



LiveAgent

DON'T PANIC

Ultimate Survival Guide

for Support Agents from Support Agents

Table of Contents

Don't Panic	3
1 Patience	4
2 Now it's time to make it personal	5
3 Know your product	6
4 Learn from your mistakes	6
5 Stay positive	7
On the road again	8
6 Teamwork	8
7 Make a customer feel taken care of	9
8 Screw speed (sort of). What matters is quality.	10
9 Do not "just respond". Act on your customer's behalf.	11
10 Self development. Do not underestimate importance of learning.	12
The last and the most important task	13

Don't Panic

Ultimate Survival Guide for Support Agents from Support Agents #1

You know it. Another day, another challenge. Working as an IT support guru has some perks... But still, it is your job and it puts food on your table. So why, just why won't you do it right for once?

Are you telling me you don't know how? Customers are driving you insane? Well, good for you, that you are reading this. We have prepared just what you needed: Ultimate Survival Guide, sounds pretty damn cool, right?

I believe that there is an equality to all humanity. We all suck.

Bill Hicks

Every single day at the office is different, every customer needs special treatment and your chat is ringing. Time to pick it up and start working. "Wake up Mr. Freeman. Wake up and smell the ashes. Right man in a wrong place, can make all the difference in the world." What you just read was a quote from one wise man. Who was it, you may ask. Well, G-Man from Half-Life 2. We just thought you may feel better in a shoes of one of the greatest heroes of videogame world. So, are you ready to make a difference? Read along.

We are going to present you few absolutely essential skills and kinds of attitude to provide top level customer support and how to stay sane while doing it.

1 Patience

Being patient sounds pretty simple. But it is actually one of the hardest things to achieve. Dealing with customers is often very hard. When they come to get support, they are usually frustrated and eager to get a solution for their issue as soon as possible.

While having a conversation with customers – always stay calm, polite and be as understanding as you can. Being patient does not end up with just you. Every single customer support specialist should be able to encourage patience in their clients. Do not forget to take your time and explain what is wrong, what can you do about it and how long is it going to take to make a fix.

More often than not, customers will not be satisfied with provided timeframe. It is essential that you make sure that they fully understand why is it so. Highest level of integrity is needed as well – basically you should NEVER lie. Honesty is the key. If you need to deliver bad news, do it without hesitation. This is when your communication skills may come in handy. Check next step.

We are dealing with incredibly impatient customers every single day. What helps us here is keeping the distance in these situations. Let the customer shout his anger out on chat, give him some time so he can show us how frustrated he is. Then hit him with empathy, understanding and logical explanation. Trust us, it will help in most situations.

If customer makes you angry - make sure that he is not aware of this fact. Keep your emotions to yourself and scream inside your own head. Or think about cute kittens. Google them. Have a look. Feeling better already?



Tom Wootton rewarded Martin Svitek

Nov 17 (23 days ago)

