

Christ-centered customer service principles



These biblical principles provide the foundation for why customer service matters at HOPE International. We believe customer service is a key method of how we bear witness to Christ and His kingdom through our work.

1. We treat others as we like to be treated

We all like to be treated with respect and courtesy so we extend this treatment to our clients. With every customer service interaction, we “clothe ourselves” with compassion, kindness, and humility. We give clients our full attention, greeting them by name and putting aside distractions like phones or unrelated conversations with colleagues. Our behavior should show clients that we appreciate them and value them.

- **Matthew 7:12** - So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.
- **Colossians 3:12-14** - Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

2. We listen with love and seek to understand

We demonstrate the love of God by listening actively without interrupting or multi-tasking. We seek to understand instead of seeking to be understood, asking questions to understand the situation. We use locally appropriate body language to show we are listening, like eye contact, smiling, and other welcoming body language. Whenever possible, we listen and respond in clients’ preferred language.

- **James 1:19** - Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.
- **Proverbs 18:13** - If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.
- **Proverbs 18:2** - A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.

3. We empathize

We go beyond sympathy – having pity for someone else's misfortune - to empathize with the person and their situation. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. We seek to relate to our client’s feelings, for example, saying, “I’d be frustrated too.” When a client is frustrated, instead of responding with our own frustration, we try to recall a situation when we were upset with a company, and then act in the manner we would have wanted to be treated.

- **Galatians 6:2** - Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
- **1 Peter 3:8-9** - Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

4. We seek resolution for the person and the situation

We demonstrate care for the whole person in our interaction, recognizing that they are made in the image of God. Once we're aware of the clients' situation, we seek to resolve it quickly and rebuild the client's confidence in us and the organization. If we are unable to resolve the situation on our own, we quickly involve a manager or other staff who can help.

- **Philippians 2:1-4**- Therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but to the interests of others.
- **Matthew 5:41**- And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

5. We demonstrate humility and seek forgiveness when we're wrong

We recognize that there will be situations where we individually or as an organization made a mistake. In these circumstances, and in with sincerity, we apologize to the client. We then seek to resolve the issue quickly and reconcile our relationship with the client. We commit to offer better service in the future and thank them for being our client.

- **Philippians 2:5-8** - In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!
- **Proverbs 28:13** - Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

6. We seek to proactively meet our client's needs

The best customer service seeks to meet a need before it becomes a serious issue. Ask the client how they may be helped. Some customers do not have the audacity to seek for help. We should have a spirit of getting interested in the client's needs.

- **1 John 3:18** - Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.
- **Proverbs 3:27-28** - Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, "Come back tomorrow and I'll give it to you"— when you already have it with you.