



Crop production

Level-IV

Based on March, 2018, Version 3 Occupational Standards (OS), V1 Curriculum



Unit of Competence: Build Relationships with Customers

Module Title: Building Relationships with Customers

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LG #11	LO #1- Establish rapport with customers
Instruction sheet	
<p>This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing relationship with customer • Maintaining Professional ethics • Clarifying customer needs and preferences • Maximizing sales opportunities • .Giving customer space and time • Demonstrating effective methods of closing sales <p>This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish relationship with customer • Maintain Professional ethics • Clarify customer needs and preferences • Maximize sales opportunities • .Give customer space and time • Demonstrate effective methods of closing sales 	
<p>Learning Instructions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide. 2. Follow the instructions described below. 3. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets”. Try to understand what are being discussed. Ask your trainer for assistance if you have hard time understanding them. 4. Accomplish the “Self-checks” which are placed following all information sheets. 	



5. Ask from your trainer the key to correction (key answers) or you can request your trainer to correct your work. (You are to get the key answer only after you finished answering the Self-checks).



Information Sheet 1- Establishing relationship with customer

1.1. Introduction

Rapport, from a French word meaning relationship, is useful in a range of settings. We say that two people have established rapport when closeness, empathy and mutual liking characterize their relationship. In the absence of rapport, people may show little interest in interacting spontaneously and enthusiastically with one another. Rapport building is a critical feature of our approach to intervention. It is an ongoing part of the intervention, not just a stage that occurs once at the beginning and is then dropped.

Furthermore, rapport building is not a mechanical set of procedures but is based on sharing, cooperation, and mutual give-and-take. Because rapport involves an interactive relationship, it helps to overcome the passivity that people with disabilities often show or, worse, are encouraged to show. Rapport is therefore an important part of a communication based approach to intervention, which assumes a speaker and a listener who want to interact with one another.

Building rapport with clients generally means directly meeting the client. Although many marketing experts say that advertising can build rapport, Merriam-Webster defines rapport as a "relation marked by harmony...or affinity." Certainly, advertising builds word-of-mouth, brand recognition and brand identity and can be considered the driving force behind sales, but rapport means building a relationship.

The two components of rapport can be trust and credibility

1. Trust

We propose a broad concept of customer trust in the salesperson. Customer trust of the salesperson has two components, affect and cognition.

✓ **Affect** is feeling secure or insecure about relying on the salesperson, and

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✓ **cognition** is the belief that the salesperson has both the necessary competence and motivation to be relied upon.

A **customer** is any person who had, has or can have some interaction with a salesperson or salespersons. The “customer” can include final consumers, any member of an organizational buying center, or very broadly any shopping or buying role partner of a salesperson or salespeople in general.

Trust refers to the degree to which one person can rely on another when the former is dependent on the later. A fundamental competitive strategy of a growing number of organizations is to build long-term mutually beneficial relationships with their customers. The ability of those organizations’ salespeople to earn their customers’ trust is essential to the success of that strategy.

Trust Builder Trust develops when the salesperson is:

- ✓ **Expert:** The salesperson knows what he/she needs to know. The salesperson and his/her company have the ability and resources to get the job done right.
- ✓ **Dependable:** Buyers can rely on the salesperson. The salesperson keeps his/her promises
- ✓ **Candid:** The salesperson is honest in his/her spoken word. The salesperson’s presentation is fair and balanced.
- ✓ **Customer oriented:** The salesperson truly cares about the partnership. The salesperson will go to bat for the customer.
- ✓ **Compatible:** The buyer likes doing business with the salesperson. The buyer likes doing business with the salesperson’s company.

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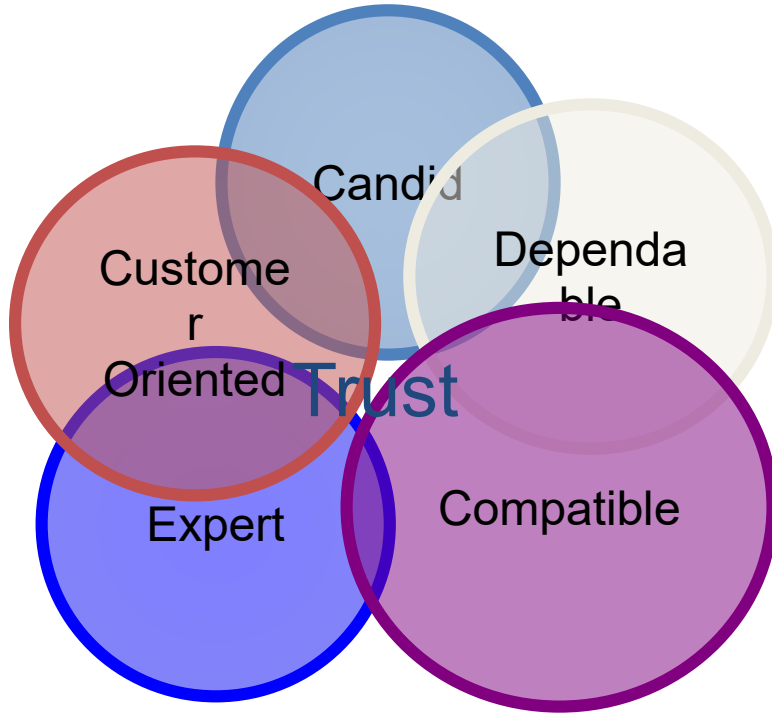


Fig 1 Trust builder diagram

What does it mean by a customer and who are your customers?

The customer is defined as a transaction between Provider and an individual in a purchase transaction involving sales of goods and services. The customer is the individual purchasing the goods and service.

Successful sales people are far better at building and maintaining high quality relationships with their prospects and customers than average salespeople. People are 100% emotional. They decide emotionally and then justify logically. How the customer feels about you as a person will have more of an influence on what the customer decides than any other factor.

The most important thing you can do in building successful sales career is to create and keep customers for the long-term. The better you become at developing high quality

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customer relationships, the more you will sell, the easier you will sell it, the more money you will make and the more valuable you will be, both to yourself and to your company.

Developing the positive kind of personality that leads to long-term sales success is similar to maintaining physical fitness. It requires continually exercising your "personality" muscles so that you become an icier, more positive and more likeable person in everything you do. There is nothing that will help you more than to develop a positive reputation among your customers and prospects.

2. Credibility

You should always be looking to build your credibility in the eyes of your customers. Here are some further tips and suggestions:

- **Become the expert**

Can you become the expert in your field? For example, if you run a garden center, can you write a gardening column in the local newspaper? Can you give talks on gardening to garden clubs or service clubs?

- **Offer free seminars or workshops**

Another effective way to add credibility (and tangibility, because you can hand out brochures and flyers) is to promote your services through free seminars. For instance, if you have a camera shop, offer free workshops on how to get the most out of digital photography.

If you can show them how, who are they going to buy their cameras off? And by the way, you're well on the path to becoming established as the expert because they're going to tell their friends about you!

- **Piggy back on experts**

So you don't feel you have the confidence to run the work shop yourself? That's no excuse! Ask your key suppliers to send a technician (and also to share the costs of the promotion). Or invite expert guest speakers to share the presentation with you. This will

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enable you to increase your credibility 'by association' in a similar way to featuring a well-known supplier brand or logo on your promotional material.

- **Make use of technology**

Technology offers great opportunities for adding credibility to your business

- **Testimonials/reviews**

Gain a competitive edge by getting testimonials or reviews from people who are either well known in the community or in your industry. For example, if you are offering some new products or services, why not make these available to the people you would like favorable reviews from? If they provide you with favorable feedback ask their permission to use the comments on your promotional material.

This will increase the credibility of your business in the eyes of the public because endorsements from third parties carry more conviction than your own comments about your products or services. You might think your products and services are the best in Ethiopia, but a quote from a well-known person is far more convincing.

- **Reassuring your customers**

So, you need to reassure them on all these points. To increase your credibility:

- ✓ Use quality signage.
- ✓ Introduce uniforms and name badges for staff.
- ✓ Project professionalism through a modern layout and good lighting.

- **Display the following:**

- ✓ Framed certificates and qualifications held by you and your staff.
- ✓ Customer feedback and awards you've received (such as industry awards), or keep a 'brag book' of these you can show customers.
- ✓ Your mission statement or core service objectives for the business.
- ✓ Your guarantee.

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1.2. Techniques for Building Rapport

The followings are some suggested techniques caseworkers can use to build rapport with clients. Caseworkers can:

- Demonstrate empathy, warmth, respect, and genuineness.
- Maintain frequent contacts.
- Be consistent and persistent and follow through.
- Meet a concrete need(s) of the family.
- Highlight strengths, no matter how small.
- Reach out to the client.
- Be flexible.
- Use interpersonal skills effectively (e.g., nonverbal skills, strategic use of questions, summarizations, etc.)
- Give the client a sense of control (e.g., involve the client in scheduling appointments; ask the parents how they would like to be addressed, etc.)
- Acknowledge difficult feelings and encourage open and honest discussion of feelings.
- Ask for the client's perspective of a problem.
- Give the client information (e.g., explain the role of a caseworker, describe the agency, explain what will happen next, etc.)

These are only a few key techniques; there are many other methods that will help build rapport with the client.

The ability to rapidly build and sustain Rapport is essential for those of us who need to Influence in our professional or private lives. We are also required to be 'master rapport builders' if we are to avoid or reduce conflict, particularly if our personal success is bound to the quality of the trusted relationships we develop. This ability can be intuitive for some but very challenging for others.

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Whether we are ‘managing or motivating, selling or strategizing, merging or marketing’, we need to influence everyone with whom we interact. What we are seeking is not hierarchical obedience to leadership, nor is it blind agreement to wacky ideas, but fully cognitive and emotionally energized commitment. Gaining that agreement is the process of persuasion, achieving the emotional “Buy in” is the effect of influence.

Getting to rapport is a stage process described in the Rapport Pyramid below in fig 1. All of us will be at different stages with the different people in our personal and professional lives.

