Here to help: customer service

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
INTERMEDIATE | B1-B2

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Tick the correct category for each customer service word.

Word | Problem | Solution | Person | Quality

1 escalate [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
2 compensation [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
3 helpline [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
4 attentive [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
5 miscommunication [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
6 resolve [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
7 representative [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
8 responsive [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

2 Correct the mistake in each sentence.

1 I had to escalate of the complaint. _____
2 They offered compensation of the delay. _____
3 I called the helpline of the company. _____
4 The staff were very attentive to. _____
5 There was miscommunication between us. _____
6 They resolve the issue quickly. _____
7 I spoke to representative on the phone. _____
8 The team was responsive for our needs. _____

3 Choose the more suitable description.

1 For raising a complaint to a higher authority: escalate / ignore.
2 For money or benefits given for inconvenience: compensation / punishment.
3 For a phone number for customer support: helpline / hotline for emergencies only.
4 For staff who notice and respond to needs quickly: attentive / distracted.
5 For a misunderstanding between two parties: miscommunication / clear agreement.
6 For successfully solving a problem: resolve / worsen.

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4 Complete the reports with words from the box.

attentive | compensation | escalate | helpline | miscommunication | representative | resolve | responsive

Report A: A customer had to 1 _____ her complaint after the first 2 _____ was unable to help. She eventually received 3 _____ for the inconvenience.
Report B: The company's 4 _____ was praised for being fast and 5 _____, with staff described as 6 _____ and quick to notice issues.
Report C: The problem was caused by 7 _____ between departments, but staff worked hard to 8 _____ it before the customer left unhappy.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

What makes customer service memorable

Research on customer satisfaction consistently shows that how a problem is resolved matters more than whether a problem occurs at all. Customers who experience a fault but receive fast, attentive service often report higher satisfaction than those who never had a problem, a phenomenon researchers call the service recovery paradox. Miscommunication and slow responses, by contrast, can permanently damage a customer relationship even over a minor issue. Companies that empower frontline representatives to resolve problems immediately, rather than forcing customers to escalate repeatedly, tend to see significantly better outcomes.

1 What does research on customer satisfaction consistently show? _____
2 What do customers who experience a fault but receive good service often report? _____
3 What is this phenomenon called? _____
4 What can permanently damage a customer relationship? _____
5 What tends to lead to significantly better outcomes? _____
6 What does this avoid forcing customers to do? _____

6 Rewrite each phrase using the word in capitals.

1 I had to raise the complaint further. ESCALATE _____
2 They gave her money for the inconvenience. COMPENSATION _____
3 The staff noticed problems quickly. ATTENTIVE _____
4 The company solved the issue fast. RESOLVE _____

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OVER TO YOU

Write a 100-120 word account of how a company could improve its customer service. Include specific suggestions and reasons.

[ ] Use at least ten target expressions. [ ] Include polite, precise wording. [ ] Organise the account clearly.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Categories

1 Solution 2 Solution 3 Solution 4 Quality 5 Problem 6 Solution 7 Person 8 Quality

2 Corrections

1 escalate the complaint 2 compensation for the delay 3 the company's helpline
4 very attentive 5 miscommunication between us 6 resolved the issue quickly
7 to a representative 8 responsive to our needs

3 Suitable descriptions

1 escalate 2 compensation 3 helpline 4 attentive 5 miscommunication 6 resolve

4 Reports

1 escalate 2 representative 3 compensation 4 helpline 5 responsive 6 attentive 7 miscommunication 8 resolve

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 How a problem is resolved matters more than whether a problem occurs at all.
2 Higher satisfaction than those who never had a problem.
3 The service recovery paradox.
4 Miscommunication and slow responses.
5 Empowering frontline representatives to resolve problems immediately.
6 Escalating repeatedly.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 I had to escalate it. 2 They offered compensation. 3 The staff were attentive. 4 The company resolved the issue.

Over to you

Answers will vary. Check range, respectful register and clear organisation.