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I am currently employed at a major electronics retailer, Circuit City<sup>, where</sup>. At my job I work in the technology department selling a variety of products and services. For the most part, my sole job responsibility is dealing with customers. As simple as this may sound, one would be surprised how hard it can be dealing with such a diversity of people. Customers are only alike in the fact that they think they are right; other than that, they are all different, and all very hard to please. As my career began to grow, I realized that there are so many different types of customers. For the most part, I have noticed three common types of customers at my work place, all of which have their own unique effect on my workday. The most common customers are the courteous/polite customers, the overly curious customers, and finally, the rude customers.

To start off, as a gesture of kindness, and just to say thank you, I will talk about my polite customers. These are the customers whose respectful and caring attitudes make my job worthwhile. These customers, whom I would not mind helping even off the clock, are very attentive and appreciative of my time. They take my advice seriously and ask smart questions during the sale, which shows me they have a serious interest and are not just wasting time. After the sale, they thank me for my help and are noticeably satisfied with their purchase and experience at Circuit City. Occasionally, these same customers will be so considerate as to comment to my manager on my great performance, which is something I always appreciate dearly. For example, last weekend I helped a young couple pick out a computer system and explained in detail what they will be able



perform with it. They took my knowledge and advice very seriously, considering they knew very little about the latest computer technology. By the end of the sale they had purchased everything I had recommended and could not stop thanking me for getting them through the challenge of purchasing their first PC. They appreciated my help so much that they informed my manager of my great performance before they left the store. Although customers like this are usually very rare, I always appreciate their kindness and respectful attitude towards me through the sale.

The second kind of customer to walk through the doors at Circuit City is the one I dread helping the most. Every store has them, and every lowly associate is forced to deal with the overly curious 1,000-question customer. Although my experiences with these customers can last as long as two hours, it takes only a few minutes to realize I have been hooked by one of them. A dead giveaway that you have been cornered by one of these customers is the fact that they will repeat themselves, and their questions, very often. It could be that they don't realize they are repeating themselves, but in any case, it's very frustrating to deal with. Just last week I was asked, "What is a mega pixel?" by the same elderly couple nearly a dozen times. Maybe it was because they were old or just new to cameras, but I was ready to staple the definition to their foreheads after repeating it so many times. As more time passes during a sale, and I continue to ask myself "Didn't they just ask that question?!" I tend to get more and more frustrated. I would like to say my hours of hard work dealing with customers on an individual basis produces excellent sales, but unfortunately it doesn't. Most customers who ask a million questions will normally leave the store empty handed, giving me the impression that I had just wasted my time. To prevent this, I am currently working on getting a large "Frequently Asked

No  
contraction



Questions" poster installed in every department of my store to make the 1,000-question customer extinct. Until then, I will continue to keep my eye open and my guard ready for these customers.

The final kind of customer that I deal with on a daily basis is the arrogant and/or rude customer. Just sitting here thinking about these customers and the stress they've caused me makes me want to head butt my monitor into oblivion. At my job I try to help every customer every time, just like our company motto says. I do understand that most customers need help understanding the features and specifications of certain products, but must the customer be cocky or rude when he asks these questions? Most rude customers will usually display zero patience, even during crowded weekend sales. They put themselves as first priority and have no regard for me or my prior obligations. These customers will commonly grab me for help and have no problems referring to me as a "Geek" just to get my attention. Once they have my attention and are asking me questions, they seem to disagree with every one of my answers. They interrogate me for answers, almost like a detective<sup>or</sup> and have no problems disagreeing with me or accusing me of lying. I soon <sup>times</sup> began to fight back and to make customers think twice about mistreatment of associates at any store, associates who generally are there willing to help them. For example, last month I had an older fellow thinking he knew everything about a wireless router and believed that I was telling him lies. I started to become frustrated and I said to the customer, "If you know everything about this wireless router, why are you in this store asking me questions you supposing already know?" Today, I no longer cower in fear from customers on a power trip, and usually match their cruelty with kindness. If

- why #3?



this strategy doesn't work, I am always more than willing to stick up for myself or involve a manager in the issue.

After working for two years at Circuit City I have developed a better understanding of the customers that drive our business. Some of the customers I enjoy talking with and helping, and some I just wish shopped at best buy or another retailer. From my experience, I know there will always be kind customers, curious customers, and also, mean customers. Luckily for me, experience gained over the past two years of my employment has helped me deal with these customers in an appropriate manner, making my job more tolerable.

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Intro SC clause