Chapter 9

Expressing “That’s Never Happened Before" Surprise

Whenever you talk to customers, you have knowledge that they lack. After all, you’ve spoken to hundreds if not thousands of them—fielding their questions and helping them solve problems.

Yet they may contact your organization only a handful of times.

Your history of dealing with so many customers gives you much-needed perspective to understand their concerns. But your vast experience can also work against you.

Consider what happens when a customer presents you with a situation you’ve never faced. You look puzzled and blurt out, “That’s never happened before.”

You figure the purchaser will feel better knowing that a particular problem isn’t common to your company. But the statement doesn’t help you build rapport; instead, it throws a wrench into the conversation.

Customers don’t want to feel as if they’re the first to face a problem. Telling them, “That’s a first” or “We’ve had thousands of customers and no one has experienced that,” will only make them feel horribly unlucky. Or they may doubt your truthfulness.