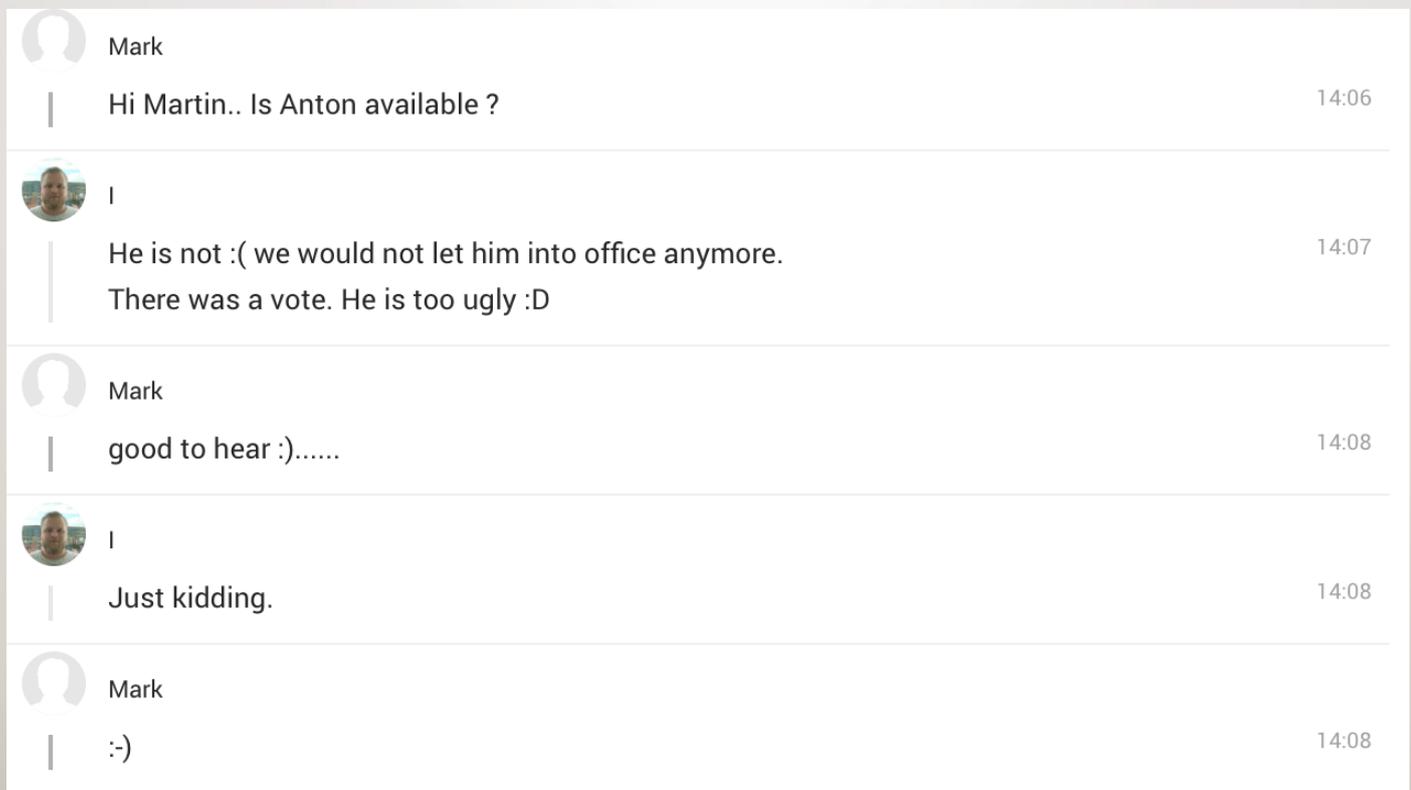
Martin went way beyond the call and helped me with problems that are not even caused by your software. You guys are all the best!

2 Now it's time to make it personal

We all have experience with it. Dissatisfied customer tends to be rude and impatient. Explaining some things to not-so-well educated person in particular field could be difficult and frustrating. That is the moment when your communication skills may shine. Always stay on point, do not get emotionally involved and keep things simple. To make a conversation bearable, try to make your customer feel that you are treating him as a personality, human being, even if he is on the other side of the world.

Trust your guts. If you feel that person on the other side is chatty, ask a few personal questions about his hobbies, how is he today or what is his favorite food :) Tone of the whole conversation can very well change if you try this trick.

It is up to you to decide what kind of person are you talking to. Friendly tone and occasional joke can make things smoother. But never forget – conversation is about your customer and his issues, not about you.

