

PRACTICE #2: CUSTOMER ASKS US TO COMPLETE AN ONLINE APPLICATION

A young lady, Nicole Mitchell, has told the Greeter that she needs help completing an online application to a local hospital. She tells the greeter that her friend works in the cafeteria and the cafeteria manager is ready to interview her but she needs to first put an application in the system. The Greeter offers Ms. Mitchell the help of a Resource Specialist in the resource room. The Greeter explains that the Resource Specialist will help her get started on the hospital's website, and will be available for any questions she may have as she works on the application.

We need someone to play the following parts:

Greeter

Resource Specialist (RS)

Ms. Mitchell (MM)

Practice #2: Version 1 – How to say “no”

Greeter to RS: David, this is Ms. Mitchell. She has an exciting opportunity to work for the hospital, and needs to get an online application completed as soon as possible. I told her you would be able to assist her with this.

RS to Greeter: Absolutely, I'd be delighted to help her with that.

RS to Ms. Mitchell (MM): Ms. Mitchell, my name is David Thomson. I'll be happy to help you with your hospital application. It's cold out there today. I need to get a big coat like yours to keep warm.

MM: Everybody loves my coat. I got it at Burlington Coat Factory at their end of winter sale this spring.

RS: I'll have to check Burlington out, but I might need to go there before this winter ends! Tell me about this opportunity you have at the hospital?

MM: My girlfriend works in the cafeteria and her manager wants to interview me, but they said I have to get this online application done first. I'm a little nervous about it because I don't really know computers too good.

RS: Don't be nervous. They're really not as hard as they seem, once you get into them. I can tell you're worried about using the computer. Let me ask you a question - how familiar are you with computers?

MM: Not very. My daughter pays all of our bills online using the computer at home. I mainly use it to play games. I love the slot machine games.

RS: My mom likes those slot machine games too. So, if you play those games you know how to use the mouse a little bit, is that right?

MM: Oh yea, I can do that.

RS: All right, well let me suggest that we do this. How about if I set you up on this computer right here. I will pull up the Hospital website and get you started using the online application. 90% of it is using the mouse. You'll have to enter your work history using the keyboard. Do you think you can do that?

MM: Can't you do it for me?

RS: I will definitely be helping you. How about we do it as a partnership. I'll get you started. You do the parts you can. When you get stuck, just ask me and I'll help you out.

Resource Specialist gets the customer started. He helps her get to the hospital website, to the application, shows her how to use the tab button to go from field to field, and familiarizes her with the basics of entering data using the keyboard. Ms. Mitchell starts entering her contact information. 10 minutes goes by.

MM: Help. It's asking for phone numbers and addresses of my previous companies. I don't know those. Can I leave it blank?

RS: No, it's better you provide contact information of previous employers. You don't want any part of your application incomplete, especially that one. Perhaps we can use the Internet to get that information. Let's try www.anywho.com to see if we can find your previous employers' contact information in there. (RS pulls up www.anywho.com, Ms. Mitchell finds the info she needs and adds it to the application.)

MM: I think I'm finished. Do I hit this SUBMIT button.

RS: Before you do that Ms. Mitchell, please review everything one final time. Then when you are ready, press the SUBMIT button and it will submit your application to the hospital.

MM: (Smiling) I did it!

RS: Yes you did. It wasn't as hard as you thought. And now if you have other companies that require online applications, you can do those yourself.

MM: Yes I can. And if I get stuck, I know where to come for help.

RS: Before you leave, is there anything else I can help you with today?

MM: No, I have to pick my daughter up from her work. We're sharing a car this week. I better get going.

RS: Alright, remember we are here for you. And if you decide you need help preparing for that interview when you get it, let us know and we'll help you out.

MM: Will do. Goodbye.

GREETER: Did you get everything you needed today?

MM: Yes, I did. Thank you.

GREETER: Good luck on that hospital job. Have a good afternoon.

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Practice #2: Version 2 – When to say yes and complete the application for the customer

In this second scenario, let's see how David the Resource Specialist handles it when Ms. Mitchell reveals different information about her ability to work with computers. We'll pick up the scenario after the initial greeting and exchange of information. David asks Ms. Mitchell how familiar she is with computers.

