

Customer Service

You have just finished helping a long-time customer with his large order. 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 customer approaches you and complains that you wouldn't be so slow if you "quit chitchatting and just stick to business." How do you respond to this customer?

- a) You say nothing and simply sigh, wondering how he can be so insensitive.
- b) You decide to ignore the customer's comment and say nothing. You wait for your new customer 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 customer is a long-time friend of the restaurant.
- f) You mention that the previous customer 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?