

“THE RIGHT RELATIONSHIP IS EVERYTHING”. This is Chase’s slogan. While it is debatable that Chase can actually have “the right relationship” with its millions of customers worldwide, the slogan is certainly on target. The real question is: how does your bank establish the right relationship with its best customers? The answer varies by type of customer, but it is your largest depositors and borrowers who are most crucial to your bank. Here are some ways to help ensure that your best customers are your most satisfied customers.

1. Each account should be assigned the *same primary and second officer* rather than a variety of different officers. The most profitable customers should also know the bank’s senior management team. This is a personal relationship larger bank’s can’t match.
2. Officers should review the relationship twice annually to seek ways to further develop the relationship and improve satisfaction. Even little things matter. For example, a customer without a safe deposit box is likely to be far less loyal than a customer with a box.
3. Officers should take the time to get to know the primary account holders and their families. Business relationships should include knowing the company’s decision-makers.
4. Officers should also correspond with customers regularly by answer all emails on the same day, mailing letters to customers at least each quarter, inviting customers to social events at least annually. It is important to say “thank you” often by sending birthday cards, holiday cards, thank you notes and by making unexpected phone calls for no other reason than to say “thank you.”
5. If your bank does not provide direct dial access to individuals in the bank, your best customers should be given an exclusive number to call, as well as a toll free number.
6. Customers should be able to contact officers directly, rather than rely on bookkeeping or customer service.
7. Better customer should enjoy expanded perks such as leather checkbook covers, custom checks, gold or platinum debit cards (with higher spending limits), premium credit cards, larger preauthorized overdraft allowances, etc. Also, to avoid irritating nickel-and-dime service charges, better customer should have a relationship account that eliminates most fees and provides benefits such as premium CD rates and discounted loan rates.
8. Your best customers should also be identifiable by a CSR on the CIF screen with a code or symbol signifying that these customers are to receive special treatment.

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