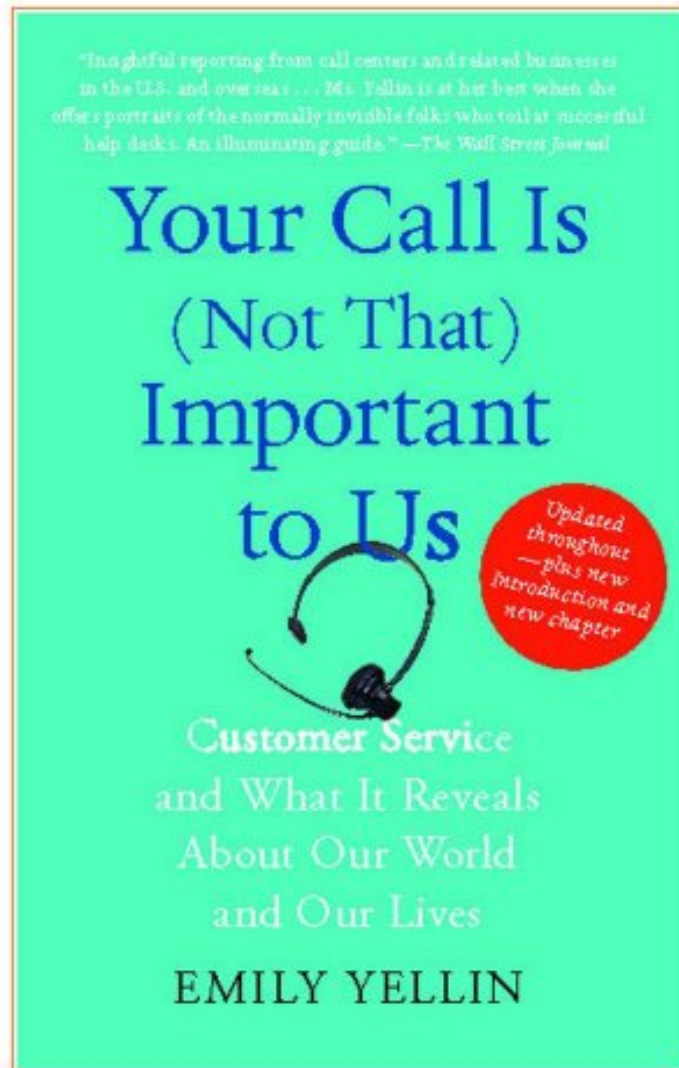


[Mobile pdf] Your Call Is (Not That) Important to Us: Customer Service and What It Reveals About Our World and Our Lives

# Your Call Is (Not That) Important to Us: Customer Service and What It Reveals About Our World and Our Lives

*Emily Yellin*

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**Emily Yellin : Your Call Is (Not That) Important to Us: Customer Service and What It Reveals About Our World and Our Lives** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Your Call Is (Not That) Important to Us: Customer Service and What It Reveals About Our World and Our Lives:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. as good as the title By J. Young I knew Emily Yellin was a fair