1.3 The rapport pyramid - Communication Sequence:

There are common stages and often a specific sequence of communication that people go through in order to get to that ‘place of rapport’. For some it is intuitive, and they may or may not go through all of the stages to arrive at rapport. For others it is hard work, and they may have difficulty going beyond polite conversation.

Stage # 1 – Polite conversation & cliché...

Something the English are very good at, the main topic being the weather. It sometimes doesn’t even involve eye contact or listening, often expressed via the mouth without troubling the brain. Topics are ‘safe’ and often concluded with a cliché e.g. ‘all's well that ends well!’ Rapport at this stage is far off.

Stage # 2 – Facts & Information...

This usually employs some degree of listening and thought process but tends to involve ‘reporting’ facts & information rather than ‘communicating’. These facts can be delivered quite dispassionately, often via a series of statements with little need to involve personal conviction. Rapport is still far off, however we are beginning to reveal the building blocks of what may be important to us.

Stage # 3 – Ideas & Opinions...

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Now we are definitely engaging our brain, we are ‘surfing our mind’ and then transmitting what we think may be appropriate to the issue in hand. We are now revealing where we are coming from by submitting our opinions and interpretations, (positive or negative), agreement or disagreement. Dependent upon the manner in which we deliver this we may well have opened the door for rapport to come right in.

Stage # 4 – Feelings & Emotions...

Now we are involving our ‘soul’ which is our ‘Thinker’, ‘Chooser’ & ‘Feeler’. By expressing how we feel and displaying our emotions via the words we use, our tone of voice, our body language and pace, we are signaling: “this is how I really feel; these are the choices I have made and conclusions I have come to. I am hearing and responding to what you say (although my perception may be something different and I may be reacting rather than responding).” If this matches the depth of your conviction we are connecting at a deeper level then the door is even wider open for rapport to occur.

Stage # 5 – Authenticity & Congruence...

I am now prepared to accept and be myself, not who I think everyone else thinks I should be. I am comfortable and at peace through being myself. I am displaying honesty and sincerity because I am displaying The Authentic Self. Although I am prepared to adapt my behavior to improve communication, I am doing and being what I said I would do and be: there is congruency in my words and behaviors; the message is you can trust me. We are almost at rapport.

Stage # 6 – Rapport

Rapport defined: “a close and harmonious relationship characterized by affinity and empathy, in which there is a clear and common understanding”. There are certain foundational principles which if ignored greatly reduce the opportunity of rapport

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occurring. Likewise if these principles are employed they will greatly enhance the opportunities for rapport to be achieved.

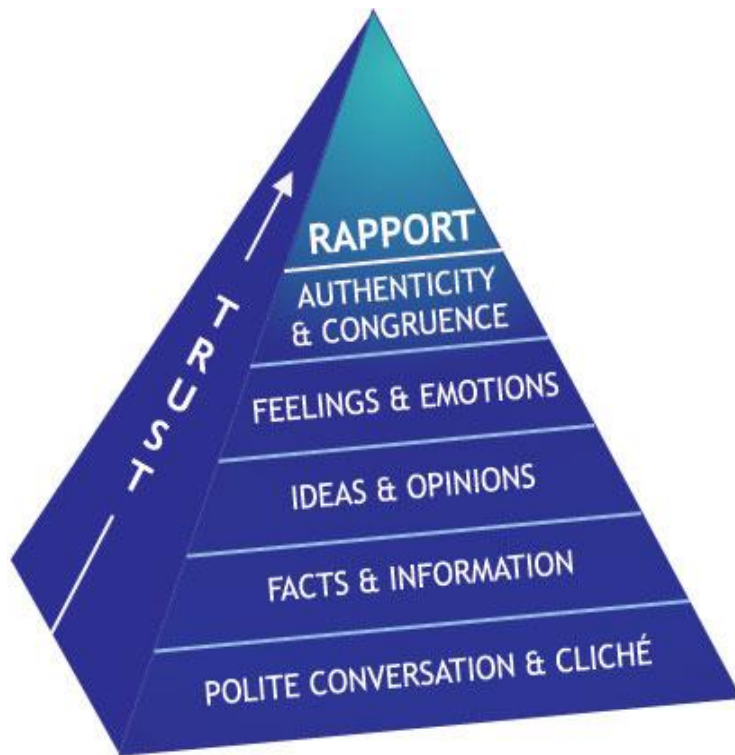


Fig 2: The Rapport Pyramid

1.4 Principles of building rapport

The 7 Principles of Building Rapport:

Principle # 1 - Develop an Attractive Personality

- People are attracted to people who are attractive. Adopt a Positive Self Image & Mindset.
- Display Confidence, Leadership, Passion, Kindness, Humility, Emotional Control and a Sense of Purpose.

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Principle # 2 - Become Genuinely Interested in Other People

- Focus on the other person and their interests. Learn and apply the twelve facets of 'Empathy'.
- Observe rather than judge, establish common ground and values; always think the best of others.

Principle # 3 - Aim to Meet the Other Person's 'Crucial Needs'

- Rapport will only occur when both parties conclude consciously or unconsciously that their 'Crucial Needs' are being met. We all have a need for Security, Significance & Self-Worth.
- To meet these needs in others and we aim to make the other person feel 'Loved' 'Important' & 'Valued', in every situation.

Principle # 4 - Become an Excellent Communicator

- Smile and be an Exemplary Listener™. Encourage others to communicate about them by asking them open Socratic questions which stimulate dialogue.
- Communication will be enhanced when you engage the other person by adapting to their
- 'Perceptual Preferences' for Visual, Auditory or Kinesthetic information.

Principle # 5 - Be Like Them

- People build rapport to meet their own needs, not yours. People build rapport with people they like, and people like people who are like them!
- The potential for establishing rapport is greatly enhanced when one party is able to discreetly
- Mirror & Match the behaviour of the other, thus sending back the message 'we are alike'.

Principle # 6 - Understand and Adapt Behavioral Style

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- Examine and hone the traits of your own behavioral style. Observe, quickly identifying and valuing others' behavioral styles.
- Be flexible, adapting your style in order to dramatically improve communication, significantly deepen relationships, reduce conflict and enhance productive connections.

Principle # 7 - Cultivate Trust & Trustworthiness

- Understand the characteristics of trust and how to develop the six essential dimensions of Trustworthiness.
- Trust is at the heart of rapport. Display Dependability, Integrity, Credibility & Empathy and strive to reduce Self-Interest and Inconsistency.

1.5 Strategies for Building Rapport

Paying Attention	You pay attention to customers by stopping what you're doing when they approach you, directing all your attention to them, and dealing with any interruptions to your conversations quickly.
Showing Empathy	You can show empathy toward your customers by briefly and relevantly relating your own experiences, reflecting their emotions and situations back to them, and normalizing their difficulties. All of these strategies help demonstrate understanding and are used to reassure customers and make them feel more comfortable.
Connecting	You connect with customers by finding commonalities with them and making them feel like they can identify with you. You also connect with people by making them feel that they are welcome and that they mean something to you. Techniques that you can use to establish a connection with people include greeting them, smiling at them, calling them by their names, listening actively, and remembering details they've shared with you in the past.
Being Positive	To be positive, you should maintain a positive attitude in difficult situations, try to never say no to customers, and always try to offer possible solutions to their particular problems.

1.6 Building return customer base



A customer base represents the current flow of customers that a business can reasonably expect will consider it as an option when planning a purchase. It's different from a customer list, which often identifies all of the customers a business has ever done business with, many of which may not be providing current sales.

The customer base for a retail store would be the customers who currently frequent the store. For a wholesale business, it would be the retailers who have a buying relationship with them. The customer base for an attorney, dentist, plumber or other professional service providers would be those clients who give repeat business.

Understanding the makeup and needs of your customer base makes it easier to provide proper service, develop new products or services, enhance sales volume and maximize margins.

Properly managed, a customer base can be leveraged as the foundation for future revenue and profit margin growth.

One reason many new businesses fail is that they bask in the publicity of their grand opening. They expect significant customer interest to automatically continue, so they place a few advertisements and then sit back and wait for more customers to show. They learn too late that customers inundating/flooding their business for grand opening celebration specials may not return later in droves.

The keys to maximizing your clientele and keeping them coming back for more involve two marketing initiatives. The first is to ensure customers have a positive experience when they frequent your business establishment, which means focusing on the triumvirate of quality, price and service.

The second is to ensure your business has continued positive exposure in the media through public relations, news stories and advertising, so potential customers become real ones in the future. The operative word in the previous sentence is "continued." Consumers are not usually spurred or urged into action by one or two media exposures

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to your business. Only when they are exposed over a period of time should you start to see meaningful results in terms of new customers.

A solid, loyal customer base is the meat of any business, while new customers should be considered the bonus gravy. Your established customer base should be diverse. If one customer is responsible for more than 30 percent of your business, warning bells should ring, because the dissatisfaction (or defection) of that customer could bring your business to its knees. Solve this potential predicament/difficulty by continually increasing your established clientele, thus reducing your reliance on a single customer.

Base your future financial planning on your established customer base plus a conservative annual growth factor representing new customers you will secure each year. Then ensure your projections are met by implementing a strong marketing strategy. If your customer base is primarily local, this strategy should include a plan of action for face-to-face contact with potential customers.

Self-check	Written test
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Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Illustrations may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

1. What is the definition given to affect and cognition? (3 point)

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2. Write at least five techniques of building rapport(5pts)

3. Write the seven (7) principles of building rapport.(5pts)

4. What are the strategies for building rapport?(5pts)

5. List and explain the rapport pyramid communication sequence? (5pts)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

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Information Sheet 2- Maintaining Professional ethics

2.1. What are morals and ethics

- **Morals**

Morales are a set of beliefs that people learn and follow based on their developed beliefs that are influenced throughout an individual's life. Morale are what is thought to be wrong and right around the world, within Ethiopia, within culture, community and families and our moral values are held individual by all of us.

