Lesson Plan © Easy Access English

# A MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

***Through comprehension, vocabulary building activities, discussion and opinion stating practice, improve your ability to discuss retail strategy.***

Preparation time 30 minutes

## Customer Experience

***"Most things still remain to be done..."*** **Ingvar Kamprad.**

**Activity 1 - Give your opinion.**

- ☑ In your opinion can a shopping experience be meaningful?
- ☑ What can make a shopping experience meaningful?
- ☑ Which recent shopping experiences have you had?
- ☑ Were they pleasant? Were they meaningful?
- ☑ What contributed to a good or bad experience for you?




**Activity 2 Study the article and then resume the main points made .** This article is an extract from a case study about factors in the retail environment which affect customer experience, in this extract the authors refer to various articles of research on the subject. **Source:(Isaksson/Suljanovic)**.

**Before your lesson:** Please **listen to the article,** (**Click Here**),before you read it and try to assess how much you understood. Try to answer the questions after listening to it. See how many you are able to answer. Then read the article and see how many you can answer again after reading the text.

**Questions**:

1. How does Barnes define emotional value?
2. Which examples of values which create efficient customer relationships does Barnes give?
3. What do managers need to recognize?
4. What do Gilmore and Pine say about a companies objectives?
5. What do Burns and Neiser say about attracting customers?
6. How should a company view customer relationships according to Schmitt?
7. What does Barnes say about meaningful customer relationships?
8. How were stores viewed recently compared to in the past?



- ☑ How many questions could you answer after listening to the article? _____
- ☑ How many questions could you answer after reading the article? _____

According to Barnes value is the single greatest contributor to the beginning of the process that leads from customer satisfaction to loyalty. He claims that companies can create two forms of value; functional value, which is related to their ability to be convenient, accessible, easy to use, and to save the customer time and money. Emotional value which is how the company and it's employees make the consumer feel important, valued and special.

Barnes gives examples of some forms of value that firms can create to develop efficient, functional customer relationships such as; convenience, access, product quality, value for money, accuracy and communications. Other forms of value that are more central to the feelings and emotions of the customers such as; shared history, values, goals, reliance, intimacy and trust. If a company does more for the customer than anyone else does and more than the customer would normally expect then they are creating value.

Managers need to recognize the importance of creating value for their customers in the form of experience. Offering products or services alone is not enough; organizations must provide their customers with satisfactory experience.

Gilmore & Pine claim that the way for a company to reach its customers is through creating an experience. They claim that companies should create market experiences by creating places – real or virtual – where customers can try out offerings as they immerse themselves in the experience. The objective for companies should be to rise above the role of a supplier of a particular product or service to become a partner in the creation of value, one on whom the customer can always rely to produce results.

Burns and Neiser claim that a store's environment can have the ability to attract customers, to entice purchases and to attract customers back to the store. In fact, a stores environment can be more influential than the product itself in the purchase decision and has the ability to affect the level of satisfaction experienced with the retailer.

Schmitt describes the shopping experience as something that includes much more than simply getting what you want. It focuses on all the events and activities that are part of it: the design of the shopping environment in the store or outline, the service personnel, how they greet you, whether you bought something extra, and how you felt while you were shopping. It is important for companies to view relationship from their customer's perspective. The relationship consists of more than just the customers buying product and services regularly. This is due to customers being aware of the difference between; repeat buying, based on convenience, non-emotive factors like price, or situations were the customers return repeated times to the same company or brand because they have a special feeling for them. What a brand or accompany means to a customer is dependent on how it fits with the customers values.

Barnes states that various forms of value exist, firms can create a type of value contributing to functional customer relationships based on; access, convenience, timeliness, product quality, value for money, competency and communications, among others. These factors can result in customers dealing with a firm again or to buy a brand again and again. Other forms of value are those dealing with the customers feeling and emotions like: goals, interests, shared history, beliefs; sense of commitment, reliance, social support, trust etc. When these types of value exist it contributes to emotional loyalty and more importantly and also more lasting relationships, leading to customers being resistant to competition from competitors that can seem more convenient and efficient.

Barnes also states that meaningful customer relationships are those characterized by high level of emotional value, which is created by more than functional and instrumental components; the company and the customer should share something in common it can be background, interests, values and beliefs. For companies to be able to have to meaningful customer relationships they have to gain a deeper understanding of the customers. This can be attained by gaining knowledge about the customers, what role the brand plays in the customer's life, now and in the future, as well

as being aware of the expectations of the customers. Real meaning derives from anticipation and a company addressing issues that the customer does not expect them to address.

