

# Building Empathy

**Purpose:** Review strategies for building empathy.

Empathy involves listening to and understanding a customer's feelings. This quality is an essential building block in developing and maintaining customer relationships.

## SkillBrief

Strategies for building empathy	
Relating Experience	By telling a customer about a situation you're familiar with and in which you experienced similar emotions, you show that your interaction is between equals and that you have some expertise in dealing with the issue. However, it's important to keep your story brief and your examples relevant.
Reflecting Emotion	Acknowledging the customer's bad feelings and the reasons behind them shows that you understand how the customer is feeling and why he's feeling this way. Reflecting a person's emotions in this way conveys warmth and understanding, and it defuses tension.
Normalizing Responses	Let the customer know it's normal to have these problems and feelings. If a customer is self-critical, or makes negative statements about herself, it's important to offer reassurance and affirmation. However, avoid making the customer feel as though she's just like everyone else and avoid telling stories about other identifiable customers, as this shows a lack of respect.

SkillSoft Course: Customer Service Fundamentals: Building Rapport in Customer Relationships

Topic: Understanding Your Customer's Feelings

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