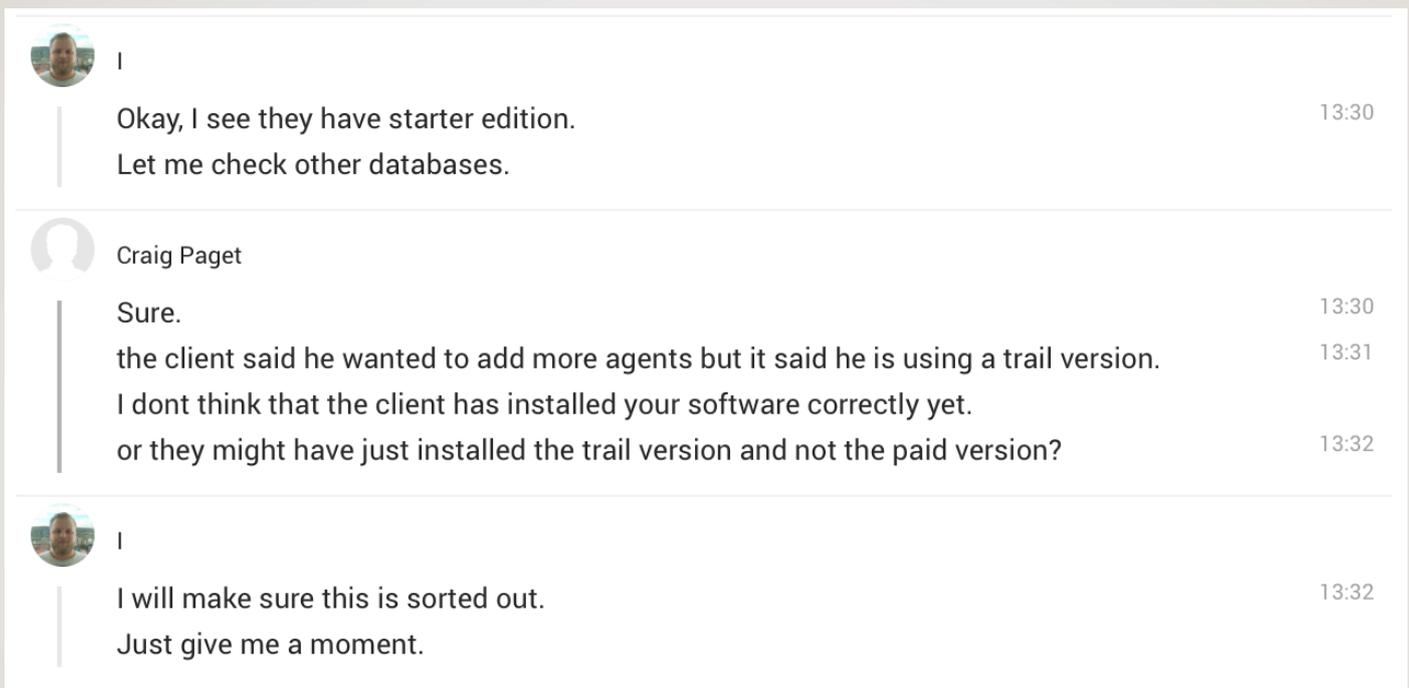


The screenshot shows a chat interface with five messages. Each message is preceded by a circular profile picture icon. The messages are as follows:

- Mark** (grey icon): Hi Martin.. Is Anton available ? 14:06
- I** (blue icon): He is not :(we would not let him into office anymore. There was a vote. He is too ugly :D 14:07
- Mark** (grey icon): good to hear :)..... 14:08
- I** (blue icon): Just kidding. 14:08
- Mark** (grey icon): :-) 14:08

3 Know your product

There will be many situations when you'll not be sure what to say or how to solve a particular problem. There is no shame in it and no shame in admitting it. Do not hesitate to contact one of your senior colleagues for answers and advice. Also, make customer aware that you are double-checking the issue with one of your top guys. It will make him feel taken care of.



The screenshot shows a chat interface with three messages. The first message is from the customer, the second is from the support agent 'Craig Paget', and the third is from the customer. The messages are separated by horizontal lines.

Customer: I
Okay, I see they have starter edition.
Let me check other databases. 13:30

Craig Paget:
Sure. 13:30
the client said he wanted to add more agents but it said he is using a trail version. 13:31
I dont think that the client has installed your software correctly yet.
or they might have just installed the trail version and not the paid version? 13:32

Customer: I
I will make sure this is sorted out.
Just give me a moment. 13:32

4 Learn from your mistakes

Are you doing IT support and have provided wrong information, which mislead a client? No worries. We all have been there. If you noticed that you actually made a mistake, never hesitate to go to your team and ask a question. Let them explain to you what you did wrong, so you never repeat the same mistake again. Another important thing is to do a follow-up with a customer, apologize and make things clear.

