

ARE YOU AN IDEAL CONSUMER? CHECK OUT

Whenever you purchase a product of similar quality and the same brand at a lesser price than your neighbour, you tend to believe you are the best consumer and make others also believe so. Even a small monetary difference inflates your ego. Pricewise you may be a good consumer. But is that all that makes for an intelligent consumer? A well informed consumer is one who not only purchased at lesser price but is also conscious of his rights and responsibilities.

What are the qualities you should possess to brand yourself an ideal consumer? Recently, the department of trade and industry in Philippines published a flyer listing out the qualities of an ideal consumer. Check out where you stand.

An ideal consumer should always be conscious of his rights. In India the Consumer Protection Act guarantees the consumer six rights: right to safety, right to choose, right to information, right to redress, right to healthy environment and right to consumer education. You should be ready to take action whenever your rights are violated. For example, in case you are sold a defective product you should bring it to the notice of the seller right up to the manufacturer. Keen observation before taking decisions in the marketplace is another quality of an ideal consumer. Avoid impulsive purchase, particularly when seller adopts aggressive marketing strategies.

An ideal consumer never goes after brands but ensures quality. There is a misconception among consumers that products of popular brands are always good quality stuff. Recently the Consumer Education Research Centre (CERC) tested some popular brands of irons. It was found that all the popular brands failed while some unknown brand passed all quality tests.

Manufacturers, sellers and distributors devise various methods to attract customers. Huge sums of money are spent to study the buying psychology of consumers. The idea is to identify your weaknesses and plan a suitable selling strategy. But an ideal consumer should upgrade his purchasing skills. As a consumer you should study the motive behind advertisements, discount sales, bargains and keep abreast with latest information.

An ideal consumer is moderate and wise in spending although what is moderate is subjective and depends on your earning capacity. Money management is an important component of consumer protection. One who examines and reads labels is essentially an ideal consumer. The best source of information for consumer is the print on the product. Labels contain information both mandatory and voluntary. The Drugs and Cosmetics Act and other rules make it mandatory for manufacturers to print some information on the product.

An ideal consumer will not or should not keep quiet and suffer due to the mistakes of the manufacturer or seller. When you notice a defect in the product or difference in price, you should bring it to the notice of the manufacturer. As a consumer you have the right to redress. An ideal consumer should be reasonable but firm in seeking redress for grievances.