- **Ethics**

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Ethics refers more to the set of rules, principles, or ways of acting in particular circumstances. When we join a business we already have a set of beliefs, and likely some prejudice that have developed though our lives, but when we step into a business as an employee our actions should be professional and guided by professional ethics.

2.2. How do we behave ethically in a retail environment?

Ethics is not just about acting in an appropriate ways to your immediate customers, although this is vital important, it is also about acting ethically with respect to your employer and towards other members within the organization.

Things we need to do;

- Work within industry standards
- Work within the law
- Work within organizational policy
- Be an honest, reliable employee that always tries their best gain as much knowledge about the product you sell as you can so you can act competently and best serve the business and the customers’ needs.
- Show a genuine interest in the customer’s needs. Fully clarify the needs and then do your best to satisfy/exceed those needs
- Try to maximize sales to assist the business\create and foster good customer relationships to encourage customers to return.
- Treat information that customers give you with integrity and discretion.
- Maintain customer details in a safe and secure way to that customer’s privacy is maintained.
- Always exhibit a professional manner in appearance, attitude and behavior.
- Always try to empathize with, and reassure your customers.

If we can convey to our customers that we are there to help them satisfy their needs and that we are knowledgeable, competent and trustworthy we have gone a long way to build

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and maintaining a good rapport with the customer. The customer will return because they have had their needs satisfied, the boss will be impressed, the stores reputation will be enhanced and we will have done our job in an ethical way.

Self-check	Written test
------------	--------------

Name..... ID..... Date.....

Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is moral?



2. What is ethics?

3. Explain briefly how to behave in a retail environment?

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Information Sheet 3- Clarifying customer needs and preferences

3.1. Introduction

Customer preferences are expectations, likes, dislikes, motivations and inclinations that drive customer purchasing decisions. They complement customer needs in explaining customer behavior. For example a customer needs shoes and they`d prefer a particular style, brand and color. Appealing to the preferences of customer is a basic marketing technique that is useful for branding, product development, distribution and customer experience.

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Consumer satisfaction and acceptance are often considered in the literature to be closely linked yet these are distinct concepts. Satisfaction is the fulfillment and gratification of the need for a stated good or service,

Acceptance describes consumer willingness to receive and/or to tolerate. For example, a customer might accept the occurrence of a certain number of yearly supply interruptions given a certain price. Consumer acceptance and satisfaction are related, as the first is a precursor of the latter. However, despite the fact that satisfaction and acceptance can be thought of as lying on a continuum, acceptance does not automatically lead to satisfaction (see Figure 1.1). Weighing needs or preferences against provided product or service attributes results in the balance of satisfaction pointing in a negative or positive direction, depending on whether interests are conflicting or corresponding.

This determines the way in which people evaluate companies' or utilities' performance. Only when a consumer's needs for a stated good or service are met, i.e. when the service provided corresponds with their preferences, will they feel satisfied. Customer satisfaction can be enhanced when their needs are met (in terms of both quality and quantity) and accord with their preferences. At the other end of this dimension, where the service provided conflicts with the prevailing needs or preferences, customers may experience feelings of dissatisfaction.

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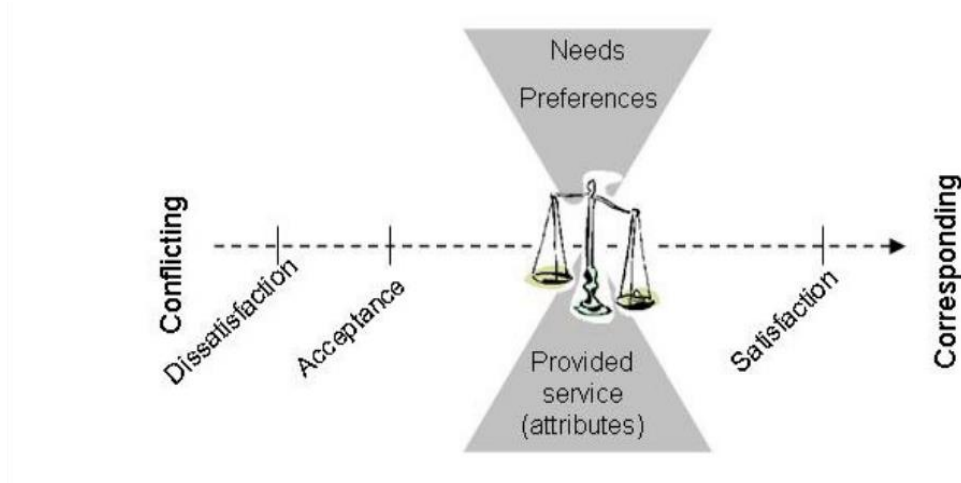


Figure1.1 Schematic review of the concept of acceptance placed in the context of customer preferences and satisfaction

Acceptance is also used in the literature to mean an affirmative answer to a proposal. The distinction is subtle but there are occasions where consumers might not agree to a proposal yet accept the subsequent service in the sense of tolerating it.

- **Consumer Concerns**

These are expressed anxieties or unease over an object broadly defined (e.g. discolored tap water or a proposal to change the water pricing structure).

- **Consumer Preferences**

This is used primarily to mean an option that has the greatest anticipated value among a number of options. This is an economic definition and does not tap into 'wishes' or 'dreams' (for e.g. that safe drinking water was free, that there should be world peace) but for all practical purposes is an appropriate definition. Preference and acceptance can in certain circumstances mean the same thing but it is useful to keep the distinction in mind with preference tending to indicate choices among neutral or more valued options with acceptance indicating a willingness to tolerate the status quo or some less desirable option.



Self-check	Written test
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Name..... ID..... Date.....

Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is consumer satisfaction?

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2. What is customer preference?

3. What is consumer concern?

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 4- Maximizing sales opportunities

4.1. Ways of maximizing sales

There are two ways you can help maximize sales with each customer that you serve.

These are:

- 1. Add-on or complementary selling and,
- 2. Up-selling

1. Add-on or complementary selling

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This technique of maximizing sales is the one most people think of when they hear the term add-on selling. It is also the technique that, as customers, you experience most often. Unfortunately in most instances the salesperson uses it something like this:

Salesperson: Is there anything else you're after?

Customer: No thanks.

The problem here is that the sales person has made no attempt to personalize the sales process, nor have they used any of the information they have learnt about the customer and their needs through their earlier questioning. In this instance the customer has responded, 'No thanks', even though there were a number of items that the customer had a need for. Instead of the approach used above, the salesperson should have used the following question:

Salesperson: you mentioned earlier that the table you inherited was in need of a little care. This furniture polish should do the job.

Customer: Thanks, that's a great idea; I thought I'd have to go to a hardware store.

This has meant that instead of the customer feeling the sales person is being pushy (aggressive), the customer thanks the salesperson for saving them time and effort.

2. Up-selling

Another technique that can be used to maximize sales is called up-selling. When you 'up-sell' you are suggesting to a customer that a more expensive product may be better suited to their needs. As with add-on selling, this can look pushy if used incorrectly, as illustrated in the following example:

Salesperson: Those chairs are good but I think these ones will suit you better.

Customer: They're twice the price! Thanks for your help but I'd like to shop around before I decide.

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Making a suggestion at any stage of the sale without linking the suggestion with one of the customer’s buying needs or preferences is likely to harm your success in selling to that customer. Doing so towards the end of the sale by suggesting they spend more money will certainly cause them to lose trust in you and may simply annoy the customer to the point that they leave the store.

It is therefore extremely important that if you are to suggest that they buy a product that is more expensive, you must also explain why this product will meet their needs and preferences better than the less-expensive alternative. In the example above, the sales person should have used the following approach:

Salesperson: These chairs are excellent value for money; however, you mentioned that you’d like the chairs to last as long as the table will. While the quality of these chairs is good, the joints are what are known as dowel joints; these are OK, but not as long-lasting as ten on joints, which will last much, much longer.

Customer: Oh, they are twice the price of the others! But you’re right, I want good quality. Thanks for pointing this out, I wouldn’t have known otherwise. Looks like I’ll need these ones. So, even though in both examples the sales person showed the customer the same, more expensive, chairs, in thesecondexamplethecustomerreactspositively, thanking the sales person for suggesting the more expensive item .I tall depends on whether you link the product with a need or preference that the customer has spoken of earlier.

4.2. Applying detailed product knowledge

Because of the competitive nature of the retail industry, stores must work extra hard to attract customers and make sales. It is important to maximize each encounter with a customer.

People go shopping to fulfill a need and it is are tailor’s job to help them fulfill this need. But how can you satisfy the customers if they don’t tell you everything they need, as in the following case study?

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Self-check	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. List the two ways of maximizing sales?

2. Describe add on complementary selling?



3. Define up selling?

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Information Sheet 5- Giving customer space and time

5.1. Introduction

It is important to make sure that the customer doesn't feel as though they are being rushed towards making a decision or that they are being pushed. One of the most important concepts to remember is that the best stores and the best sales people succeed because they have developed loyal customers who repeatedly return to shop with them. One of the surest ways of destroying this relationship is by pushing customers in to making hasty decisions.

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On the other hand, the role of a sales person is to maximize the store's sales. So in giving customers' space and time to evaluate their purchasing decision you're assisting the customer to be sure that the suggested product does meet their needs. There is little to be gained by selling customers products that don't suit their needs. You will only have to deal with the results of this at a later date. Problems caused by not giving enough time and space may include:

- customers not returning to shop in the store again
- customers returning products
- customers complaining to their friends about the service
- Losing your customers' trust.

All these problems are avoidable if you allow the customers time and space to make decisions themselves.

It's important to be clear on this point. The time needed by customers will vary significantly and maybe as little as a second or two or as long as wanting to think the whole purchase through overnight.

Stores have legal obligations regarding purchase decisions and sales people must know what these are. Customers are entitled to a fair deal and reasonable satisfaction. You should let the customer know about any policies that might impact on their decision, such as refunds or warranty repairs, etc.

