

Client Service

You have just finished helping a long-time client with his payment. As he turned to leave, you asked him if he would be going fishing on the weekend, knowing that he loves this hobby. He makes a couple of comments and leaves. Your next client approaches you and complains that you wouldn't be so slow if you "quit chit-chatting and just stick to business." How do you respond to this client?

- a) You say nothing and simply sigh, wondering how he can be so insensitive.
- b) You decide to ignore the client's comment and say nothing. You wait for your new client to make his service request.
- c) You ignore his comment and ask, "How may I help you today?"
- d) You say, "You're right sir. I apologize for being thoughtless. How may I serve you today?"
- e) You apologize and comment that the previous client is a long-time friend of the business.
- f) You mention that the previous client is a "regular" and you have come to know him well. You apologize and say that you hope to get to know him as well.

Discussion Points:

- 1) How can saying nothing be considered rude, and what clues would you look for?
 - a) Body language.
 - b) Facial Expressions
- 2) How can an apology sound patronizing?
- 3) Offering an explanation may sound defensive. What would be appropriate to say, if anything?