They are humans, just like you, and in most cases, they will understand and appreciate your honesty.



Andrej Saxon ● wrote

Nov 23 (17 days ago) ▼

Hello David,

this is a follow up on our chat conversation. Can you please ask all your agents to log out and log in into the LiveAgent please? I know it is simple move, however it can solve the chat issue. :)

Regards,

Andrej Saxon
Support Guru
Quality Unit, LLC

View ticket history: http://support.qualityunit.com/ticket_295

.... Answer delivered by LiveAgent - <https://www.ladesk.com>

5 Stay positive

Occasionally you will interact with customers you will not satisfy no matter how hard you try. Hardest thing to do is not to get emotionally involved and stay on top. We fully understand it is easier to say than to actually do it. When you get frustrated, there is high possibility that you will pass your emotions to another conversation or support issue. Now is the time to take a break. Get cup of coffee, play your favorite song or crack a joke or two about what just happened. Don't get angry, take it easy and rather than packing your stuff to go out on a revenge mission – entertain your colleagues with you experience. Bill Hicks once said: *"There is nothing so serious, you cannot have a good laugh about it"*.



Elaine Watson rewarded Andrej Saxon

Nov 30 (9 days ago)

I loved his last comment, "remember we are here for you".

Feeling like you could use some more tips? Stay tuned for Part 2 of the Ultimate Survival Guide for Support Agents from Support Agents.

On the road again

Ultimate Survival Guide for Support Agents from Support Agents #2

Have you read first part of our survival guide? Do you still feel lost? Help is on the way.

“ Behind every beautiful thing there’s been some kind of pain

Bob Dylan, Not dark yet

6 Teamwork

Being a strong individual is important. We can all agree on that. In case of providing best possible customer support, lone wolf tactics will simply not cut it. You have to rely on your teammates and their knowledge. Humans are not created to be the same.

Good teamwork is not just about asking for help from your fellow colleagues. This is the space where your personality can shine. Be the one who will stand up and do everything to make customer experience better. Don't be selfish and provide your assistance to your coworkers as well. Newcomers especially. Stand together Brothers in Arms!



7 Make a customer feel taken care of

Hey Support,

I have Issue X and it's causing me this problem. Can you solve this for me? I am really frustrated, please do something ASAP!

Thanks!

Customer XY

Response from support (24 hours later):

Hello Customer,

Issue X cannot be solved by us.

We are truly sorry for the inconvenience.

Thanks,

Support Team Representative

It does not sound right, does it? Imagine that you would be in your customer's shoes. Would you be satisfied with answer like that? Yeah, thought so...

We do understand that there are things and areas not connected to your job nor they are your responsibility to play around with. Is there a better way of how to explain that to your customers? Just change the tone of the conversation, go the extra mile and let the world know you did it!

