

# Customer Service Role Play

## Description

In groups of three, one student is an observer, one is a customer, and one is the business/shop representative. The customer and representative act out various scenarios. The observer offers feedback in terms of how well the representative communicated with his/her customer. The roles are rotated.

**Note:** It is recommended that the Communication 101 Activity Plan be taught first.

## Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- recognize their own verbal and non-verbal communication styles
- identify appropriate ways to communicate with customers in a work setting
- observe others' communication styles

## Terminology

**Empathy:** the ability to relate to another's feelings

**Body language:** non-verbal communication using stances, movements, and gestures

**Non-verbal communication:** communication that involves sending and receiving messages without words, includes body language such as gestures, facial expressions such as tone and pitch of voice, and body posture

## Estimated Time

1 hour

## Facilities

Classroom

## Materials

- Computer and projector
- Handout: [Customer Service Role Play – Observer Notes](#)

## Videos

[In the hardware store](#) (2:59)

[Texting on the job](#) (2:02)



# Student Activity

## Procedure

1. As the class watches the customer service videos, have them write down the verbal and non-verbal communication they observe in both the customer and the hardware store employees.
2. Project the videos:
  - [In the hardware store](#) (2:59)
  - [Texting on the job](#) (2:02)
3. After viewing the videos, discuss as a class. What verbal and non-verbal communication (gestures, facial expressions, tones of voice, etc.) did they observe (hardware store employees and the customer)? Have any students had similar customer service experiences? How did it make them feel? How would the employer/owner feel if they saw their employee behave this way?
4. Invite a few students to role play the same hardware store scenario, but incorporate proper customer service (eye contact, friendliness, helpfulness, gestures, tone of voice, etc.). What would be appropriate behaviour, body language, etc. in this scenario? Discuss the importance of empathy when dealing with customers. What behaviours would make the customer want to return to this place of business?
5. Divide the class into groups of three to role play the following scenarios. For the first scenario, one student will be the customer, one will be the business representative, and one will be the observer. Make sure each student has a handout.

### **Possible scenarios:**

- Customer complains a product/service is defective. The representative has to convince the customer it isn't.
- Customer asks a question about a product or service that the representative doesn't know the answer to. Customer isn't happy.
- Representative is asked to "bend the rules" on a return policy by the customer. The representative has to explain he/she can't bend the rules, but the customer is insistent.
- Angry customer demands a solution for his/her complaint.

**Note:** Teacher may want to create/tailor the scenarios depending on the module(s) they teach (automotive shop, drafting office, home under construction, bakery, etc.).

6. Have groups role play customer service scenarios, rotating roles after each role play. Encourage students be aware of their verbal and non-verbal communication as the representative. The observer will write down notes in the handout on the representative's verbal and non-verbal communication.
7. Groups debrief after each role play. Observer shares notes.

## Extension

Scenarios could also be acted out non-verbally with gestures and actions only, showing the power of nonverbal communication.

Role plays could be videotaped so students can view how they present themselves.

## Reflection

In small groups, have students reflect on what the role play activity taught them about their communication style and strategies they could use when dealing with customers.

## Assessment

- Participation in role plays.
- Peer and self-assessment.