

BY LAURA DURHAM

Most South Africans visit a supermarket regularly. Some more than others and some not at all – because they have someone to do it for them. Regardless, gripes about service and store experience run rampant on the social networks – just trend #supermarket on Twitter and you'll see how many negative comments pop up every second!

Supermarket & Retailer therefore decided to use Facebook to gather up some of these gripes in the hope that store managers take note, especially if they're ignoring the social media reality!

We asked:

If you could give your local supermarket manager some advice, complaint or compliment, what would it be?

- If there are 10 cash registers available, don't only make use of two.
- Make sure you have enough staff at your tills. 50 tills and 8 tellers during peak rush hour is not cool @checkers!
- Restocking of shelves should be done before and after the rush not during!! Tellers shouldn't look like it's a mission to help you even if they are bored!! I also like smiles.
- Packet packers...you can fit more than 3 items in a packet. And placing bread and eggs at the bottom is NOT intelligent.
- To ask the tellers to acknowledge your existence while ringing up your groceries.
- Faster tillers, I have to factor in fifteen minutes for the actual payment – speed it is not a word somehow.
- Don't scream at employees in front of all your customers at the till and have the basics on your shelves and make sure your card machines all work so you don't have to swipe my card 3 times at 3 different machines!



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All customers expect from a cashier is a smile and friendly greeting – a common courtesy that seldom happens free of charge these days!

Crunch time for cashiers



Cashiers are the brand ambassadors of your store – make sure they realise what an important role they play in a customer's loyalty!

Do you notice a common thread here?

Other than a customer having to search down a staff member to enquire about a missing price, the most customer-staff interaction occurs at the checkout. And this interaction is never very enjoyable it seems. You should consider cashiers to be your store brand ambassadors because how they treat the customer creates a lasting impression of the store as a whole

- I'd love if there were prices that matched the actual items above it. Nothing worse than not being able to tell how much something costs.
 - I wish you would speak English to me rather than carry on a conversation with the packer in another language.
 - It gets really awkward when no packer arrives and as the customer, I am expected to pack my own groceries.
 - Tellers need to be informed about their own company's loyalty cards!
 - To compliment managers who are actually on the floor and available for customers' inevitable issues at the checkout!
 - Please give me my 5c change!
 - Going grocery shopping is a pain – but getting to the checkout and seeing only three tills open and the longest queues makes me want to just leave my basket and walk out.
 - Open more tills! Stop narrowing shopping aisles!
- **Greetings** – as soon as the cashier closes the till for the previous customer, her attention must be on the next one with a smile and friendly greeting. It should not move onto a social conversation with the packer. Furthermore, if the cashier shift is about to end, she must inform the waiting customer in advance instead of letting them unpack their groceries and then have to wait for the new cashier to get ready.
 - **Loyalty** – if your store has a loyalty programme, the cashier should ask the customer for the correct card. If the customer isn't part of it, the cashier should have a stack of sign-up forms ready. Of course, this delay might irritate waiting customers so another option would be to direct the customer to the information or customer care desk in-store to learn more about the programme.
 - **Packets** – the cashier must always ask the customer if he/she would like a plastic bag for the groceries – don't assume because every bag costs the customer. It is sometimes difficult to judge how many will actually be needed so rather give the packer too few and then ring through an extra one near the end.
 - **Apologise** – if something goes wrong with the scanner, a product breaks or anything else holds up the customer – apologise to them if it is the store's fault (even if it is not the cashier's). If no packer arrives to pack the groceries, it is up to the cashier to call another one and as a last resort, offer to pack the bags themselves.
 - **Smile and respect** – cashiers should know how important every customer is to the store. Showing them respect, through a cheerful smile, will go a long way. And it will probably brighten the cashier's day too!

Build brand ambassadors

Conduct regular training sessions with your cashiers over and above general staff training.

It is important that you go right back to basics and discuss some of the following:

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