writer when Fred Smith, founder of Fedex actually sat and visited with her and shared stories. Mr Smith is long past the point of having time to retell old stories, and seldom makes himself available anymore, but he knew she'd come prepared with days of insight and careful observation. He came to life with her questions because she is not coming for a pick, to get even, or leave with an agenda. She's simply reporting how some company's have worked hard to see all this from the customer perspective, and how other company's paid a price by not realizing customers keep calling if ignored and tell friends and websites if talked down to. Her followup to confirm stories was impressive as she could have relied on emotionally driven blogs to jazz up this book. She seeks to show both sides. She's NO hack. She's written for the NY Times, Washington Post, and Time, and one senses she just had a real curiosity about this topic and WANTED to write the book. A good study at the corporate level for sure. John Young<sup>3</sup> of 3 people found the following review helpful. Up to Date and Informative By J. A. Burrus If you have ever worked in a customer service call center or tried to get help from one, this book will explain why both are so frustrating. Most companies treat call centers like a drain on profits and do not adequately train or motivate the people who answer their phones, nor do they allow them to make decisions. The author, Emily Yellin, visits traditional customer service call centers as well as those companies that use call centers as an information resource. She shows how the traditional call centers drive customers away and smart call centers help recruit and retain customers over the long term. Since many corporate executives think only about the numbers on the next quarterly report, they often miss the long term benefits inherent in serving their customers. Yellin provides quite a bit of evidence supporting this conclusion. <sup>3</sup> of 3 people found the following review helpful. From an industry insider By CrisInTexas As a person working in this industry, I thought the book was very entertaining and true to life. I'll fess up: I'm a Voice User Interface designer, one of those people who write "phone trees." So I have spent a lot of time working with people in call centers. The book captures that world well, and is a good, and readable, introduction to people who are new to the call center / customer service industry. She doesn't offer a lot of new conclusions or anything earth shattering for people like me who have been doing it for awhile (but then, I suspect that the general public is her target audience, not me). She points out that companies are continually walking a line between saving money and serving their customers. She mentions that the "silos" between organizations in a business sometimes get in the way of good communication and good customer service. And, she says that good customer service has to come from a commitment from management at the highest levels of the company. None of this is a surprise. However, she does offer some interesting tidbits and useful quotes, some from other sources. It's always nice to have new sources for presentations, especially numbers and quotes. The chapter I thought most worth a read was her interview with David McQuillen, the first "Director of Customer Experience" at Credit Suisse. (p. 248-259) It was very interesting to read his techniques for how he got other parts of his organization to start paying attention to customer satisfaction. He does a lot of "experience immersion," where he makes executives and members of his organization get direct experience with how it feels to be a customer of their organization. He kicked off a presentation to top managers by making a live call to the call center, as a new customer, asking to open a new account. He took executives into branches and made them be customers instead of managers. When customers were making lots of mistakes on new client contracts, he brought the team who authored the contract together and had them observe clients trying to fill out the form. I thought his approach to overall customer experience was very inspirational and well worth emulating. Overall: The last chapter in particular is interesting and useful. The rest of the book has its entertaining anecdotes, but doesn't offer much in the way of new insights to the industry insider. It would definitely be good for people who are new in the field and want to get a good overview of "customer service" in a general sense. It was very true to reality and Ms. Yellin has written a very interesting, useful book. I wish more people would read it.

Bring up the subject of customer service phone calls and the blood pressure of everyone within earshot rises exponentially. Otherwise calm, rational, and intelligent people go into extended rants about an industry that seems to grow more inhuman and unhelpful with every phone call we make. And Americans make more than 43 billion customer service calls each year. Whether it's the interminable hold times, the outsourced agents who can't speak English, or the multitude of buttons to press and automated voices to listen to before reaching someone with a measurable pulse -- who hasn't felt exasperated at the abuse, neglect, and wasted time we experience when all we want is help, and maybe a little human kindness? *Your Call Is (Not That) Important to Us* is journalist Emily Yellin's engaging, funny, and far-reaching exploration of the multibillion-dollar customer service industry and its surprising inner-workings. Yellin reveals the real human beings and often surreal corporate policies lurking behind its aggravating facade. After reading this first-ever investigation of the customer service world, you'll never view your call-center encounters in quite the same way. Since customer service has a role in just about every industry on earth, Yellin travels the country and the world, meeting a wide range of customer service reps, corporate decision makers, industry watchers, and Internet-based consumer activists. She spends time at outsourced call centers for Office Depot in Argentina and Microsoft in Egypt. She gets to know the Mormon wives who answer JetBlue's customer service calls from their homes in Salt Lake City, and listens in on calls from around the globe at a FedEx customer service center in Memphis. She meets with the creators of the yearly Customer Rage Study, customer experience specialists at Credit Suisse in Zurich, the founder and CEO of FedEx, and the CEO of the rising Internet retailer

