

Achieving consistent and reliable customer satisfaction



The aim of this booklet is to look at the things needed to achieve consistent and reliable customer satisfaction.

What is Customer Service?

Customer service is about the return of customers as well as the satisfaction of customers when they leave. Customer service consists of values and training. Staff members must follow the values of customer service so that service can keep customers happy.

Why is Customer Service Important?

Customer service is important because its main goal is to keep customers satisfied.

Ten Rules For Good Customer Service

Commit to quality service. Staff members need to be dedicated in making every customer's experience a positive one. Always aim above customer expectations.

Know your products. Make sure you have a detailed knowledge of every product and service so that the trust and confidence of customers are won easily. Have knowledge of the company's products, services, and policies. Be prepared for all types of questions from customers.

Know your customers. Try to learn everything you can about your customers so that you'll be aware of what they like to buy. Talk to customers and listen to everything they have to say. This will allow you to find the reason why the customer is unhappy with the services and products provided.

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Treat people with courtesy and respect. Be positive and reasonable whenever you're in contact with a customer. Use satisfying phrases – “ Sorry to keep you waiting,” “ Thanks for your order,” “ You're welcome,” and “ It's been a pleasure helping you”. This will raise your customers' satisfaction.

Never argue with a customer. You know very well that the customer isn't always right. However, it is important that you do not focus on the mistakes of a particular situation; instead, concentrate on how to fix it. Research shows that 7 out of 10 customers will do business with a company again if that business resolves a complaint in their favour.

Don't leave customers in limbo. Customers will be more likely to come back if their call backs, repairs, letters and emails are handled with urgency.

Always provide what you promise. Don't make a promise to a customer you can't keep. You'll lose credibility and customers if you promise to them aren't fulfilled. Always apologise to a customers if you can't fulfil your promise. Offer compensation like free delivery.

Assume that your customers tell the truth. Always take a customers complain to heart and do your best to find a solution for the complaint.

Focus on making customers – not on sales. Remember that quality is better than volume. Customer satisfaction should be the first priority instead of sales.

Make it easy to buy. Any form of buying products should be easy for the customer.

Scope Of Job Role

Staff must be able to distinguish what they cannot and can do as part of their job role. Staff should be able to use their initiative to resolve simple problem's raised by customers. They may not have the authority to make promises to customers therefore they should know when they should and shouldn't make promises to customers.

Make sure that every customers needs and expectations are met and be responsible.

Your typical duties would include:

managing a team of customer service advisers

handling difficult enquiries or complaints

training staff to give a high standard of service

making sure that staff understand company procedures and consumer and data protection laws

developing customer service policies

setting up customer feedback or complaints procedures

reporting on levels of customer service and looking for ways to improve standards

recruiting and appraising staff

issuing refunds or compensation if necessary

helping and advising customers by telephone, e-mail or face-to-face

handling face-to-face enquiries from customers.

managing a team of customer services staff;

helping to develop a customer service policy for an entire organisation

You should be able to handle customer enquiries and complaints.

If you're a customer's first contact with an employer it will be best to meet with the customer face to face. Your work may include:

answering customer enquiries or passing them on to another department

giving information and helping to solve problems

selling products or taking orders

arranging services for customers, such as booking tickets or setting up insurance policies

handling complaints, referring to a manager if necessary

entering customer information onto a computer database

taking payment for goods or services

Issuing refunds.

Ensure that the customer is at the heart of everything we do.

Make sure you can demonstrate interest and drive with brilliant communication skills. Be focused on teamwork and customers service.

The ideal candidate for this opportunity:

You will work efficiently and independently in a team environment.

This role will require you to multi task, and you will be comfortable managing a workload and prioritizing responsibilities accordingly.

You will be highly motivated and professional at all times.

Have excellent communication and presentation skills.

Have a can do attitude and a great sense of humor!

The job of customer service representative is one of the most important functions in a business because it deals directly with customers who may be:

seeking information

making a complaint

seeking to speak to a specific company official

ordering products

calling to compliment the company on a good product or company experience

The customer service representative is the voice of the company and his/her service reflects directly on the company's image.

Knowledge Of Products/Service

Staff cannot provide their customers with accurate information and advice unless they know what products or services the business offer. This may include ' best buys, what products/services meet customers' individual needs and recommendations of other customers.

Product knowledge means more sales. It is difficult to successfully sell to a customer if we cannot show how a specific product will be perfect for a customer's needs.

Strengthens Communication Skills

Different techniques and methods can be used to present products to customers if you know your products in detail. Strong communications skills can help a salesperson present products or services depending on the type of customer.

Boosts Enthusiasm

Seeing someone completely keen about a product is one of the bestselling tools. As you generate excitement for the product, you remove any uncertainty the product may not be the best solution for that customer. The easiest way to become keen is to truly believe in the product.

Grows Confidence

Be confident when selling a product or service because a customer will not complete a sale if he/she feels that the salesperson isn't confident with the product or service. Learning and understanding a product in detail will help you grow your confidence.

Assists in Overcoming Objections

Objections made by customers may be struck down with realistic information regarding the product. That information usually comes in the form of product knowledge. Being well skilled in not only your products, but similar products sold by competitors, allow you to easily counter objections.

How to Gain Product Knowledge

Marketing Literature

Sales Reps

Training Sessions

Testimonials

Role Playing

Practical Use

It is important to understand how the product is made, the value of the product, how the product should and can be used, and what products work well together.