Dear Customer,

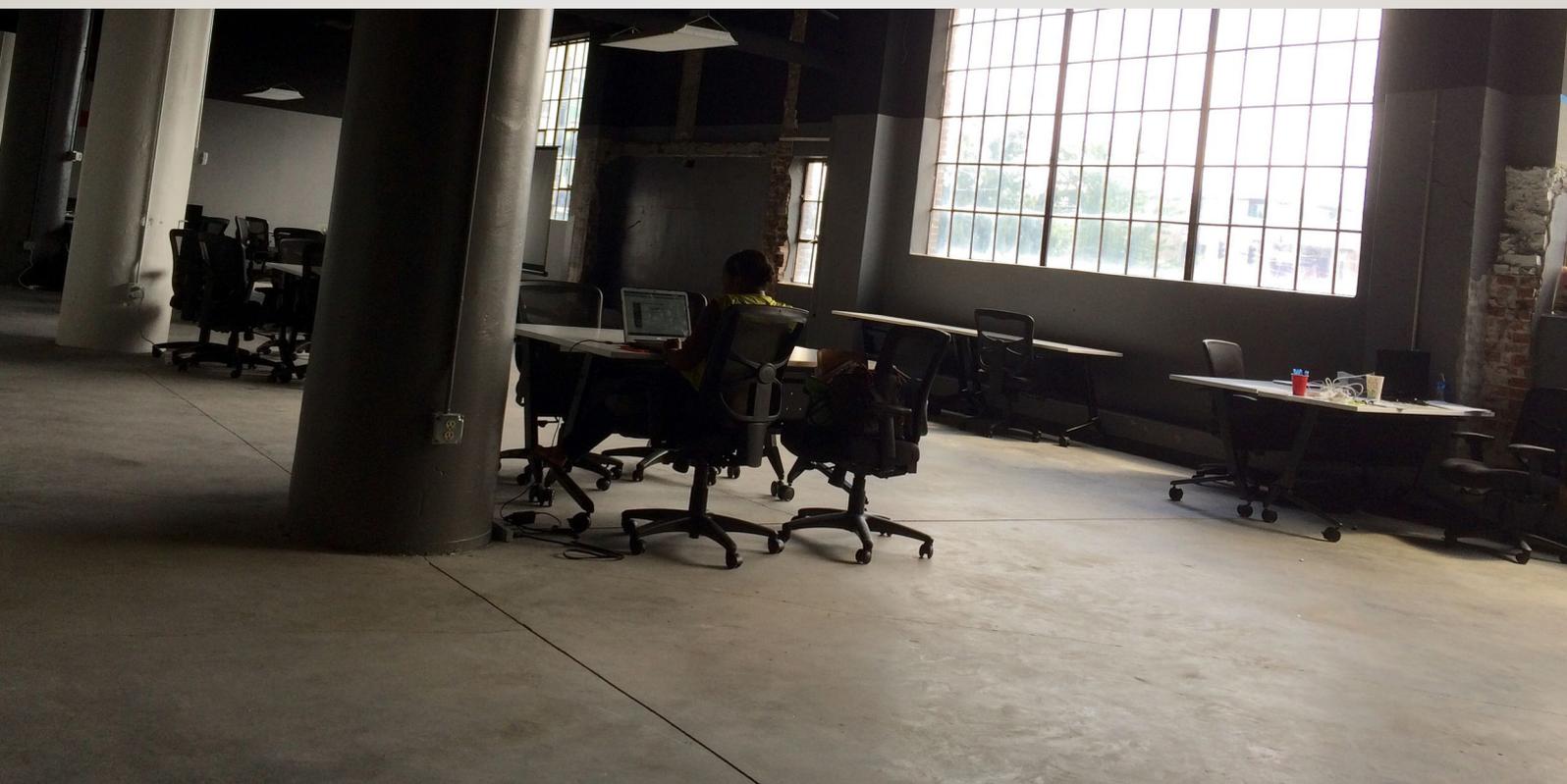
Sadly, I was not able to solve issue X on our server. I involved my management and senior colleagues about the nature of the problems you are currently facing. Sadly, I have been informed that our system cannot solve issue X.

However, if you can be more specific about what you are trying to accomplish, I could offer more assistance!

Thanks and please let me know if you have any other issues or questions!

Customer Support Rep

See? Both responses carry the same message: We cannot do that. It is not our fault. What is important is the difference in tone of the communication and how it would affect your customers. Make them feel taken care of!



8 Screw speed (sort of). What matters is quality.

We know, we know. Your management most probably uses some “genius” spreadsheet with even more “genius” way of calculating your performance index. Well, we may have a pro tip just for you: Tell your manager to make feedback from your customer equally important.