5.2. Buying signals

How do you know when or if a customer is ready to buy, or if they will need more time to make their decision? This is a matter of being aware and observant of the customer's buying signals and how strong these are. Most of the time customers will give clues that will tell the observant sales person whether they are ready. These clues may sometimes be quite obvious and at other times a little more difficult to spot.

Some examples of buying signals that customers may exhibit include:

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- ✓ 'I've been looking for one of these for years!'
- ✓ 'When could it be delivered?'
- ✓ 'These chairs will look great with the table!'
- ✓ 'Can I pay by check?'
- ✓ 'You've found exactly what I was looking for.'

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Self-check	Written test
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Name..... ID..... Date.....

Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. How do you know when or if a customer is ready to buy? (5 point)

2. Give some buying signals you observe in the retail store located in your area by Asking the store keeper?(5pts)

3. What are the Problems caused by not giving enough time and space? (5 point)

4. Give examples of buying signals that customers may exhibit? (5 point)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

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Information Sheet 6- Demonstrating effective methods of closing sales

6.1. Using effective methods to close sales

What does ‘closing a sale’ mean? Some sales people think it means using the cash register to record the sale. Closing the sale actually means getting a commitment from the customer that they will buy the item(s) they have shown interest in. In effect it is getting the customer to say, ‘I’ll take it’. While this may appear to be quite a straight forward step, closing the sale can be the most challenging part of the sales process for many sales people. Up until this point the sales person has been helping the customer find product/s that meet their needs. They have built rapport and trust, asked a range of questions, listened to responses and has been as helpful as possible to the customer. The salesperson hasn’t really had to sell; they have only had to provide a range of services for the customer. It is because they may now need to ‘ask’ for the sale that many salespeople become uncomfortable.

In the previous section we discussed buying signals. It is the presence and strength of these buying signals that will allow the sales person to decide up on how they will close each sale. These buying signals will provide the salesperson with some effective choices in closing the sale.

Here are three closing techniques and explanations of when to use them.

1. Assumptive close

The customer has shown very strong buying signals, so the sales person assumes that they are going to buy the product. Examples of this technique include:

- **Buying signal:** ‘I’ve been looking for one of these for years!’
- **Close:** ‘I’m glad we could help you find it, when would you like it delivered?’
- **Buying signal:** Customer reaches for their wallet.
- **Close:** ‘How would you like to pay for it?’

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Some people think this technique is pushy or aggressive but it's not if you are simply responding to clear and strong buying signals. The only time this technique will appear to be pushy is if you use it without the appropriate buying signals.

2. Alternative close

This close is based on the fact that customers like to be given choices. They may not have exhibited any

- ✓ **Buying signals** at this stage. An example of this technique is:
- ✓ **Close:** 'Which of these would you prefer, A or B?'

With the alternative close, always try to give the customer two choices; regardless of which one the customer selects, you have made a sale. Even if no product choices exist you can give two choices with regard to payment or delivery. For example, 'Would you like this delivered to your office or to your home address?' or, 'Will that be on your store card or cash?'

3. Don't miss-out close

This close works best when the item or offer will not be available for much longer. Examples of this close are:

- ✓ **Buying signal:** 'We only have two of these left in stock, so I'd recommend you buy now.'
- ✓ **Close:** 'If you need this delivered by next Saturday, you will have to confirm your order with us today.'

In both these examples and with this technique generally, it is extremely important to be truthful. The last thing you want is your customer to buy the product from you today, believing that they are purchasing the last one that is available, only to be back in the store next week and see a whole wall of the items in the store.

Tips when closing sales

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Do it! If you don't ask you don't get. If you've misread the buying signals and the customer isn't ready to buy, don't worry. Apologize and get back into the sale to find out what else the customer may be looking for. Give the customer time and space when making their decision. Now is not the time to keep selling. Let the customer make up their mind.

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Self-check	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What does closing a sale mean? (5 points)

2. What are the three closing techniques? (5 points)

3. Define the three closing techniques? (5 points)

4. Ask an experienced salesperson what closing techniques they have found to be Successful?(5pts)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____



Name: _____

Date: _____

LG #12	LO #2- Apply expert knowledge
Instruction sheet	
<p>This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing customer with accurate information • Providing supplier and/or manufacturer information • Demonstrating product/stock range • Maximizing Customer interest • Calculating Prices and/or discounts <p>This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide customer with accurate information • Provide supplier and/or manufacturer information • Demonstrate product/stock range • Maximize Customer interest • Calculate Prices and/or discounts 	
<p>Learning Instructions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide. 2. Follow the instructions described below. 3. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets”. Try to understand what are being discussed. Ask your trainer for assistance if you have hard time understanding them. 4. Accomplish the “Self-checks” which are placed following all information sheets. 	



5. Ask from your trainer the key to correction (key answers) or you can request your trainer to correct your work. (You are to get the key answer only after you finished answering the Self-checks).

Information Sheet 1- Providing customer with accurate information

1.1. Product and service appraisal

Always provide the customer with accurate information, even if you have to take extra steps to locate it. Customers are more willing to deal with delayed deliveries and other undesirables when they know they have been given accurate information.

- ✓ Accurate information allows the customer to plan accordingly. Inaccurate information makes customers angry and unwilling to trust what the company says.
- ✓ In addition, inaccurate information generates more calls into the already busy call center.

Providing accurate information the first time is beneficial for everyone involved

1.2. Back up service and warranty information

In business and legal transactions, a warranty is an assurance by one party to the other party that specific facts or conditions are true or will happen; the other party is permitted to rely on that assurance and seek some type of remedy if it is not true or followed.

A warranty may be express or implied depending on what you bought.

1. Implied warranty

An implied warranty is one that arises from the nature of the transaction, and the inherent understanding by the buyer, rather than from the express representations of the seller.

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The **warranty of merchantability** is implied, unless expressly disclaimed by name, or the sale is identified with the phrase "as is" or "with all faults." To be "merchantable", the goods must reasonably conform to an ordinary buyer's expectations, i.e., they are what they say they are. For example, a fruit that looks and smells good but has hidden defects would violate the implied warranty of merchantability if its quality does not meet the standards for such fruit "as passes ordinarily in the trade". In Massachusetts consumer law, it is illegal to disclaim this warranty on household goods sold to consumers etc.

The **warranty of fitness for a particular purpose** is implied when a buyer relies upon the seller to select the goods to fit a specific request. For example, this warranty is violated when a buyer asks a mechanic to provide snow tires and receives tires that are unsafe to use in snow. This implied warranty can also be expressly disclaimed by name, thereby shifting the risk of unfitness back to the buyer.

2. Lifetime warranty

A lifetime warranty is usually a guarantee on the lifetime of the product on the market rather than the lifetime of the consumer (the exact meaning should be defined in the actual warranty documentation). If a product has been discontinued and is no longer available, the warranty may last a limited period longer. For example:

- ✓ The Cisco Limited Lifetime Warranty currently lasts for five years after the product has been discontinued.
- ✓ HP Networking products lifetime warranties for as long as you own the product. [\[3\]](#)

3. Second-hand Product Warranty

The importance of the used/second-hand product market as a fraction of the total market (new + second-hand) has been growing significantly since the beginning of the twenty-first century. Second-hand products include products that have previously been used by an end user/consumer. Users change their products even if they are still in good condition.

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Some products such as computers and mobile phones have a short lifetime and technologies of these products are released to the market every day. As a result, the sale of new products is often tied to a trade-in, resulting in a market for second-hand products. For instance, in France, used car unit sales increased from 4.7 million to 5.4 million between 1990 and 2005, at the same time as new car sales declined from 2.3 million to 2.07 million units.

Self-check 1	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is the problem of giving inaccurate information to customers? (3 points)

2. What is the meaning of warranty? (5 points)

3. What is the difference between life time and implied warranty? (2 points)

4. What is second hand product warranty? (2 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Information Sheet 2- Providing supplier and/or manufacturer information
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2.1 Introduction

Every organization has suppliers and customers. Each serves a vital role in the success of the organization. Suppliers provide the goods and service required to create a product of value while the customer purchase and/or use the product produced. Customers use the products created by an organization. Customers can fall into either an internal or external category. External customers are outside of the organization and purchase the products produced by that organization.

These customers are important for financial reasons. Without these customers the organization would cease to exist.

The concept of internal customers is easily understood once you grasp that all work is a process. All work that results in a specific product going to a customer is a part of a process.

If your objective is to satisfy or even delight your customers, meeting customer expectations and the customer satisfied is essential. Customer expectations are defined in terms of agreed upon specifications and the relationship built through doing business with the customer. And the relationship built through doing business with the customer.

Customer satisfaction simply means that the customer is happy with the product provided and the business relationship. The caution remains however, that what satisfies customers today may not tomorrow.

Think about your work situation. Who are your suppliers? Who are your customers? Whom do you provide with data, information, support, service, or product? These are your customers. Who provides you with data, information, support services, or product? These are your Supplier.

No company can succeed without the ability to generate, solicit and exchange knowledge; such a skill is essential for solving problems and harnessing new opportunities. But

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knowledge management is often difficult, not least because not all companies are ready to implement effective strategies.

2.2 Upstream or Downstream?

The performance impact that explicit knowledge has for manufacturers differs depending on whether the knowledge comes from upstream or downstream sources.

In general, good performance is tied to low inventory investment, which yields high levels of organizational efficiency. In this study, low inventory investment is considered the desired outcome of explicit knowledge inflows.

It's important to note, however, that not all knowledge is equal. The richest information is accurate, descriptive, timely and customized.

If manufacturers sought information on their customers internally, they would be vulnerable to inertia, myopia and competency traps – resulting in an undesirable increase in inventory investment.

On the other hand, utilizing downstream knowledge to gain an understanding of customer purchasing behavior can significantly improve inventory investment.

Self-check 2	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What do we mean by external customers?