What to Know About Your Products

Pricing structure

Styles, colours or models available

History of the product

Any special manufacturing process

How to use the product

Product distribution and delivery

Servicing, warranty and repair information

It will/may take a while before you can fluently have complete knowledge of your product/service especially new products/services. Overtime you should/will be able to confidently provide correct information to customers fluently. This confidence will increase and improve the sales results of the business.

Staff Attitude And Behaviour

Customer service personnel are expected by customers to continuously have positive attitude and to behave in a courteous manner.

Attitude:

Your attitude is influenced by the way you think. Being depressed makes you negative. Being fed up makes you bored and you'll be friendly if you enjoy being with other people. You will be focused and motivated if you enjoy doing your best. Even though this is important when dealing with customers many employers that that the most valuable attribute is to be positive. There are many reasons for this:

People prefer being with others who are positive because they are open, approachable and easy to be with. They make others feel better!

Be positive. Always think ' YES'. Look at problems or difficulties as a challenge and an opportunity to show what you can do.

Reflect commitment and interest in every customer and be organised.

Always want to do your best.

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Behaviour:

This is closely linked to the attitude because this influences what you do and why you do it.

Be positive. Be cheerful and friendly.

Enjoy working with others. Behave in courteously, be thoughtful and respect others. Do not back-bite, be hurtful or mislead people to get your own way.

If you want to do a good job. Do not cheat employers, tell lies, arrive late, leave early without authorisation or pretend to be sick.

Be mature and professional.

Interpersonal Skills

The way you behave when you are dealing with other people is related with your social skills. Being popular and adored with friends and family does not necessarily mean that you will be great to work with or employ. Neither does it mean that you will automatically be skilled at handling customers. This is because the social skills you need at work are different from the skills you use/have in your personal life. You **MUST** always be professional, courteous towards staff and interested in helping customers.

Timing

Staff members should always know how to approach customers. Timing should be one of the main priorities of customer service. Keep appointments with customers, e. g. deliveries. Make appointments at your customers' convenience.

Timing Is Everything

Effective time management would allow you to...

Impress more customers without added staff, equipment, or office space

Meet deadlines

Pursue opportunities instead of recovering from problems

Reduce stress

Accomplish more each day

Time management will help the productivity and efficiency levels rise. This give you more time to complete critical tasks that can and will improve customer service.

Accessibility/Availability

Customers expect products or services to be readily available or easy to access when they go into a shop or business for a particular product or service. If a products is unavailable customers will expect the business to order in the item or take their name and call them when the products is available. A happy customer will give repeat business and stay loyal to the organization.

Meeting Specific Customer Needs

In order to keep customers coming back, talk to customers and make sure that products and services meet the customers requirements.

TALK WITH CUSTOMERS

Make sure you understand customer expectations so you can meet them.

Ways to determine this include:

Meeting with customers

Asking open creative questions about what is required

Using a Content mirror to ensure understanding and show you are listening and interested

Taking copious notes for future reference!

Holding a team meeting afterward to compare notes and pinpoint exact needs and wants

Returning to the customer if needed for clarification before beginning a project

Even though many customers know what they require, some simply do not. Some customers will know what they want but it won't have anything to do with what they need. It will be up to customer service to draw the needs and wants out of them in order to create a plan and goals.

When talking to customers ask them about the company's strength and weaknesses.

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STEPS TO MEET THESE NEEDS AND WANTS

Whether you are working with a team on a project or you are trying to sell products or services, the steps you take should include:

Brainstorming possible solutions to issues presented by the customer

Outlining project goals and assigning tasks

Determining the correct product that will meet the needs and wants of customers

Presenting solutions to the customer

Always check with a customer to make sure you are on the right. Make sure that customers know that they are a priority and that you are trying your best to meet their requirements. In order to be a successful customer service it is important to keep customers informed.

Working Under Pressure

On a quiet day anyone can be charming to customers. However, it's another matter when you are busy. To ensure that you deal with customers in an appropriate manner follow these 4 things:

Keep calm and don't panic

Realise that you can't always multitask and must do one thing at a time

Deal with the most urgent thing first

Work as fast as you can but stay pleasant at the same time

Customer expectations for speed, quality, cost control and delivery have increased and customers complain when their expectations are not met. When customers complain it can be a very stressful experience and remaining calm under pressure is the key to holding long-term customer loyalty.

Confirming Service Meets Needs And Expectations

Once customers have made or used a service good businesses never forget their customers. They call them, email them or write to them all to ascertain that the customers' needs and expectations have been met.

Always check with the customers to make sure their expectations have been met if you deliver a product or service or if you show the customer a process. This will let the customer know that you want them to be satisfied. If customers aren't satisfied, follow company procedures to fix the problems that customers may have.

Satisfied customers = regular customers = more supporters/customers

Dealing With Problems

A customer service representative has to deal with many different types of problems. The rules for dealing with unhappy customers include:

Letting them talk without interrupting

Checking that you have the right facts

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Doing your best to help

Referring the problem to a supervisor if it is serious

If a customer's needs and expectations are not met they'll have problems with the company. Minor problems are expected to be dealt by your own initiative. You should always refer serious problems to your supervisor.

Always remember:

If a customer's problem is beyond you ask for advice from superiors and never make promises to a customer that you can't keep or isn't in your power to make.

A customer's problem MUST always be important and solvable. Note down their problem in detail and decide how best you can help and reassure the customer that you will do what you can to help. No matter what the problem is never give the customer the impression that their problems are unimportant or unsolvable.