

# Internal Customers - Dealing With

## Do You Handle Internal Customers Differently From External Customers?

Yes, and no. The defusing techniques on this site and in our books apply to all customers, regardless of whether they are internal or external. However, there IS a difference.

### Internal Vs. External Customers: Internals Don't "Go Away"

There is one major difference between internals and externals. Most of us deal with the same external customer rarely. Our interactions with them occur far less frequently, and most of the time, we aren't in positions to build long term relationships, particularly if we are talking about business to consumer businesses.

The external customer isn't going away. You may have to deal with them on a daily, or at least a regular basis, so if you have unresolved issues, they can drag out for what seems forever, and there are additional negative outcomes to allowing that.

### The Main Differences In Your Priorities When Dealing With External Customers

Because those externals aren't going away, there are two things that are different.

- With internal customers you need to put a much higher priority on building a positive relationships over time. Your concern isn't just about "this time", but about "this time" and all the times in the future where you interact with the person. The reason is that if you have a poor relationship with an internal customer, it will "always be there", making it much harder and "costly" to deal with them. There's nothing worse than having an internal customer that you dread. So, you take a look at the bigger picture, both present and future.
- The second difference has to do with getting to the root causes of problems, and finding long term solutions to addressing problems with the internal. So, you have to work to identify how to solve any ongoing problems "once and for all", a kind of permanent fix. You invest more time in interacting with the internal customer to solve ongoing and recurring problems.

So those are the two major differences. Focus more on building long term relationships, and more on finding permanent solutions with internal customers.

Unique solution ID: #1131

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Last update: 2014-02-05 17:58