2. What do we mean by internal customers?

3. What is the difference between upstream and downstream?

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____



Information Sheet 3 - Demonstrating product/stock range and benefits of products/services

3.1. Presenting and Demonstrating Your Products

The confidence and care you take in presenting and demonstrating products can set you apart from other retailers but also from the ever increasing competition. Here are some tips to help you stand out from the pack/folder. Get your customers involved If it's an item of clothing let the customer touch it and then encourage them to try it on. If its furniture, perhaps you're showing them a sofa, invite them to sit on it. If you're in a pharmacy and you're reading information from the label on the back of the box pick up the second item and put it in their hand so that they have it as well. Wherever possible, encourage your customers to hold the item, try it on or use it in some way.

By letting them experience the product, it becomes more real to them. Also it is no longer your product, when it is in their hands or as they are trying it out it is potentially their product. They've moved a little closer to ownership of the item.

- **Handle with care**

Have you ever been in a jewelry store and noticed how the staff present a precious diamond necklace or ring to the customer? Without even seeing the price you know it is expensive because of the reverence they show as they handle it.

They should also present a diamante necklace or ring in exactly the same way, yet very few sales people do this. It's about being customer focused rather than product focused. You are handling this person's potential possession so it should be treated as if it is precious.

Treat your merchandise with respect. Remember, you may be showing the product to its future owner.

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I remember trying on a pair of squash shoes in a small sports store. It was busy and there seemed to be lots of pairs of sport shoes spread across the floor. After trying on a pair that didn't seem quite right, the owner brought me another pair. He made room for me by sweeping aside the first pair and a couple of others with his foot as if they were rubbish/garbage to be put in the bin/basket.

He probably thought he was just moving HIS 'stock' out of the customer's way but to customers he is not only devaluing the product, he is treating THEIR potential product disrespectfully.

By the way, it is a good tactic to immediately remove from sight any product that the customer has rejected - though not ones they are just a bit doubtful about - so, the sports store owner was doing something right. It's just how he did it that was wrong!

- **Demonstrating a product**

We've already covered some key points appropriate to demonstrating a product in the previous sections on handling the product with care and getting your customer involved.

The more interactive you can make the shopping experience, the more inclined your customers will be to buy. And if you can provide them with evidence via this interaction they will have proved to themselves that the product can do what you say.

With many products, an ounce of demonstration is worth a ton of words especially if your customers can try out the product for themselves. Research has shown that when a customer is given the opportunity to use a product or see it in operation the chances of closing the sale increase by 17%.

There are a couple of additional rules to bear in mind.

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- 1 Check any products first to make sure they work. This should be done in advance of your customers coming into the store. There is nothing more embarrassing than attempting to demonstrate a product that has a faulty part that doesn't work.
- 2 Make sure you can demonstrate with confidence by rehearsing in advance. Take turns at demonstrating products with your colleagues.
- 3 Be completely familiar with any safety considerations associated with the product.

Self-check	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. Why do we involve customers in demonstrating our product? (3 points)

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2. What are those tips we need to consider while demonstrating the product? (5 points)

3. What are the rules we should follow while demonstrating? (2 points)

4. Why do we check Products first before presenting? (2 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Information Sheet 4- Maximizing Customer interest

4.1 Introduction

Learning how to negotiate to increase sales and profits is an essential skill set in a competitive marketplace. Discussing price before you've established the value of your product greatly reduces the options available to create a win/win agreement. Talking price

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up-front usually results in a "single currency negotiation." These negotiations are generally not in your best interest because the only thing to negotiate is price. The options you face in this situation is either meeting the price demand or losing the sale. Neither is an ideal outcome. Although customers may apply "price pressure" during any sale there are strategies and tactics you can take that can help you make sales without dropping your price.

Here are some key negotiation tactics that you should use before you cut your price. Using these tactics can help you negotiate more effectively and sell at a higher price.

- **DO's**

- ✓ When you meet sales resistance, try selling benefits before you negotiate.
- ✓ Plan your negotiation.
- ✓ Know what you want and what you need.
- ✓ Set your aim high.
- ✓ Know the other party.
- ✓ Establish a positive climate for negotiating.
- ✓ Identify all the issues before you begin to bargain.
- ✓ Maximize the value of each concession you give.
- ✓ Break complex negotiations down into pieces, and solve each piece one at a time.
- ✓ When you lack power, structure the negotiation around facts, figures and hard numbers.

- **DON'Ts**

- ✓ Be the first to concede on a major issue.
- ✓ Make unilateral concessions.
- ✓ Get caught in a price only negotiation.
- ✓ Bow to pressure.

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- ✓ Be afraid to say "no".
- ✓ Offer to split the difference.
- ✓ Rush the process - how you negotiate is as important as what you negotiate.
- ✓ Be put off by the word "no".
- ✓ Negotiate with anyone who has less authority to make concessions than you do.
- ✓ Negotiate at times when you desperately depend on a favorable outcome.

There are no simple short cuts or magic bullets for dealing with price pressure. By learning how to negotiate to increase sales and profits you can greatly enhance your chances of not only getting the sale but at the price you want.

Remember, if your sales situations require an ongoing relationship with your customers use the negotiating tactics described with care. As with any sales tactics you must establish *and* maintain rapport during the sale. Doing so helps you be assertive when necessary without threatening the relationship. Use these tactics as part of you sales strategies to increase sales, profits and customer loyalty.

Self-check	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What are the key negotiation tactics that you should use before you cut your Price?(5pts)

2. Explain briefly how to maximize your customer interest?(5pts)



Note: Satisfactory rating - 10points & above Unsatisfactory - below 10 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet-5	Calculating prices and/or discounts
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5.1 Determinants of pricing

This article addresses a variety of factors that should be considered when establishing a price for your product or service. These include:-The concept of a 'price' is a worldwide concept. In fact, there are many ways to express the concept of 'price'. Some of the terms are; assessment, bill, charge, cost, dues, duty, expense, fare, fee, honorarium, interest, levy, premium, rate, retainer, salary, wage, tariff, tax, tithe, toll and tuition. I'm sure if you spend a little time you can think of several more. No matter what you choose to call the

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'price' you will charge for your product or service there are a number of factors to consider when determining exactly how much you should charge.

5.2 Types of Pricing

Let's begin with the fact that there are many ways to present the 'price' for a product or service to the customer. Some of the more well known methods are described below.

- ✓ Cost plus a percentage of the cost. (usually service oriented)
- ✓ Breakeven, that is, whatever it costs to produce the product or provide the service. (usually non-profit organizations, but not necessarily)
- ✓ Target profit (e.g.: make a 20% profit before tax. This implies that you understand all of your operating costs very well.)
- ✓ Perceived value (price to the consumer's expectation)
- ✓ Competitive related (price using competitive price as a base)
- ✓ Sealed bid (usually construction projects)
- ✓ Psychological pricing (eg: to create an impression of a lower price, \$199.95 vs \$200)
- ✓ Geographical/sales site location (eg: varying prices for fuel in different geographical locations)

- **Your Objectives**

The objectives that you have set for your enterprise and/or a particular product or service will have a significant impact on your decisions related to the prices you set.

- **Competition**

If you are not the market leader in your industry, competitive prices will influence the pricing of your product or service. Market leaders have often created a "pricing standard" against which other product/service prices are compared.

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- **The Market/Prospect**

Understanding the characteristics of the marketplace is an essential factor in establishing a price for your offering. You should first try to identify the general type of market you will be selling to.

- **Type of market**

- ✓ commodity (many buyers/competitors, non-unique products) - minimal pricing flexibility
- ✓ uncontrolled (many buyers/competitors, unique products) - maximum pricing flexibility
- ✓ controlled (many buyers, few competitors, unique products) - some pricing flexibility
- ✓ vertical-low (limited # of buyers, many competitors)
- ✓ vertical-high (limited # of buyers, few competitors)

- **Prospect Characteristics**

Then you should learn as many details as possible about the 'typical' prospect in the market you have targeted. Examples of the kind of detail you should look for are:

- ✓ Prospect's perception of your product (positive perception = higher price)
- ✓ Prospect's awareness of your product (lack of awareness raises promotion costs)
- ✓ Whether product is for a captive audience (eg: razor blades, minimizes marketing costs)
- ✓ The criticality of the offering to the consumer (more critical = higher price)
- ✓ The ability of the consumer to pay (greater ability = higher price)
- ✓ Demand due to seasonal considerations (snow shovels priced lower in the summer)

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- ✓ Demand due to geographic considerations (snow shovels in Tahiti are unlikely to sell no matter how low the price)
- ✓ Market trends, fads or changing consumer interests

- **The Product or Service**

There are, of course, many characteristics of your product or service that will influence the price.

- ✓ Does your offering provide tangible versus intangible benefits/differences? Offerings with immediate and tangible benefits will usually support higher prices.
- ✓ The uniqueness of your offering versus the competition. Uniqueness usually supports a higher price if the offering has credibility.
- ✓ Whether your offering is one of several in a product/service line. Pricing must be consistent with the rest of the line.
- ✓ Whether your offering is a complement to another product/service. Sales to existing customers usually reduces marketing costs thus giving greater pricing flexibility.

- **Your Enterprise**

A variety of factors within your enterprise will influence the pricing decision. Some examples are:

- ✓ Your cost to produce the offering is clearly the first factor in setting the price.
- ✓ The potential for learning curve benefits. That is, will sales volume and time result in lower production costs thus creating the potential for lower prices?
- ✓ Your ability to meet demand. If you have a limited production capacity, you should price high enough to insure that you don't create more demand than you can satisfy.
- ✓ Your cost to deliver, including shipping, warehousing and installing.

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- ✓ Your cost to promote, including press releases, press tours, ads, literature, demos, etc.
- ✓ Your financial resources, giving you the ability to sustain a start-up period of losses.
- ✓ The quality and speed of your product/service delivery. If you can deliver quickly and "how quick can I get it?" is the most critical factor to the prospect then high pricing is likely.

- **The Environment**

In addition to characteristics of your competitors, your prospects and your enterprise there are more general, environmental factors that can influence your pricing.

