

professional development portfolio

Customer Service

Customer needs and expectations are rapidly changing and internal and external customers are making increasing demands on their suppliers. As a result, everyone in an organisation needs to possess good customer service skills.

There are obvious benefits to providing good customer service, not least an enhanced reputation and repeat business. However maintaining service excellence will also increase productivity, improve job satisfaction, minimise stress amongst staff and the need for rework, and will create a better atmosphere for both employees and customers.

Customer Service enables the learner to:

- Understand what customer service is and how the organisation, staff and customers benefit from providing high levels of customer service
- Gain customer confidence, develop rapport and maintain relationships, therefore encouraging customer trust and loyalty
- Communicate decisions and suggestions clearly and appropriately in a variety of mediums, e.g. face-to-face, by phone or by email
- Use customer satisfaction surveys to develop and improve on the standards of service and therefore enhance the perceived value of the service provided
- Deliver difficult messages, say “no” and remain positive so that they can handle difficult situations effectively



Learning outcomes

The role of customer service

- What is customer service?
- How does the organisation benefit from delivering high levels of service?
- What is the impact of poor customer service standards over a long period?
- Whose responsibility is it to deliver high levels of service?
- What is the difference between internal and external customer service?

Building relationships

- Why is it important to develop relationships?
- How do I gain customer confidence?
- How do I develop rapport with a customer?
- What do I have to do to maintain a relationship?

Effective communication

- What communication skills do I need?
- What questioning and listening skills do I need?
- How do I deal with customers on the telephone?
- How do I deal with customers face to face?
- How do I provide information efficiently?

Handling difficult situations

- How do I deliver difficult messages to customers?
- How can I tell a customer “no”?

- How should I resolve customer problems?
- How do I deal with difficult and/or aggressive customers?
- What is the best way to deal with customer complaints?
- How do I remain positive when dealing with difficult situations?

Procedures and processes

- What is a customer service policy?
- How do we set the standards of service?
- What are customer satisfaction surveys and how should I use them?
- What is a complaints procedure and why is it important?

Target audience

This course is designed to appeal to staff at all levels. Managers and staff members who have specific responsibilities will be able to focus on those areas in particular.

Additional services

Tailoring: include your examples and issues.

See also: *Consultative Selling for Marketers, Principles of Consultative Selling, Conversations with Customers, Advancing the Sale.*