

## ↑ CAREER LAUNCHER

### Customer Service Representative



“When I tell my friends that I listen to requests and complaints every day, they can't believe I like my job. But maintaining good customer relations and resolving complaints is an important function in all businesses.”



- **Education needed:** High school diploma
- **Salary range:** \$24,798 – \$38,070 annually
- **Related jobs:** Claims adjuster, expeditor, retail sales clerk, telemarketer

## **Customer Service Representative**

### ➤ **What I do every day**

No matter where I work—a bank, a department store, or a power company—I communicate directly with customers to make sure they receive good service. When customers have complaints about billing, merchandise, or service, I investigate the problem and analyze the facts to determine whether the complaints are valid. Then I make recommendations to correct the problem and satisfy the customer. This might mean exchanging merchandise, refunding money, crediting an account, or correcting a customer's bills.

## **Customer Service Representative**

### ➤ **The best part of my job**

I enjoy solving problems and working with people. Being a customer service representative allows me to do both.

### ➤ **The worst part of my job**

Sometimes I can't satisfy customers, no matter how hard I try. When I do my best and customers still complain, I get very frustrated.

## Customer Service Representative

### ➤ What I need to know and be able to do

Customer service representatives need good communication and interpersonal skills. They must thoroughly understand the business they represent in order to resolve complaints and answer customers' questions. They must know how to use computers to keep a record of customer questions and problems.

### ➤ How I prepared to be a customer service representative

I was hired to be a customer service representative immediately after graduating from high school. My employer gave me a formal two-week training course, where I learned to deal with customers, use the



## Customer Service Representative

company's software, and complete standard company forms. I was supervised closely during my first three months of employment.

### ➤ How I could have prepared better

Making adjustments to customers' bills requires math skills. I should have taken harder math courses. I took the minimum math requirements, which aren't enough for my job.



### ► Skill Check 1

As an employee in the customer service department of DVD Village, you take many phone calls from angry customers. The manager asks you to answer each call with the name of the company, the name of the department, your name, and a friendly greeting. While talking with one customer, another customer calls. Which of the following greetings is best?

1. Hi! This is \_\_\_\_\_ in customer service.  
(Your Name)

2. This is \_\_\_\_\_ in customer service at DVD Village.  
(Your Name)

May I put you on hold?

3. This is DVD Village customer service. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Your Name)

I'm putting you on hold.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ► Skill Check 2

You spend most of your time talking to customers about your company. You decide to compare your manner of handling people with the way other customer service representatives work with their customers.

To evaluate another customer service representative, call a bank in your town and speak to the customer service representative who answers. Ask these questions:

1. How old does a person have to be to open a checking account?
2. How old does a person have to be to start a savings account?
3. Does a minimum amount of money have to be kept in a savings account?

To evaluate the bank's customer service and the manner of the customer service representative, answer the questions that follow.

(continued)

### ► Skill Check 2

(continued)

1. How long did you wait before the customer service representative came on the line? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What words did the representative use to greet you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Did the representative treat you with respect? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did the representative answer all your questions? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you think the customer service representative did a good job?  
Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



### ► Skill Check 1

As a customer service representative at a small credit card company, you often need to give people information about their accounts. Mrs. Bateman called and would like to know how much credit she has available on her credit card.

Transfer the information from the list below into a computer spreadsheet program and add a heading called "Credit Available" in the extra column. Calculate the Credit Available for each customer. Then find Mrs. Bateman from Milwaukee on your list so you can contact her with the information she needs. If you do not have access to a computer spreadsheet program, complete the chart below.

Name	City/State	Total Amount Owed	Total Credit Allowed	
Bateman, Alison	Malvern, NY	\$2,300	\$5,000	
Bateman, Arlene	Milwalton, WS	\$1,500	\$7,500	
Bateman, Andrea	Milwaukee, WS	\$3,350	\$6,000	
Bateman, Andrew	Milwaukee, WS	\$1,250	\$5,500	

How much is Mrs. Bateman's Credit Available? \_\_\_\_\_

### ► Skill Check 2

You want to return or exchange some books and software from Amazon.com, an on-line store, but you are not sure what the process is for doing this. Follow the steps below to get to Amazon.com customer service:

1. Log on to the Internet.
2. Go to: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).
3. On the Amazon.com home page, click on HELP.
4. On the Help topics screen, click on Returns and Refunds.
5. On the next Help screen that appears, click on Product Return Policies.
6. On the next Help screen that appears, click on the type of item you want to return.

Based on the information provided, answer the questions below.

1. Can you return software you have used only once for a full refund?  
 Yes    No
2. Can you exchange a book you received as a gift?  
 Yes    No
3. Can you return a book that looks like new for a full refund?  
 Yes    No
4. How many days from the day you ordered can you return items?  
\_\_\_\_\_ days