- ✓ At what point in market life cycle of your offering are you selling? If it is early in the life cycle you can usually charge a higher price.
- ✓ What is the availability, quality and cost of channels of distribution?
- ✓ What is the status of the economy (inflation, deflation, varying interest rates)?
- ✓ What is the potential for government intervention? Is your enterprise verging on a monopoly? is your offering important to national stability?
- ✓ Are market characteristics such that a lower price will generate a higher demand? (Elasticity of demand)

- **Other**

There are many other factors that can influence pricing that are difficult to place in any of the above categories. Some of these are:

- ✓ The method of payment you want to extend to the customer. (cash, invoice for 30 day payment, time payments, no payments until ...)
- ✓ The cost for the prospect to switch to your offering from their current solution. Does a high switching cost imply that you need to price low to offset the switching costs.

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5.3 Store policy

The best time to establish policies and procedures for your retail business is during the planning stages. By anticipating problems before you open your doors, you can strategize how you'll handle special situations, as well as the normal day to day operations. This helps avoid making mistakes once you're faced with customers.

Document each policy in a procedures manual. It doesn't have to be fancy, just a three-ring binder that you can continue to update as time goes by. Make several copies of the manual, give one to each employee and store one near the cash register for easy reference. To begin creating policies, ask yourself the following questions. Decide how you would like for your retail store and your employees to handle these items of business.

5.4 Product Pricing

- What is your store's markup?

Definition: A percentage added to the cost to get the retail selling price.

Examples: A widget bought for \$5 and sells for \$10 has a mark-up of 100%. (Add \$5 to the \$5 cost to get the price.) A widget bought for \$2, which sells for \$3, has a mark-up of 50%, (Add \$1 to the \$2 cost to get the price.)

- Have you created a pricing strategy?

There are many outside influences that affect profitability and a retailer's bottom line. Setting the right price is a crucial step toward achieving that profit. Retailers are in business to make a profit, but figuring out what and how to price products may not come easily.

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Before we can determine which retail pricing strategy to use in setting the right price, we must know the costs associated with the products. Two key elements in factoring product cost is the cost of goods and the amount of operating expense.

The cost of goods includes the amount paid for the product, plus any shipping or handling expenses. The cost of operating the business, or operating expense, includes overhead, payroll, marketing and office supplies.

Regardless of the pricing strategy used, the retail price of the products should more than cover the cost of obtaining the goods plus the expenses related to operating the business. A retailer simply cannot succeed in business if they continue to sell their products below cost.

5.5 Retail Pricing Strategies

Now that we understand what our products actually cost, we should look at how our competition is pricing their products. Retailers will also need to examine their channels of distribution and research what the market is willing to pay.

Many pricing strategies exist and each is used based on particular a set of circumstances. Here are a few of the more popular pricing strategies to consider:

- **Mark-up Pricing**
 - ✓ **Markup on cost** can be calculated by adding a pre-set (often industry standard) profit margin, or percentage, to the cost of the merchandise.
 - ✓ **Markup on retail** is determined by dividing the dollar markup by retail.

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Be sure to keep the initial mark-up high enough to cover price reductions, discounts, shrinkage and other anticipated expenses, and still achieve a satisfactory profit. Retailers with a varied product selection can use different mark-ups on each product line.

- **Vendor Pricing**

Manufacturer suggested retail price (MSRP) is a common strategy used by the smaller retail shops to avoid price wars and still maintain a decent profit. Some suppliers have minimum advertised prices but also suggest the retail pricing. By pricing products with the suggested retail prices supplied by the vendor, the retailer is out of the decision-making process. Another issue with using pre-set prices is that it doesn't allow a retailer to have an advantage over the competition.

- **Competitive Pricing**

Consumers have many choices and are generally willing to shop around to receive the best price. Retailers considering a competitive pricing strategy will need to provide outstanding customer service to stand above the competition.

Pricing below competition simply means pricing products lower than the competitor's price. This strategy works well if the retailer negotiates the best prices, reduces costs and develops a marketing strategy to focus on price specials.

Prestige pricing, or pricing above competition, may be considered when location, exclusivity or unique customer service can justify higher prices. Retailers that stock high-quality merchandise that isn't available at any other location may be quite successful in pricing their products above competitors.

- **Psychological Pricing**

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Psychological pricing is used when prices are set to a certain level where the consumer perceives the price to be fair. The most common method is **odd-pricing** using figures that end in 5, 7 or 9. It is believed that consumers tend to round down a price of \$9.95 to \$9, rather than \$10.

- **Other Pricing Strategies**

Keystone pricing is not used as often as it once was. Doubling the cost paid for merchandise was once the rule of pricing products, but very few products these days allow a retailer to keystone the product price.

Multiple pricing is a method which involves selling more than one product for one price, such as three items for \$1.00. Not only is this strategy great for markdowns or sales events, but retailers have noticed consumers tend to purchase in larger amounts where the multiple pricing strategy is used.

Discount pricing and price reductions are a natural part of retailing. Discounting can include coupons, rebates, seasonal prices and other promotional markdowns.

Merchandise priced below cost is referred to as **loss leaders**. Although retailers make no profit on these discounted items, the hope is consumers will purchase other products at higher margins during their visit to the store.

It is difficult to say which component of pricing is more important than another. Just keep in mind, the right product price is the price the consumer is willing to pay, while providing a profit to the retailer.

- Do you offer discounts on bulk purchases?
- Do you offer employee discounts?

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Think of your store policies and procedures as a guide, rather than being set in stone. In order to reasonably satisfy the customer, some situations may call for bending the rules. Make sure forms of payment, returns, layaways and other policies are clearly posted for customers to see. This will allow you to easily and confidently enforce your rules. As your business grows and you gain more experience operating your retail business, periodically review and revise policies as necessary.

Self-check	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is price (3 points)

2. What are the determinants of price? (3 points)

3. What is mark up? (2 points)



4. Write the strategies of pricing? (2 points)

5. Explain competitive pricing? (2 points)

6. Explain psychological pricing? (2 points)

7. Explain the best time to create store policy? (2 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____



LG #13	LO #3- Provide post - sales support
Instruction sheet	
<p>This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing evidence of ongoing support• Explaining back up service• Providing customer with store/salesperson's contact details• Entering customer and/or transaction details <p>This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide evidence of ongoing support	

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- Explain back up service
- Provide customer with store/salesperson’s contact details
- Enter customer and/or transaction details

Learning Instructions:

1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide.
2. Follow the instructions described below.
3. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets”. Try to understand what are being discussed. Ask your trainer for assistance if you have hard time understanding them.
4. Accomplish the “Self-checks” which are placed following all information sheets.
5. Ask from your trainer the key to correction (key answers) or you can request your trainer to correct your work. (You are to get the key answer only after you finished answering the Self-checks).

Information Sheet 1- Providing evidence of ongoing support

1.1 Introduction

The customer support system includes everything a customer needs to communicate with a company about its products and services. This type of system addresses customer problems and resolves issues. Giving customer support is essential to almost every business because much of the company's success relies in how many customers they can successfully gain and serve.

- Technical Support

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Customers use technical support when resolving problems with purchased items, especially electronics such as cell phones, computers and stereo equipment. Technical support representatives must have the knowledge and skills about specific products when it comes time to troubleshoot and fix problems. Many businesses often give this type of training to tech support representatives so that decisions can be made immediately when talking with customers. Technical support departments must be given authority to resolve situations through such means as refunding money or sending out new products when necessary.

- Listening

One requirement of a business' customer support system is to listen to customers. Many companies leave suggestion or complaint boxes so that ideas or complaints can be submitted by customers. This type of "listening" allows businesses to not only see how their business is viewed from the customer perspective, but also the chance to improve services and product offerings.

- Account Maintenance

Companies offer account maintenance and support to customers who have subscribed to monthly services or have made ongoing purchases. For example, cell phone companies such as Verizon, Sprint and AT&T use account maintenance representatives to help customers change monthly cell phone plans, upgrade services, and answer questions regarding the customer's account. Account maintenance--whether being conducted by representatives in a call center or through an online support ticket system--gives customers assurance of ongoing support.

- Purchases

Customers need in-store representatives to assist with making purchase and orders of products and services. Examples of in-store representatives include department store

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cashiers and restaurant waiters and waitresses. These representatives help customers follow through with the purchasing process.

- Refunds

Business use refunds and product/service exchange policies when crediting customers for broken or unsatisfactory items. These refund services often take the form of customer service desks where representatives evaluate claims from customers. Store or merchandise credit or refunds are typically given to customers who have valid arguments.

Self-check	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. Explain briefly customer support systems(5pts)

2. Write the strategies of pricing? (5 points)



Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 2- Explaining back up service

2.1 Introduction

If you have something such as a second piece of equipment or set of plans as backup, you have arranged for them to be available for use in case the first one does not work.

Your customer data is some of the most valuable information in your organization, but many companies fail to create proper backups. Some companies mistakenly believe SaaS systems don't need backups, while other companies fail to set up appropriate backups for on-premise systems. Spice works reports 45 percent of surveyed companies suffered from data loss, costing companies \$9,000 per occurrence. Following best

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practices for backing up your customer relationship management (CRM) tools avoids the monetary and productivity loss associated with CRM disaster recovery.

2.2 Multiple Backup Locations

You diligently back up your CRM data, but all your backup media is kept on-premise. Its proximity is convenient when you're dealing with human error-caused data loss, which Rover Backup reports happen in 64 percent of cases. However, when a disaster occurs on site, you run the risk of losing your primary systems and your backups.

Keep your CRM backups in multiple locations—ideally spread throughout the country or world. If a natural disaster strikes the entire East coast, your West coast backups are safe and secure. The disadvantage of this configuration is taking longer to get your systems back up, but it's better to take longer to recover your data than it is to not have the data available at all.

