



# **ACME INC.**

## ***CUSTOMER SERVICE INTERVIEW GUIDE***

**for**

**Sample Applicant**

**SS#: 123-45-6789**

Date Printed: 09/17/2011

Interviewer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary comments/recommendations from interview:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

## **ORGANIZATIONALLY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

In the space below, list any additional interview questions to be asked. These should include any questions needed to clarify information from the participant's resume/application, as well as questions specific to the position/organization. (Use the back of this page or insert additional pages if necessary.)

# SUGGESTIONS FOR CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

## *Before the session begins...*

- Take the steps necessary to ensure that the session will not be interrupted. The participant should receive your undivided attention.
- Review the participant's application/resume to identify any background information that needs to be explored or clarified. List questions for these items, as well as any additional questions you intend to ask, on the sheet titled "ORGANIZATIONALLY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS."

## *Starting the session...*

- Attempt to establish rapport and put the participant at ease.
- Explain the general purpose and format of the interview.
- Ask for and respond to any questions the participant may have.

## *Conducting the interview...*

- Ask the interview questions and take notes on the participant's responses.

## *Closing the session...*

- Indicate that all interview questions have been covered.
- Explain any relevant follow-up activities.
- Ask for and respond to any questions the participant may have.
- Thank the participant and close the session.

## *After the session...*

- Evaluate the Organizationally Specific Questions and the AccuVision interview questions (including the oral and interpersonal areas). The following rating scale can be used for making these evaluations.

3 - More than acceptable 2 - Acceptable 1 - Less than acceptable

- Summarize the results of the interview in the space provided on the cover page.

## ***GENERAL QUESTIONS***

***QUESTION 1:*** Working as a customer service representative requires the employee to effectively deal with customers who have very different personalities and temperaments. What experiences have you had that demonstrate your skills in dealing with different types of people?

***NOTES:***

### ***SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Providing work, civic, or community-related examples of activities that reflect an ability to deal with different types of people in relatively formal settings.
2. Providing prior work experience that emphasizes dealing with the public.
3. Providing prior work experience that emphasizes customer service activities.

### ***SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Providing no concrete examples or using examples that focus primarily on interactions with friends in social settings.

**RATING FOR RESPONSE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## ***GENERAL QUESTIONS***

***QUESTION 2:*** Employees occasionally have to deal with angry and verbally abusive customers. Assume an angry customer begins yelling at you about some problem she's having with your company. However, you are not personally responsible for the problem this customer is having. How would you deal with this customer?

***NOTES:***

### ***SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Apologizing and showing empathy for the customer's problem/situation, even though the employee was not the cause of the problem.
2. Allowing the customer to vent her frustrations in order to defuse the situation and attempting to calm her.
3. Questioning and getting the customer to focus on problem-solving actions.

### ***SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Failing to take ownership for the problem/situation (e.g. pointing out to the customer that the CSR is not responsible for the problem/situation, etc.).
2. Failing to empathize with the customer or permit her to vent her frustrations in order to defuse the situation (e.g. simply telling the customer to calm down).
3. Making no attempt to focus the customer on resolving the problem/situation.

***RATING FOR RESPONSE:*** \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION:** Assume the following: A customer calls and tells you that because of some unusual circumstances, he's going to need some extra time to make his payment. Assuming you have the power to make the decision, what other kinds of information would you want to have before making a decision about his request?

**NOTES:**

***SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Checking the status of the customer's account (e.g. is his payment already overdue, does he have a history of late payments, etc.).
2. Asking the customer when he anticipates being able to make the payment.
3. Exploring possible alternatives (e.g. asking the customer if he can make a partial or token payment) to use until the customer is able to send the full payment.

***SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Failing to recognize the importance of checking the customer's account history.
2. Neglecting to ask the customer when he anticipates making the full payment.
3. Failing to suggest possible alternatives for dealing with the situation.

**RATING FOR RESPONSE:\_\_\_\_\_**

**QUESTION:** From time to time, we may receive requests from customers that are not in line with our standard policies or procedures. In some cases, we're able to make exceptions to our policies and procedures, but in other cases, we're just not able to do what the customer requests. If a customer asked you to do something that clearly could not be done, what would you say and do?

**NOTES:**

***SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Apologizing for not being able to comply with the customer's request.
2. Exploring alternative actions that might address or partially address the customer's needs.
3. Explaining why the request cannot be met (i.e. why the policy exists and/or how it benefits the customer).
4. Taking actions that would leave the customer with a positive impression of the company (i.e. reiterating concern, apologizing for any inconvenience or problems caused by the inability to meet the request, etc.)

***SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Referring the problem to the supervisor versus taking ownership of the situation.
2. Indicating that the customer would simply be told that "policy" does not allow the action to be taken.
3. Failing to indicate concern for the customer's feelings/perspective.
4. Failing to consider alternative actions that might address or partially address the customer's needs.

**RATING FOR RESPONSE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## ***ORAL COMMUNICATIONS***

No questions are asked for this area. Rather, the participant is evaluated based on behaviors observed during the overall interview session.

### ***NOTES:***

#### ***SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Expressed comments in a concise manner.
2. Enunciated clearly.
3. Spoke in a fluid manner.
4. Looked at interviewer when speaking.
5. Used gestures to emphasize points.
6. Expressed ideas in an easy to understand manner.
7. Used proper grammar.
8. Used voice inflection to emphasize points.

#### ***SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Rambled on or was overly wordy.
2. Had slurred speech.
3. Was overly hesitant or choppy when speaking.
4. Failed to maintain eye contact when speaking.
5. Expressed ideas in a manner that was difficult to follow and/or understand.
6. Made grammatical errors.
7. Spoke in a monotone and/or failed to use gestures.

**RATING FOR RESPONSE:** \_\_\_\_\_



## ***INTERPERSONAL***

No questions are asked for this area. Rather, the participant is evaluated based on behaviors observed during the overall interview session.

### ***NOTES:***

### ***SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. At the start of the session, offered a polite and enthusiastic greeting.
2. As appropriate, used amenities such as "please" and "thank you."
3. Maintained a polite, courteous, and enthusiastic demeanor during the session.
4. Actively listened to the interviewer's comments (e.g., maintained eye contact while listening, nodding while listening, etc.).
5. At the close of the session, expressed appreciation for the interviewer's time and consideration.

### ***SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:***

1. Asked questions in an abrupt or curt manner.
2. Displayed little enthusiasm or politeness.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: \_\_\_\_\_