Zappos.com. Yellin finds out which country complains about service the most (Sweden), interviews an actress who provides the voice for automated answering systems at many big corporations, and talks to the people who run a website (GetHuman.com that posts codes for bypassing automated voices and getting to an actual human being at more than five hundred major companies. Yellin weaves her vast reporting into an entertaining narrative that sheds light on the complex forces that create our infuriating experiences. She chronicles how the Internet and global competition are forcing businesses to take their customers' needs more seriously and offers hope from people inside and outside the globalized corporate world fighting to make customer service better for us all. *Your Call Is (Not That) Important to Us* cuts through corporate jargon and consumer distress to provide an eye-opening and animated account of the way companies treat their customers, how customers treat the people who serve them, and how technology, globalization, class, race, gender, and culture influence these interactions. Frustrated customers, smart executives, and dedicated customer service reps alike will find this lively examination of the crossroads of world commerce -- the point where businesses and their customers meet -- illuminating and essential.

From Publishers Weekly If you've ever been mildly frustrated, extremely irritated or driven just plain mad by automated customer service lines, rude telephone service representatives or agents who can't speak intelligible English, this book is for you. Yellin (*Our Mother's War*) dives into the often dysfunctional world of customer service, exploring the multimillion-dollar industry from various points of view, interviewing exasperated consumers, displeased CEOs and infuriated customer service reps themselves. She includes transcripts of agonizing telephone exchanges, such as one where an AOL rep tries to thwart a customer's cancellation of his account, blog excerpts from reps who feel abused and as if they are being treated as machines and countless stories from irritated and confused managers. While Yellin's study offers more industry anecdotes than concrete solutions, readers will likely look at the industry differently and with more empathy for those who participate in it. (Mar.) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "If you've ever been frustrated by automated customer service lines, rude telephone service representatives or agents who can't speak intelligible English, this book is for you. Yellin dives into the often dysfunctional world of customer service, interviewing exasperated consumers, displeased CEOs and infuriated customer service reps. Readers will likely look at the industry differently and with more empathy." -- Publishers Weekly "For small business owners, Yellin's prodigiously researched book is a useful cautionary tale." -- Fortune Small Business Magazine "Ms. Yellin, a Memphis-based journalist, mixes polls and studies with excerpts from published reports and her own insightful reporting from call centers and related businesses in the U.S. and overseas... [she] is an illuminating guide whose conclusions are sound" -- Wall Street Journal "After death, taxes and inclement weather, it's one of life's most inescapable downers: the customer-service call. Getting help can be an automated hell, an eternity of Muzak, code punching and security questions. Which is why the title of Emily Yellin's customer-friendly romp through this unfriendly world rings so true: 'Your Call Is (Not That) Important to Us.'" -- Newsweek "According to the author, [customer service is] a barometer of how we communicate and how we treat each other not only nationally but globally and across all sorts of barriers." -- Memphis Flyer "Yellin divulges the woes of mistreated consumers, striking a chord not only with adults who have fantasized about destroying stubborn fax machines and voice recognition systems, but also those who take their revenge on companies by posting injustices on the Web. Yellin doesn't just dwell on complaints, however. She also looks at our nature to complain, what we complain about and how we do so. She adeptly covers the history of technology and its role in consumerism and customer service." -- St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri) "This fascinating history of humanity and technology meeting head-on . . . is highly recommended." -- Library Journal (starred review) "Entertaininghellip;Yellin is smart and funny throughout.rdquo; -- St. Louis Post-Dispatch About the Author Emily Yellin is the author of *Our Mother's War*, and was a longtime contributor to the New York Times. She has also written for Time, the Washington Post, the International Herald Tribune, Newsweek, Smithsonian Magazine, and other publications. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin--Madison with a degree in English literature and received a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University. She currently lives in Memphis, Tennessee.