2.3 Different Backup Media

Diversifying your backup media lets you minimize the chance of the same hardware failure affecting your backups at the same time. You also get more options for restoring your backup during the disaster recovery process. You can choose the backup media that best fits the situation, such as using the fastest option or the backup media that requires the least direct input. Cloud-to-cloud backups, co-located servers, on-premise backup servers and removable media are a few options to consider.

2.4 Regular Backup Schedule

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Your CRM data changes every day as your sales and marketing departments add new customer data. Is your CRM getting backed up that often? CRM backup frequency is a major concern for many companies, especially those using SaaS CRM applications. The SaaS vendors typically offer disaster recovery services, but their backup schedule may be weekly, monthly or even less infrequent without add-on options. Can you afford to lose a week’s worth of customer data?

Your regular backup schedule should balance minimizing losses with the logistical challenges of creating complete backups of a constantly changing CRM system. It’s not always logistically possible to handle full daily backups, but you want to mitigate the risk and downtime of losing multiple days of data whenever possible.

2.5 Test Your Backups

Your backup solution looks great on the surface, but will it perform in a disaster situation? Create a regular testing schedule for your backups to confirm the backups are saved, the right data is contained within the backup and the restore functions work properly. You also gain experience restoring backups with each solution, so it’s easy to go through the process during a high-stress situation.

2.6 Create a Disaster Recovery Plan

Have a concrete plan in place when you need to recover your CRM data. Account for different data loss situations, such as an employee overwriting files, a natural disaster hitting the data center or your main headquarters and cyber criminals taking down your

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systems. Create a clear and easy-to-understand disaster recovery process with estimates on how long it will take to recover and test the systems. List your primary contacts to send information to during a disaster, and consider using an emergency management system or app to easily communicate with these contacts so everyone is kept up to date.

No one wants to deal with CRM data loss, but having a solid backup plan makes it a bump in the road instead of a major disaster. Put these CRM backup best practices in place to protect your customer data and your sales productivity.

Self-check	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What does it mean by back up?(5pts)

2. why many companies fail to prepare proper backups?(5pts)



3. What are the importance's of backup schedule?(5pts)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____

Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 3 Providing customer with store/salesperson's contact details

3.1 introduction

A retail salesperson's job description primarily entails interacting with customers, answering their questions about various products and closing the sale. Often, the retail salesperson is the only contact that a customer has with a particularly retail establishment. Therefore, these employees must be well-trained in delivering excellent customer service and making the customer want to return to the store in the future.

3.2 Identification

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The retail salesperson's job description includes ringing up transactions on the cash register, processing credit cards and providing customers with the proper change. After the sales are completed, the retail salesperson typically bags up the purchased items and gives the customer a receipt. At least part of the retail salesperson's job description will entail arranging displays on shelves, setting up point of purchase (POP) materials, such as shelf tags or window banners, and returning loose merchandise to its proper location.

3.3 Function

In more technically oriented settings, a retail salesperson's job description may be more consultant-oriented, where the salesperson makes recommendations on which items would be more practical for the customer's use. For example, jewelry retail sales people often recommend engagement rings or diamonds based on the customer's price parameters. Additionally, an auto parts salesperson may recommend that the customer use a certain type of oil in the summer; or wax their care with a specific product brand. A retail salesperson's job description can also include exchanging merchandise, doing price checks for customers or cleaning counters, shelves and display units.

3.4 Considerations

A retail salesperson's job description may also involve taking inventory and filling out inventory reports; or reporting any cash shortages or surpluses at the end of their shift. Often, the retail salesperson's job description requires them to be cognizant of shoplifters and immediately report any theft to the store managers. A retail salesperson is also usually responsible for ensuring their safety and the safety of others by adhering to certain safety policies of the store.

3.5 Education and Skills

Most retail companies prefer that their retail sales people have at least a high school education. A retail salesperson should enjoy working with others, have basic MATHS and interaction skills and be able to communicate effectively with customers, other employees and the store's management team.

3.6 Salary and Job Outlook

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The average pay for a retail salesperson in Ethiopia

Self-check	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is the job of a retail salesperson? (5 points)

1. What type of education is preferable for sales person explain briefly?(5pts)



2. What is mark up? (2 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 4- Entering customer and/or transaction details

4.1 Introduction

You have kept your customer information on paper, in spreadsheets, in your accounting program and now you want to set up a central database for all your customer information. As you evaluate your options, you face questions like: Your customer database and potential customer database is the source of your trade. You need it to generate repeat business in the future, or as a fall back when times get tough and as an asset of your company when you want to sell up.

4.2 What Information to Track?

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This varies dramatically, but there are several frequently used types of business information:

- Contact details
- Customer preferences
- Communications history
- Sales history
- Actions
- Payments

4.3 Customizing databases to fit your information

Now that you decided what information goes into your database and where it comes from, consider how this data can fit into the database.

The simplest method of customizing a database is creating extra fields in the customer record. Many database programs make it easy and so you can accommodate business-specific information by adding more and more fields.

When you have hundreds of fields, the system becomes difficult to manage. This is probably because you have put together information about different objects. Re-structuring your data makes it easier to access and manipulate. There are two methods of re-structuring such data:

- Splitting customer records into related record types
- Storing some information in external files

4.4 Splitting customer records into related record types:

Suppose we need to record basic family information:

- Family name
- Husband's name and birthday

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- Wife's name and birthday
- Child 1 name and birthday
- Child 2 name and birthday
- Child 3 name and birthday

If you were to add all these details to your customer record, they will occupy eleven fields. Finding a John Smith will be difficult - you need to search four times - for John as the husband, Child 1, Child 2 and Child 3. And the system won't accommodate families with four or more children.

To handle this information, the databases can store it in different record types and relate these records to one another.

In our example, each personal record will then have three fields: name, birthday and the link to the family record. John Smith can be easily found with one search, no matter who he is in the family.

To see if a piece of customer information should be tracked in a separate record type check whether a customer can have more than one of it. Can a customer have multiple policies? Family members? Air conditioners? Can a customer be included into multiple lists? If the answer is yes, then those objects should be tracked separately and linked to the customer records. If no, they can be incorporated into the customer record.

4.5 Storing some information in external files.

There is a natural desire to track all customer information on the database, but is it really required? There are some data types that databases don't handle well, for example, spreadsheets. The databases are designed to work with large number of similar records, while in a spreadsheet each row could be different from the previous one. Spreadsheets' formulas can be easily modified, while in a databases they are programmed.

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So if you are used to tracking some customers information in spreadsheets or some other external files (photos, text documents etc), perhaps it is worthwhile to continue doing so, linking those files to the customer records. You will keep your database simple and agile and retain the familiar ways of working with these files, but can still easily access all customer information from a central location.

Self-Check 4	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What are the methods of re-structuring data (5 points)

2. Write the data types that databases don't handle well? (5 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 10points & above Unsatisfactory - below 10 points

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You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____

Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

LG #14	LO#4 Plan sales presentation
Instruction sheet	
<p>This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning presentation• Selecting client group• Accessing and distributing promotional materials• Selecting and preparing range of products/services <p>This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan presentation• Select client group	

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- Access and distributing promotional materials
- Select and prepare range of products/services

Learning Instructions:

1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide.
2. Follow the instructions described below.
3. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets”. Try to understand what are being discussed. Ask your trainer for assistance if you have hard time understanding them.
4. Accomplish the “Self-checks” which are placed following all information sheets.
5. Ask from your trainer the key to correction (key answers) or you can request your trainer to correct your work. (You are to get the key answer only after you finished answering the Self-checks).

Information Sheet 1- Planning presentation

1.1. Basics of sales presentation

Unlike a TV/Radio/Paper advertisement, a sales presentation has a longer format - and is delivered in person by a salesman. Thus adding a human element to this "advertisement".

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A good sales presentation is therefore the one which entices/seduce the potential customer to make the buying decision. A successful sales presentation has two parts. Part one is Presentation Planning and Part two is the actual presentation and demonstration.

Sales are an integral part of the business world and one of the most important tasks in a firm. However, sales can often be complicated. This document will detail the elements involved in creating an effective sales presentation. This includes preparing yourself for the presentation, planning and preparation of the presentation, and the actual presentation.

Preparing Yourself

According to Marjorie Brody, when preparing for a sales presentation, the salesperson needs to think of the three V's: Visual, Vocal, and Verbal. These are communication signals that can be practiced before, and delivered during the presentation.

Visual

Appearance is vital to the presentation. Even if the dress code is casual for the customer, the salesperson should dress professionally. While dressing too professionally will not hurt the sale, dressing too casually may. Clothes should be conservative, well fitting, and comfortable. The salesperson's appearance should not detract from the presentation. Facial expressions can relay a lot of information to the customer about the salesperson throughout the presentation (e.g., confidence in the product, boredom, or genuine concern for the customer). The salesperson should remember to make regular eye contact and use hand gestures to emphasize a point, but should never sway, fidget, or cross his arms.

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Vocal

There are six vocal cues to remember when delivering a presentation: pitch, volume, rate, punch, pause, and diction (Brody, 2001). It is important to remember that it is not what you say, but how you say it. Practice simple vocal exercises so that your voice will remain at a steady and relaxed level in front of customers. Vocal cues are used to keep the customer interested and to prevent the salesperson from speaking in monotones. Make sure that the presentation can be easily heard, that key words are emphasized, and that the pace of the presentation is easy to follow. Practice these six vocal cues with a friend, spouse, or colleague.

Verbal

To prevent weakening the salesperson's position, keep the following points in mind: avoid long, rambling sentences (e.g., use descriptive language and short sentences), avoid using buzz words and jargon (e.g., words that only used within a specific industry), and avoid tag questions and qualifiers (e.g., "I think this is a good product, *don't you?*"). Keep the points focused and do not use expressions such as "umm", "like", and "you know", which detract from the presentation and may cause the customer to lose focus.

