

## Company-Customer Pact

**The Challenge:** We, customers and companies alike, need to trust the people with whom we do business. Customers expect honest, straightforward interactions where their voices are heard. Companies work to inspire brand loyalty and deliver satisfaction while trying to understand their customers better. It is evident that we all have a crucial stake -- and responsibility -- in transforming the adversarial tone that all too often dominates the customer experience.



**A Call for Shared Responsibility:** Along with open, authentic communication comes the mutual responsibility to make it work. As each of us is both a customer *and* an employee, we share in the rewards and challenges of candor. By adopting these five practical measures, we can together realize a fundamental shift in our business relationships:

### Companies:

1. Be human. Use a respectful, conversational voice, avoid scripts and *never* use corporate doublespeak.
2. Encourage employees to use their real names and use a personal touch
3. Anticipate that problems will occur, and set clear, public expectations in advance for how you will address (and redress) issues.
4. Cultivate a public dialogue with customers so they feel they are being heard and to demonstrate your accountability.
5. Demonstrate your good intentions by speaking plainly, earnestly, and candidly with customers about problems that arise.

### Customers:

1. Be understanding. Show the respect and kindness to company reps that you'd like shown to you.
2. Use your real identity, and foster your long-term reputation with the company.
3. Recognize that problems will occur, and give companies the information and time required to competently address issues.
4. Share issues directly with the company, or through a forum in which the company has an opportunity to respond, so it can work with you to solve problems.
5. Give companies the benefit of the doubt, and be open to what they have to say.