David, RS: Don't be nervous. They're really not as hard as they seem, once you get into them. I can tell you're worried about using the computer. Let me ask you a question - how familiar are you with computers?

MM: I've never touched one. My daughter pays all of our bills using the computer at home, but they scare me and I have terrible arthritis in my writing hand.

RS: Do you think you could operate the mouse?

MM: What's a mouse? Can't you do this for me?

RS: Since you have never used a computer, I'm going to do as much as I can to help you. I do want you to understand that there will be times when I will need to leave you to help other customers who need my assistance. If you are willing to wait during those times when I need to help them, I will help you with this application. It will be slow and may take an hour. Do you have that much time?

MM: Wow, I didn't know it would take so long. But I understand you have to help other people too.

RS: If you don't have time for that today, could your daughter help you with it at home tonight? You said she pays the bills on the Internet. So she could probably help you with it at home.

MM: No, they said if I get this done today, they could possibly interview me later this week. If you can help me, I'll be patient.

RS: Alright, let's get started.

Resource Specialist gets the customer started. He pulls up the hospital website, and begins entering the data. He has to leave her a few times to assist other customers, but they persevere and get it done.

RS: Alright Ms. Mitchell, please review everything here one final time, and when you are ready, press this button and it will submit your application to the hospital.

MM: (Smiling) We did it!

RS: Yes we did. And now that you've seen how it's done, you and your daughter might want to try completing some other online hospital applications from the comfort of your own home!

MM: We might just do that. And if we get stuck, I know where to come for help.

RS: Before you leave, is there anything else I can help you with today?

MM: No, I have to pick my daughter up from her work. We're sharing a car this week. I better get going.

RS: Alright, remember we are here for you. And if you decide you need help preparing for that interview when you get it, let us know and we'll help you out.

As Ms. Mitchell leaves, David reminds her The WorkSource is here for her and can help her prepare for the interview if she chooses. On her way out, he Greeter checks to make sure she received what she came for and wishes her good luck on the job.

Discussion Questions:

1. Through the initial 2-way conversation, what information was the Resource Specialist able to learn about the customer?
 - a. **Scenario 1**
 - i. The customer has the opportunity to interview with the manager of the hospital cafeteria once she completes an online application.
 - ii. The customer has limited knowledge of computers gained through playing computer games. She can use the mouse.
 - iii. The customer's daughter is familiar with computers and the Internet.
 - b. **Scenario 2**
 - i. The customer has the opportunity to interview with the manager of the hospital cafeteria once she completes an online application.
 - ii. The customer is not familiar with computers; she does not know what a mouse is.
 - iii. The customer has arthritis in her writing hand.
 - iv. The customer's daughter is familiar with computers and the Internet.
 - v. If Ms. Mitchell completes the application today, she could possibly interview at the hospital later this week.
2. What questions did the Resource Specialist ask the customer to gain a better understanding of her needs and wants that day?
 - a. **Both Scenarios**
 - i. Tell me about this opportunity you have at the hospital?
 - ii. How familiar are you with computers?
 - b. **Scenario 1**
 - i. If you play computer games, you know how to use the mouse a little bit, is that right?
 - c. **Scenario 2**
 - i. Do you think you could operate the mouse?
3. What suggestions did the Resource Specialist make and how did he negotiate a successful course of action with the customer?
 - a. **Scenario 1**
 - i. Once he determined that the customer knew how to operate a mouse and had used computers to play games, the Resource Specialist suggested they work as a partnership – he would pull up the hospital website and get her started. She would enter her work history and what parts she could. He would be available anytime she got stuck.
 - b. **Scenario 2**
 - i. After learning the customer did not know how to operate a mouse and had arthritis in her writing hand, the Resource Specialist suggested that he would do much of the work for her. He did explain that he would need to assist other customers at times and the process may take up to an hour. When the customer expressed concern at that amount of time, he offered her another option – she could complete the application at home with her daughter. The customer needed the application done right then and elected to accept the Resource Specialists offer.

Discussion Points:

1. Developing rapport is a natural process intended to put the customer at ease. Discuss some best practices for developing rapport.
2. Setting, clarifying and reviewing expectations helps customers understand how we can (and sometimes cannot) help them. What types of things do you say to help establish common ground and set expectations with your customers?