Stores have for long been viewed as strictly a place for making transactions but according to Hu & Jasper stores have since the early years of modern retailing also served as a place for socializing and not only a place for purchasing goods. Shopping is a socially visible behavior which means that consumers seeks to satisfy a social need when shopping, often done while accompanied by friends or family. Consumers not only shop because of personal reasons but also for social motives To be able to attract a customer back, stores have to be able to introduce social cues, making the shopping environment more personal to the customers by being relevant to their lifestyles and values. Social cues can take two forms; personalized customer service and in-store graphics that state social meaning.

**Activity 3** - **Read the text and answer the questions** stating your opinion. Use one of the expressions from the the list below for each answer.

"IKEA is one of the world's largest retailers in the world. They have managed to make their products and services more popular based not only on price but by creating a unique shopping experience for the customers. Many customers make a decision regarding where to shop based on their attitude toward a mix of stores, the shopping centre environment and the entertaining shopping experience. The depth and breadth of IKEA's range means that the retailer truly offers a one-step shop which together with a family friendly restaurant and extended opening hours make the trip easy." Source:(Isaksson/Suljanovic).

1. *Which of the points above really offer opportunities for a 'meaningful' relationship with your customers in your opinion?*
2. *Which of the IKEA basics allow you to maintain all the points described above?*
3. *How can co-workers directly contribute to a meaningful shopping experience?*
4. *Is the shopping experience entertaining enough or could it be more fun?*
5. *Which elements help to make the experience more pleasurable?*

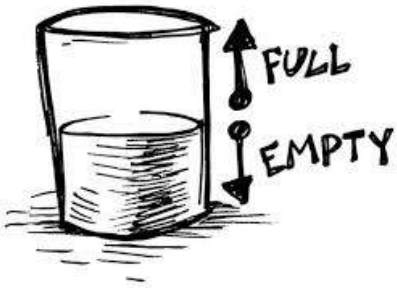
**Expressions**:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Basically,*** | ***Clearly,*** | ***Ideally,*** | ***In fact,*** |
| ***Ultimately,*** | ***Logically,*** | ***Supposedly,*** | ***In reality,*** |
| ***Obviously,*** | ***Arguably,*** | ***In all honestly,*** | ***I don't see why,*** |

**Activity 4** - **See what I mean?**

Here are some words with the root 'mean' in them. People often use the word 'sense' instead of 'meaning' but native speakers use 'meaning' more often. The words 'sense' and 'meaning' are synonyms and 'sense' means other things too. Let's look at the difference between 'sense' and 'meaning' first: Check out the dictionary.

- **I meant no offense, sorry!**
- **What does that mean?**
- **What do you mean?**
- **I don't understand what you mean?**
- **Sorry, could you explain what you meant by that?**
- **I'm not sure if I understand what you mean by that to be honest?**
- **Do you get my meaning?**
- **Do you see what I mean?**
- **He said that with real meaning!**
- **Don't worry he didn't mean anything by that!**
- **I mean it!**
- **I meant what I said!**
- **I didn't mean it!**
- **A meaningful experience**
- **A meaningful relationship**
- **He said that meaningfully**




**Activity 5 - Full of Meaning.**

☑ Are you a glass half full or a glass half empty type of person?

- **Fill the gaps in the sentences below using a word with - ful or - less.**

**The suffix -ful means full of.**
**The suffix -less means without.**

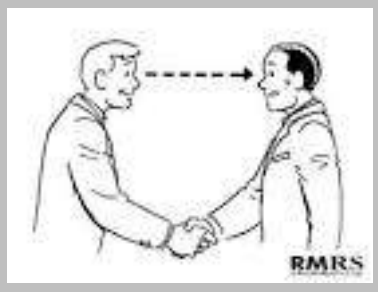
1. I am ……. to work for such a great company.
2. ……. people don't need furniture because they don't have homes.
3. The new range is really ……. it's such attractive colors and designs!
4. The chairs are pink, yellow, blue and green. So the room looks very……..
5. We can't take that bag I'm afraid, it's totally broken so it's ……..

**Activity 6** - Look at the images below, explain what they represent and then number them in order of their importance in contributing to a meaningful shopping experience.

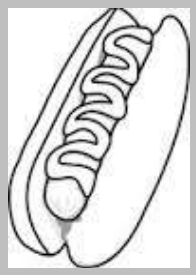
A



B




E



C



D

