

SPECIAL REPORT

TAKE THE CUSTOMER EXPEDITION.

If you walked in your
customers shoes, would
you treat them differently?

MARKETPOWER GROUP
BUSINESS ADVISORS

What's your favorite customer cliché? Here are some well-known ones.

"The customer's always right."

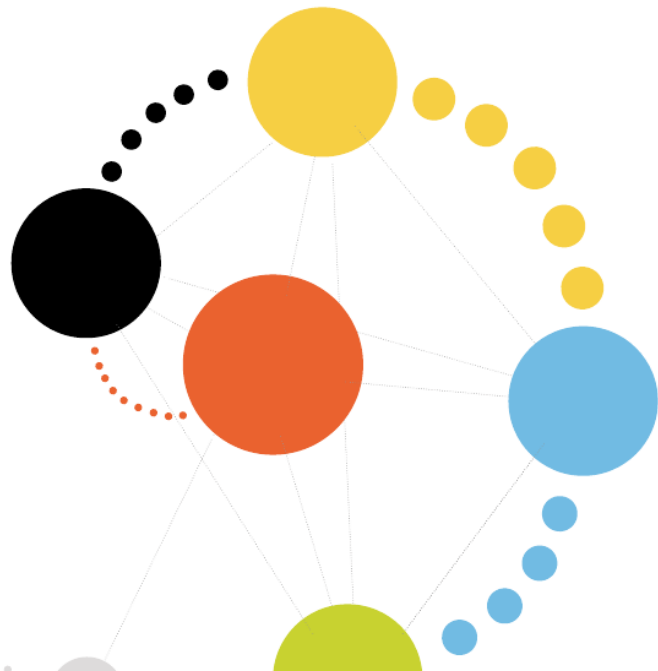
"The customer is king."

"We go the extra mile for our customers."

There are many others that continue to proliferate the marketplace every day. The problem with clichés is that while they usually contain a kernel of truth, they are so overused that their meaning is diluted. They usually become pointless, invisible and the object of scorn. In other words, no one really believes a word of it.

Brands that are building deeper relationships with customers are the ones that have discovered the real value of customer insight. In our customer insight research at MarketPower Group, we call this the *Power of the Heart*. Genuine customer insight can only emerge through empathy. Empathy is the missing ingredient in most market research and data mining projects. Unfortunately, empathy can't be reduced to a set of graphs and spreadsheets. It's a creative, more intuitive right-brained process that can get kind of messy.

People have messy lives that don't fit into our pre-determined little business boxes. Empathic research is the only effective method to capture the "whys" of their lives. And their whys are the keys to building a better business future.



You have to draw a customer journey map. Every customer walks a crooked path to do business with you. It's rarely a straight line.

You must be able to clearly see every step to find the barriers and obstacles that drive them away. One tool is the MarketPower Customer Expedition Map.

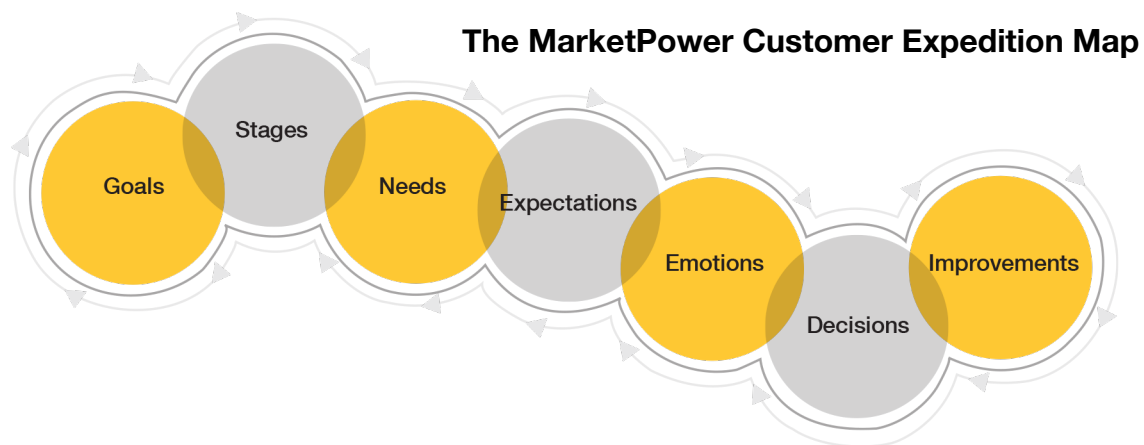
If you want 100% certainty, you'll never get it. Empathy only reveals partial truth. Based on what you hear and observe from your customers, you must always invest the time and energy to do three things:

> **Analyze:** Don't quickly assume you know what these customers think and do. Spend time breaking down the data. Look for patterns. Try to group similar comments, body language and attitudes together.

> **Interpret:** Find the gaps in what people say and what they likely mean. This is much more an art form than a science because it is creative in nature. You must read between the lines, so to speak.

> **Translate:** This is the key to communicating what you have learned across your organization. You want to tell your customers stories vividly and creatively. Use more than words; use storyboards and videos.

Now let's bring empathy full circle back to a cliché: *“Walk in your customers shoes.”* This idea can become deeply meaningful and moving when you understand the wide range of emotions your customers are experiencing in their daily lives. Many of their circumstances are completely out of their control. It's urgent to teach your company's leaders, employees and stakeholders about the importance of how they treat customers. Everyone's job is to pay closer attention and serve them with excellence.



Move from customer clichés to meaningful action. *The Power of the Heart* is what customers are yearning for from the brands they want to do business with. And you can only do that through empathy. When you understand them better, you will treat them differently, probably like you would like to be treated yourself. Understanding opens the door to building a better, more prosperous future.

MARKETPOWER GROUP
BUSINESS ADVISORS

MarketPower Group LLC
210.960.7100
marketpowergroup.com

© 2015, All rights reserved.