

Customer Service Tips

D	Discussion	Always be prepared to listen to your customers. It can take practice but it's important to actively listen to what your customer really wants and expects. Discuss an issue with the customer to resolve any problems before they get bigger and listen to their response.	
R	Recommend	Offer tips and advice on how to prevent or avoid the problem that you are fixing, or something you have spotted in the vicinity. If the customer is looking for new products, it's always good to explain the importance of approved fittings.	
A	Approval	Becoming an approved plumber with WaterSafe provides an additional guarantee to your customers that you're qualified and trusted to work safely with water by your local water company and the drinking water regulator and have a card to prove it.	
I	Itemise	Provide clear breakdown of services provided and associated costs on an itemised quote, and a contract (for larger jobs) to avoid any assumptions about what is being promised. Also make it clear what's not covered. If you are offering a discount of any sort, make it clear what terms the discount is offered on. Be sure to explain any additional charges before extra work is done to avoid surprises when you invoice. Where possible, try to cover every eventuality that that could occur when pricing a job. It is impossible to know that all the plumbing in a property, which could result in the unexpected happening, so let the customer know that these discoveries and eventual repairs would need to be quoted.	
N	New Skills	Continuous professional development helps to ensure you are aware of any changes in regulations, new trends and products that can then be applied to work	
S	Share	Share your knowledge; recommend others if you are unable to commit to a job; network with other plumbing professionals. From industry events to social media, there's plenty of information out there	
T	Transparency	Keep your word and do what you say you were going to do and don't make promises that you can't keep. If there is a problem let your customer know straight away. For example, give them a call if you are going to arrive later than you expected. Likewise, if there's something you can't repair, don't be afraid to say so - customers appreciate honesty.	
A	Ask	If you want to improve your customer service, it's good to get feedback to see if there are any areas you can improve. Remember happy customers, will recommend you and give positive reviews online. If something has gone wrong, learn from your mistakes and ask yourself if everything was clearly communicated. Talk to the customer and ask what could have been done differently to prevent any further fallout.	
P	Proof	Be prepared to show proof of any memberships or approvals to provide peace of mind. If you're an approved plumber don't forget to leave your customer a work completed certificate. It gives you customer reassurance and a legal defence.	
S	Spotless	Yes, leave the place clean after completion. You may have installed perfectly but if you leave the place in a mess, they probably won't invite you back. It goes without saying but, customers buy from people that they like. Being friendly, polite and genuine builds trust.	

If you do experience a problem that can't be resolved, Citizen's Advice has a wealth of information for tradespeople and customers.