

## 50 Things Your Customers Wish You Knew

By Sonia Simone

Some items on this list might seem cynical, but they're not. The fact is, it doesn't matter what kind of customers you have. I don't care if your customers are kidney donors or Zen masters or million-dollar contributors to your nonprofit organization. Each one of us has some less-than-loveable characteristics that tend to come to the forefront when we're in the role of customer.

If you knew, really knew, these 50 things about your customers, and acted accordingly, you'd gain their trust and even their love. After all, who doesn't want to be loved despite all our flaws and embarrassing insecurities? The better you understand both the noble and not-so-noble secrets in your customers' consciousness, the better you can serve them.

Here are 50 things your customers wish you knew: about them, about how they see you, and about your relationship.

1. I don't need you to be perfect, but I do need to know I can rely on you.
2. Telling me what you *don't* know makes me trust you.
3. It means a lot when you take the time to thank me for my business or a referral.
4. You don't need to do all that much to be a superhero. Just do exactly what you say you will do.
5. A friendly voice on the other side of the phone means more than you can imagine.
6. Your employees treat me about as well as you treat them.
7. I don't mind spending the money, as long as I feel I'm getting real value.
8. My life is really stressful. If you can reduce that stress, you become immensely valuable to me.
9. I want to tell you what would make this relationship better for me. Why don't you ever ask me?
10. I don't understand a lot of the messages you send me. Can you make them clearer?
11. My life is very complicated. If you make it easy for me to just buy a simple all-in-one package that I can use without learning anything, I'll take it and be grateful. (I'll even pay a premium for it.)
12. I want to trust you, but it's hard for me to trust anyone.
13. Once you've won my trust and loyalty, the truth is you can screw up once in awhile and I will forgive you. *If* I don't think you're taking me for granted, that is.
14. When I refer my friends and you give them exceptional service, that makes me look and feel smart. I love that.
15. I spend an awful lot of time being scared to death.
16. The wealthier I get, the more I like free stuff.
17. A lot of the time, I secretly feel like a lost little kid. I don't admit it, but I want to be taken care of.
18. I'm lousy at admitting I was wrong, but I respect you when you do it.
19. I like to get little goodies no one else is getting.
20. I don't understand how to use your Web site, but I can't admit that because it would make me feel dumb.
21. There's no worse feeling than feeling like I was suckered into trusting you. If I'm screaming at you or one of your employees, that feeling is probably behind it somewhere.
22. Our relationship isn't equal and it never will be.
23. I get crazy jealous if I think you love another customer more than you love me.

24. I don't have any interest in your excuses. In fact, I usually don't notice them at all, and if I do, they annoy me.
25. I find myself endlessly fascinating.
26. I hate salespeople, but I really like to buy things.
27. I only like to communicate over the phone/Web/mail and I hate when you try to make me communicate with you over the mail/phone/Web.
28. I want to buy your product, but I need you to help me justify it to myself.
29. There's something in my life I'm afraid of losing. If you can make me feel like you've protected it for me, my gratitude will be intense and eternal.
30. I'll give you anything you ask if you can help me not feel silly.
31. I want you to do the hard work for me. Even better if I can get all the credit.
32. I'd rather do it the convoluted hard way than learn something new.
33. I'd love to know something about your product that I could use to brag at a dinner party.
34. I have the attention span of a goldfish. Go too long without contacting me and I'll simply forget you exist.
35. Money is no object when it comes to my obsessions.
36. What you think you're good at is not what you're good at. Ask me, and I'll tell you what you do better than anyone else.
37. I like it when I feel like you're talking just to me.
38. It infuriates me when you answer the phone while I'm talking with you face-to-face.
39. Embarrassment scares me more than death.
40. I'm lazier than I would ever admit.
41. I'm more selfish than I would ever admit.
42. I'm more vain than I would ever admit.
43. I'm more insecure than I would ever admit.
44. Despite all that, I secretly think I'm a better person than most people. Help me believe that and we'll be fast friends.
45. I believe I deserve much more than I'm getting.
46. I want to tell you everything you need to know in order to sell to me, but I'm lazy. Make it easy enough and I will. (Especially if you flatter me a little.)
47. I don't know what I want most of the time. You need to figure it out for me.
48. I mostly daydream about making life better for myself, but I'll take action to keep from losing what's mine.
49. I believe that most of what's wrong in my life is someone else's fault. Let me keep that cozy illusion and I'll believe anything you say.
50. It really is all about me.

*Sonia Simone is the founder of Remarkable Communication -- [www.remarkable-communication.com](http://www.remarkable-communication.com) -- and is also senior editor for Copyblogger ([www.copyblogger.com](http://www.copyblogger.com)). There are lots of terrific tips for communicators on both sites. Consider bookmarking them or subscribing to her blog.*