An ear to the customer

Tune in—before, during and after the service delivery process—to enhance your customer retention and profitability.

by Ed and Aaron Wandtke

...A man went to his doctor complaining of poor hearing. The doctor took out a pocket watch and asked his patient if he could hear it ticking. "Yes," the man replied. The doctor went into the hallway. "Can you hear it now?" he asked. "Yes," said the patient.

The doctor moved to another room. "Can you hear the ticking now?"

"Loud and clear."

The doctor returned to the examining room. "There's nothing wrong with your hearing," he said, "you just don't know how to listen."

It's true of many people. They don't know how to listen.

As children, we were taught to "listen to others." But the older we became, the less we felt we had to listen to certain advice. Not until we've had a variety of unfortunate experiences do we begin to remember the importance of being a good listener.

The ability to listen well contributes much to human development. People do learn from mistakes and from trial and error, but many of the errors can be avoided if they learn to listen to people who have experienced similar situations.

The trade-off—When we spend our money, we expect good service or a good product in exchange for the money spent. Customers can inspect and use the product in exchange for the money spent. We expect good service or a good product in exchange for the money spent.

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