

# Go Ahead...Make My Day!

In the real world, you will probably have to deal with a difficult customer at some point. Most of these people are nice at heart and don't get any big kick out of giving you a "bad hair day". In most cases, if they are upset, it is because they perceive they have been "wronged" and simply want a resolution. Most are feeling like victims, and they simply want to be heard. Many times, their disposition was created before they encountered you (personal problems or prior business interaction), and you are simply in the wrong spot at the wrong time.

**SCENARIO 1 :** Someone comes in to your business, gets in your face, and starts yelling at you. If you step over to the "dark side" with that customer and get angry back at them, you have now escalated the situation. You may now have two egos battling head to head with neither party wanting to back down. More than likely, you have probably drawn other customers and employees into observing the altercation, which makes it even harder for anyone to back down. No one wants to look wrong, or lose face in the eyes of other observers, so the chance for escalation grows dramatically.

This is a lose-lose situation that must be avoided at all costs.

**SCENARIO 2 :** Someone comes in to your business, gets in your face, and starts yelling at you. If you can influence their life by treating them with respect and empathizing with their concerns, anger, or frustrations; who wins? Everybody wins. I truly mean everybody, because not only do you and the customer come away winners, but other customers and your co-workers see how you handled the situation and observe a happy ending. No matter how much anxiety you have over angry or difficult customers, keep your ego out of it. There is only one way to handle challenges like this; you need to treat that customer like you would want to be treated.

Please pay close attention to this sentence: "*Treat a person as they are, and they will remain as they are. Treat a person as they could be, and they may become the person they should be.*" Basically, it says that if a customer has a bad hair day going on and you treat them like that, they're going to stay that way. Why on earth would they change? All you have done is to reinforce they have a right to act this way, because everyone around them is a jerk too. Forget how they're acting and treat them like you want them to be, because they may become the person they should be.