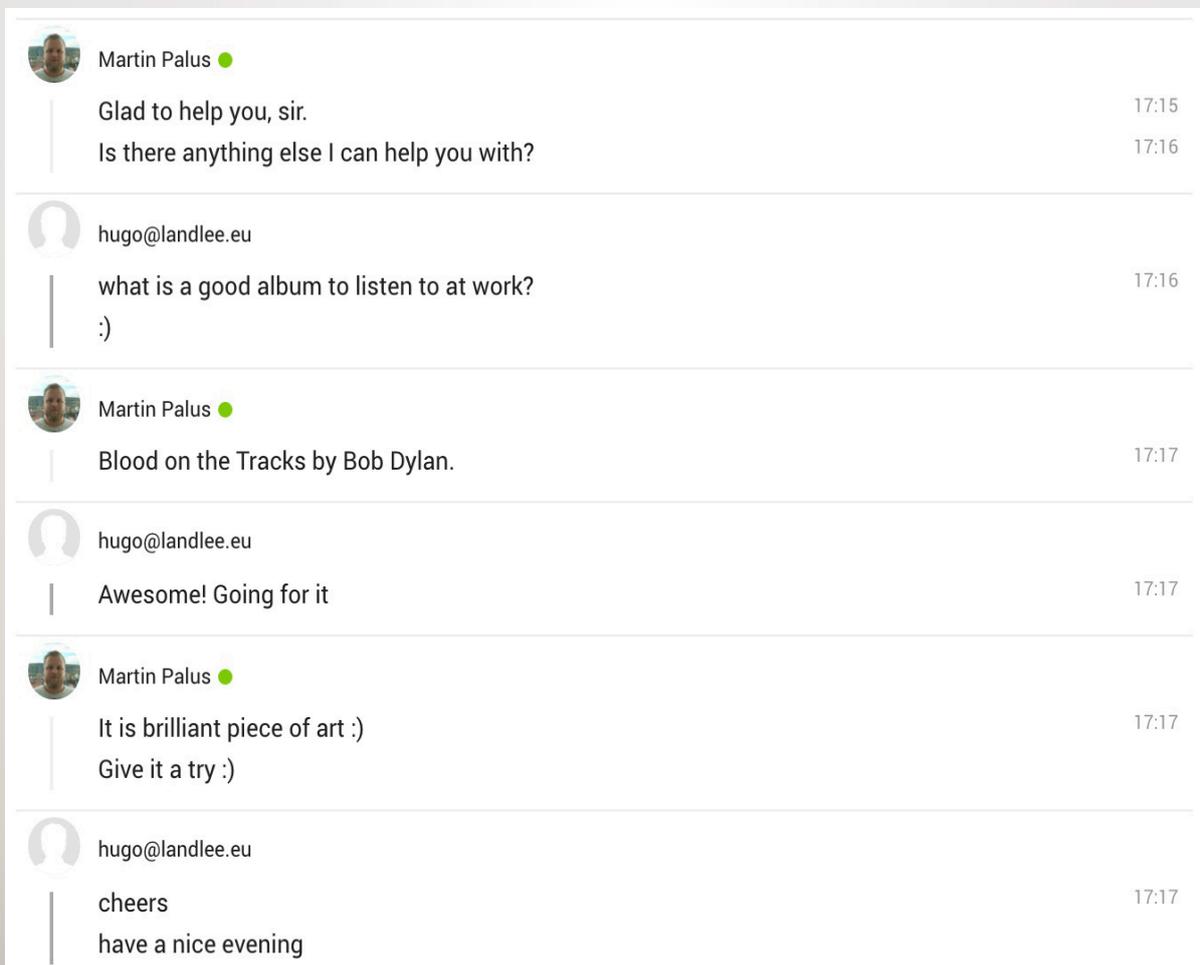
Customer support as a whole, is not about picking huge numbers of chats and solving ticket with so-so answers you send just because you have to respond somehow... Good support agent should really take some time, dig deeper and once he provides assistance - makes it count. At the end of the day it will be easier for him (no storm of emails), for your customers (no confusion, all information received at once), your management (satisfied customer = good evaluation) and most importantly your company's image.

9 Do not “just respond”. Act on your customer’s behalf.

You probably have tons of canned messages, ready to be send in mere seconds. As well as brilliant knowledge base full of useful articles, that you can use as a guidance for your customers. Right now you are probably great team player, always calm and positive and providing both quality and quantity. So what is next for you, how can you go even further?

Now is the time to use your sixth sense. Trust your guts. If you have a feeling that your customers are really confused and any kind of self-help is ineffective – act on their behalf. Quite often they can have just a marginal problem you have seen thousand times before. Why would you make your customer read ten pages of fully fledged manual to fix the issue? Do it for them. They will appreciate it like nothing else.

