

Case Study ▶ Who to Hire

Customer Service Representative

Job Description:

You will perform a full range of customer services activities such as obtaining information from policy holder callers, responding to inquiries or problems and explaining processing procedures. Superior customer focus is our primary goal: we make it possible for you to provide it.

Responsibilities:

- Identify and analyze customer needs to ensure high customer satisfaction, growth and retention of business.
- Provide timely and accurate guidance and service to policy holders for a variety of product, plan or programs.
- Resolve and take corrective action on policy holder inquiries (i.e. Account Status, billing information, renewal, etc.)

Qualifications:

- High School diploma or equivalent.
- Ability to write and speak in concise, accurate, and understandable terms when responding to policy holders.
- Demonstrated knowledge of customer service requirements, company products and the insurance industry.
- Ability to be detail oriented and thorough.
- Excellent interpersonal, oral & written communication skills and influencing skills

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Applicant #1

Mary Smith's interview was scheduled for 10:00 am. At 9:45, Mary phoned and said she was running a tad late. She arrived at 10:10, apologizing for being late and also for not dressing as professionally as she usually dresses for an interview.

After graduating from high school, Mary worked as a bank teller for eight months. Since then, she has worked at two different retail stores as a customer service representative. She left her current position four weeks ago. You were impressed by Mary's positive attitude. She was convincing when she explained that she is a fast learner and she gave good examples of how she learned product knowledge at her previous job. Mary indicated that she had received Employee of the Month award on three separate occasions and she had received a bonus for being the number one in sales. She stated she could call her supervisor so you could confirm that fact. Overall, Mary was confident and articulate throughout the interview. She also indicated that she could start immediately.

When you asked Mary why she left her previous position, she said she was looking for a job with more variety and opportunity for advancement. During the interview, Mary's cell phone rang twice. She excused herself once stating "it was a call she just had to take and she'd only be a minute."

After reviewing Mary's application, you learned she is 20 years old. She is a high school graduate, but has no college experience. She has had three full-time jobs since graduating from high school.

Applicant #2

Jose Gonzales's interview was scheduled for 10:00 am. He arrived at 9:45, dressed in a black suit and tie. You noticed he turned off his cell phone as you approached to introduce yourself.

Prior to working as a bank teller for eight months, Jose had worked as a computer technician in a small firm. Jose indicated that if he were to be offered this position, he would need to give his current employer two weeks' notice. Jose was somewhat pensive and shy, but pleasant. You felt as if it took a lot of energy to keep the conversation going but, overall, you were impressed with Jose's professionalism.

You also learned that Jose is 20 years old. He is enrolled in a college degree program majoring in business. In the interview, you recall that Jose indicated he had not done so well in his English course. He said he was excellent with technology and he was sure he could improve his communication skills to succeed in this job.