

#### Monitor your business' online presence

Monitor your brand on social media, especially on review sites like Yelp that people rely on for recommendations. If a problem arises online, resolve it by taking steps similar to those you use in-house.

