

One Minute Marketer

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Words Mean Things



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Well of course they do, that's what they do, they mean stuff. The question is which words mean which stuff. Rush Limbaugh is often heard saying he possesses "talent on loan from God." A well-meaning caller suggested that God had given him that talent. Limbaugh, using only the title of this tip

as explanation, assured her that he meant what he said: "On loan from God." The caller was attempting to pay him a compliment, but Limbaugh was making the point that his talent was beyond mere mortal ability and therefore was simply being borrowed from on high. You do not have to agree with Limbaugh's politics, but he is certainly a successful wordsmith. I am not sure I agree with the statement about his talent, but I am sure Words Mean Things. Join me next Friday and learn the difference between a client and a customer, and what it can mean to your bottom line.

You may have noticed the word customer rarely, if ever, appears in my writings. Customer is defined by Webster's as "one that purchases some commodity or service." Whereas a client is defined as "a person who engages the professional advice or services of another." My question is simple: which would you like to be considered, a client or a customer? A restaurant for which I consult recently changed all instances of the word customer to guest, in everything from the annual plan to the Employee Training and Policies Manual. If you think these changes are purely semantics, I believe you are mistaken. If a restaurant staff thinks of you as a guest, they will treat you very differently than as merely "one that purchases a commodity."

Instill in everyone in your company the idea that you do not have customers, but instead clients, guests, or partners, and you will see a far-reaching, profit-generating change in the service your clients receive.



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