

How to Prioritize Communication and Customer Service

By John Higgins

A little effort can go a long way



At India Springs Inc., we have learned that customer service is very important, and that a little effort can go a long way in developing a long-lasting relationship with a customer.

India Springs Inc. is a custom spring manufacturer, which means a lot of the work we do is unique to the customer. The customer's project needs can range from a simple compression spring to a complex assembly. To learn what the customer needs, India Springs Inc. opens communication between our design engineers and the customer. Our design engineers make it a point to learn from the customer the goal of their project. Sometimes this leads to the India Springs Inc.'s design engineer going back to the drawing board and working step by step with the customer to redesign and/or fine tune the product. This is a service that we have learned is very important in achieving customer satisfaction.

"I have been in manufacturing for 46 years, and this is a new one to me," said our design engineer Bob Powner. Last week, he was overheard talking about the need for high IT to achieve

hook length concerning a new customer's large diameter extension spring. Knowing this aspect of the project allowed him and India Springs Inc.'s craftsmen to come up with a solution that fit the customer's project needs.

With this prioritizing of communication, India Springs Inc. can determine what is right for the project in hand. Sometimes a customer will just send in specifications and ask for the product to be made. A best practice for India Springs Inc. is to take this information and review how it matches up with the result the customer is looking for. By doing this, and openly communicating with the customer, we have been able to work with the customer in the design phase and fine tune everything needed, rather than just making the item per specification, and then the customer realizing what they wanted made doesn't work and having to restart the whole process. Once the given parameters have been received and reviewed, our design engineers work around this information and achieve a solution to the project need.

About 75 percent of customers start off the sales process by sending in a need with the specifications laid out. Of this group, about a quarter of them need to be re-engineered. Whether they just need something small tweaked from previous specifications, or a brand-new design because of a change in the overall project and priorities, we would never find this out if it wasn't for the focus on open communication with the customers.

India Springs Inc. makes customer communication and customer service main priorities. Doing this helps save money for the customer, shortens the project lead time, and achieves a satisfying result for the customer. ■