This will have a huge effect on your customers’ loyalty. It very well may be the most important factor that determines if they are going to stick with your company for coming years.



The screenshot shows a chat conversation with the following messages:

- Martin Palus** (17:15): Glad to help you, sir.
- Martin Palus** (17:16): Is there anything else I can help you with?
- hugo@landlee.eu** (17:16): what is a good album to listen to at work? :)
- Martin Palus** (17:17): Blood on the Tracks by Bob Dylan.
- hugo@landlee.eu** (17:17): Awesome! Going for it
- Martin Palus** (17:17): It is brilliant piece of art :)
Give it a try :)
- hugo@landlee.eu** (17:17): cheers
have a nice evening

10 Self development. Do not underestimate importance of learning.

Try to identify your strong skills and make them even better. Think about areas where you can improve your knowledge and do not give up – go out there, ask questions, use Google, study and you will get better.

Even legendary Jeremy Clarkson once said: *"Speed has never killed anyone."* Suddenly becoming stationary - that's what gets you. We assume you want to move forward. Learning opportunities are everywhere, embrace them.

The last and the most important task

Ultimate Survival Guide for Support Agents from Support Agents #3

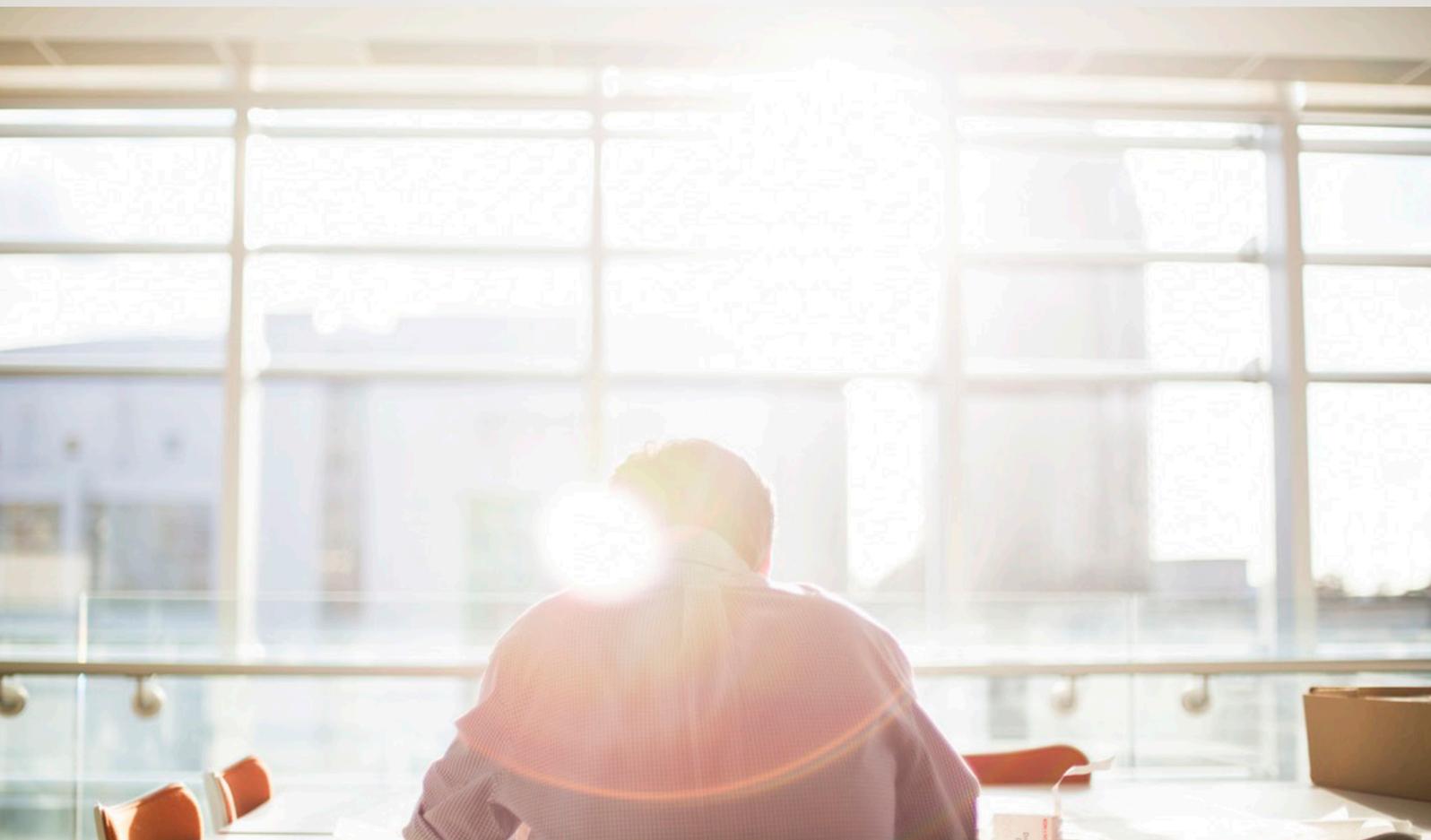
So you have read our **Ultimate Survival Guide series** and you feel ready to show your excellence? Congratulations! We hope you got the basics and now you are ready to deliver.

There is one last thing we want to remind you. Be aware it takes lots of effort to achieve this last goal, however it is the most important one. To keep it short it all comes down to this –

Be a decent human being.

“
“
May you grow up to be righteous
May you grow up to be true
May you always know the truth
And see the lights surrounding you
May you always be courageous
Stand upright and be strong
May you stay forever young

Bob Dylan, Forever Young



Our last point is not just about providing excellent customer support and experience. It is about life itself. We encourage you to be a grateful, sympathetic and helpful person. To listen and answer with respect. To have dignity and highest level of integrity.

Customers that you will be dealing with are just like you – humans. You have never walked in their shoes, as they never had in yours. Your encounters with them will be like meetings with a stranger in need. We all should always try to be helpful and understanding in situations like these.

In case of live chat or responding to simple e-mail, always have in mind that you get paid for actually helping people. We know, we know – you are not a neurosurgeon or fire fighter, but still – you are helping people in need and you should be proud about that.

You'll never know, when are you going to find yourself in the same situation as your customers. Maybe, you'll run into some issues with your new laptop. Or your fridge will malfunction. Questions stands: Who are you going to call? Ghostbusters? Not this time. You guessed it – customer support.



It's incredibly important to keep this on your mind and repeat it to yourself as a mantra. While providing support, you are creating value and building relationships which may last for years. If you keep your customers satisfied, they will incline to buy more and more from your company, you will make your living and put food on your table.

Doing that you'll gain experience that is at the end of the day, far more important than knowing how to write a code or how to replace a malfunctioning motherboard on a PC. Answer by answer, chat by chat – if you have the right attitude, you will become a better person.

It is worth fighting for, isn't it? We are fully aware that there will be times when you will feel down, frustrated and DOA right after you turn on your computer. Please bare in mind that you are not alone in a blinking light. On the other side of the world, there may be a customer feeling exactly the same way. Last thing he or she needs is someone on support, who will not treat him with respect. Are you saying that customers are often rude, demanding and have impossible expectations? Welcome to a little thing called life.

The biggest challenge is to stay on top of things. Be something more. Be a better person than the one screaming at you from the other side of the world. Offer empathy, do not get lost in pride. Forgive the people you meet. They are human beings just like you.



LiveAgent is a complete customer support platform with live chat integration and all Helpdesk features.

Ready to take the next step?

Do it before your competition does. Try out our 14-days free trial!

Try it free

Mailing Address

United States territory

Quality Unit, LLC

616 Corporate Way, Suite 2-3278

Valley Cottage, NY 10989

USA

European Union & Worldwide

Quality Unit, s.r.o.

Tomanova 80/C

SK-83107 Bratislava

Slovakia (European Union)

Stay in touch

www.ladesk.com

support@ladesk.com

 facebook

 Google+

 Twitter