Planning and Preparation

First step in developing a sales presentation is to write out your presentation plan. Preparing a written plan requires one to think of the major selling points of your product or service. One must also think of the possible questions customer may ask. Consider the best case, worst case and most probable case, try to anticipate as much as possible. This requires lots of thinking - on what are the customer's needs, what will be the major selling point to those needs, how would the customer possibly react, what would be the questions & objections, and how you can effectively show that your product or service can meet your customer's needs.

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The best preparation in developing a sales presentation plan is to know a lot about the potential customer themselves: Who they are, what market segments they serve, who their competition is, what are the major challenges facing them etc. Another important thing that must be taken into consideration while developing the sales presentation is the objective of the sales presentation. If the sales presentation is being delivered on the very first meeting, then the sales presentation must do the following:

1. Establish rapport
2. Discover needs
3. Match your product features & benefits with customer needs
4. Get commitment for the next action step.

In most business-to-business sales, the first meeting will not result in closing the deal or winning the order. So the objective for the very first presentation must be set accordingly.

In a multi-meeting presentation, the objective will be to:

1. Reinforce the rapport established in the earlier meeting/presentation
2. Build a relationship with the customer (based on inputs from the earlier meetings)
3. Jointly discover customer needs
4. Set the stage for the next meeting
5. Address any objections, concerns the customer may have
6. Present the value of your product/service to the customer
7. Close i.e., Get the order

Objective of the sales presentation drives the content of that presentation. In a complex sale, objective of various presentations are different, one has to prepare multiple presentations.

Planning for a presentation helps the salesperson to be organized, prepared, and confident. When planning for a presentation, it is helpful to think of the presentation as having three main features: content, style, and rapport. These are necessary for a good

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presentation. For instance, it is of little benefit to have good content (e.g., facts to enhance the product) without style if there is no rapport between the salesperson and the customer. Similarly, it is of little use to have great style and rapport with the customer if there is no content.

Analyzing What the Customer Wants

When preparing for a presentation, the salesperson needs to remember that all customers are not the same and that they respond differently to price (what the buyer pays) and value (what the buyer gets). This information is important in making sales presentations to customers and can be determined with a little “pre-call probing”. Few sales will be made unless the customer believes that value outweighs cost. Make sure to ask open-ended questions, and then listen to the answers. This will help to focus more on the needs of the customer, not the product. Also, when creating content, it is important to address the question that every consumer has: “What's in it for me?” After determining the dominant buying value, or what is most important about the product to the customer, the salesperson can plan the presentation to stress this value. Many salespeople use a guide or planning sheet that helps identify key information about the customer. This information could include the key contact's name, objective of the call, potential needs or problems, potential questions to determine needs or problems, appropriate testimonials, and prepared answers to any objections that the customer may raise. Space should also be left for new questions that may arise during the presentation and may be helpful later. The style of the presentation should be interactive. The most effective way to accomplish this is by involving the customer in a dialogue-type presentation.

Gaining the Customer's Attention

Gaining and maintaining the customer's attention is crucial. To facilitate this, ask questions, let the customer have physical contact with the product, use interesting

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anecdotes, explore the customer's needs and propose workable solutions, offer powerful evidence of why the customer needs your product or service, and physically demonstrate your product or service. These strategies involve the customer with the product and should help lead to a sale.

The Actual Presentation

There are many ways to make a sale, but it takes time. The salesperson should always time the presentation so that the customer never feels "rushed" into making a decision. Rushing the customer due to other time commitments will usually hurt the seller. Make sure to ask if anything has changed since the customer and salesperson last met. This will help avoid going down the wrong path in the presentation. Also, ask where the customer is in the decision-making process. This will help the salesperson determine the likeliness of making a sale that day (or scheduling another appointment for later) and whether there is other competition involved. Try to begin the presentation with a quick review of the goals and objectives of the customer's firm. This will help focus the presentation and let the customer know that the salesperson is interested in the customer's needs. The salesperson should use visuals to gain the customer's attention and give focus to the presentation. Visuals often help to illustrate key points and help build rapport between the salesperson and customer. Be concise and factual. The customer will feel more comfortable buying from the salesperson if he feels that the salesperson is straightforward and honest.

Conclusion

Using a well-planned and interactive presentation should convey how the benefits of the product outweigh the costs. Always summarize the benefits of the product to the customer. This will allow the salesperson to recap how the product meets the needs of

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the customer. Once this is done, the customer may send signals indicating that he is ready to make a purchase; and once the customer agrees, the salesperson can ask for the sale.

Self-Check 1	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What are the first steps in developing sales presentation? (5 points)

2. What are the parts of a successful sales presentation? (5 points)

3. What are the objectives of a multi meeting presentation? (5 points)



Note: Satisfactory rating - 15points & above Unsatisfactory - below 15 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Information Sheet 2- Selecting client group

2.1 Introduction

The first step towards good practice in client focus understands who your clients are by developing a profile of their characteristics. Profiling your clients will help you compile the basic information needed to view your products and services from your current clients' perspective, not just your own.

2.2 Creating a client profile

Developing a client profile involves pulling together all the information you can find about your client groups and finding answers to many of these questions:

1. Who are they? What defines them as group that uses your products/services—is it their age, background, interest, occupation, ambition, a set of attitudes or values or some other factor? Are they 18-21 year old students, employers in small business,

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engineers, or Indigenous Australians? If it's a mixture of all of the above, which are the biggest groups?

2. What's the size of the group or the size of the potential market? Why are they consuming? What is their need/objective?
3. What are their main demographic characteristics? e.g. age, gender, income, socio-economic background, geographic location, education level
4. What issues concern them? What else is on their agenda?
5. What else is competing with our product, service or issue for their time, attention or money? What are they doing with their disposable income, free time, product choices?
6. What are their preferred channels of communication? What do they watch, listen to, and read?
7. Who do they trust? Who gives them advice? Who are their heroes or role models?

Self-Check 2	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What do we mean by creating client profile?(3 points)

2. What are the main client profile questions? (5 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

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You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 3- Accessing and distributing promotional materials

3.1 Sales Promotion Materials

You desire the best possible product recognition for your brand to attract customers and get them to notice your sales promotion materials and order your product. These materials are your image, and sometimes your only promotional piece to reach the customer, and therefore your sales promotion materials must be exceptional, eye catching and be durable and produced to last.

All of our sales promotion materials are custom designed to meet the specific requirements of our customers. The photos exhibited are of sales promotional materials that many organizations apply for their business.

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Self-Check 3	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is sales promotion material? (3 points)

2. What are the main promotional materials used in your area? (5 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

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Score = _____
Rating: _____



Answer Sheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 4 Selecting and preparing range of products/services

4.1 Introduction

Planning a sales presentation is not something that can be done on a fly. Often in a complex sale, you would require inputs from various departments within your own company - to capture the value your product/service can provide, to answer the objections/concerns of the customer, and to establish credibility to your sales presentation.

The primary purpose of the planning your sales presentation is to have a thorough preparation for the presentation. The thoroughness of your preparation will establish a strong rapport between buyer and seller (which is an essential ingredient for consultative selling).

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Self-Check 1	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. How could you select and prepare for arrange of products and services(5pts

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

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LG #15	LO #5- Implement sales presentation
Instruction sheet	
<p>This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Briefing numbers of support staff• Applying communication skills• , Demonstrating Products/services• Measuring results of sales presentation <p>This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief numbers of support staff• Apply communication skills• Demonstrate Products/services• Measure results of sales presentation	
Learning Instructions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide.2. Follow the instructions described below.	

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3. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets”. Try to understand what are being discussed. Ask your trainer for assistance if you have hard time understanding them.
4. Accomplish the “Self-checks” which are placed following all information sheets.
5. Ask from your trainer the key to correction (key answers) or you can request your trainer to correct your work. (You are to get the key answer only after you finished answering the Self-checks).

Information Sheet 1- Briefing numbers of support staff

1.1 Staffs comes first

There’s an old business cliché that the customer comes first. But for the purpose of this chapter, the cliché is wrong. It is your staff that comes first, because it is your staffs that will help you make a success of your business. If you want your staff to give customers quite exceptional service, then you must first treat and train your staff in such a way that they will willingly deliver this outstanding service—and do it consistently.

1.2 Every one markets the business

Staffs that have no contact with customers are just as important as staff that does. You depend on such staff to make a quality product or design an exceptional service or provide efficient administrative support. If they don’t, you stand to lose customers. You have to make it clear to all your staff that they are ambassadors for your business. This can be quite a revelation for some staff, who thinks they have no role in marketing the business. In fact **everyone** markets the business.

1.3 Recruiting the right staff

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A common fear in businesses is hiring the wrong person. Many later staff problems can be avoided if you take extra care to recruit the right people in the first place. A strategic vision backed by strong core values will help you get the right staff: people are attracted to working in a business with a clear sense of direction and values.

In many such businesses (for example technology businesses), staff will work long hours, driven by the passion of reaching goals. Your core values make up the 'personality' of your business, and in communicating them you reveal so telling others what's unique and authentic about your business.

From a marketing point of view you're looking for people who:

- Like making other people (your customers) happy.
- People do business with people they like.
- Are friendly and outgoing.
- Enjoy cooperating with others in a team.
- Can take responsibility for their own decisions.
- Shows some leadership qualities.
- Are prepared to share their knowledge.

If they are very good at sales or people skills, for example, are they happy to help train others?

Check all references carefully and look for some evidence that they have added value to previous businesses they may have worked for. A good question to ask the business is: 'Would you re-employ this person?'

The best reference is for the business to tell you that the applicant did more than their job: they have some personality and showed creativity and initiative.

Most important, do you like them? Could they sell you something?

1.4 Gaining staff buy-in

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Every business needs a Procedures Manual or House Rules that set out the standards and procedures that staff must follow. For example, in a retail business a few examples of these procedures might include:

- Always wearing name badges.
- Conforming to a dress code.
- Greeting customers (preferably by name).
- Answering the telephone in a consistent and welcoming way.
- Learning the names of regular customers.
- Taking responsibility for following through on customer service.
- Always asking new customers how they found the business.

1.5 Explain why procedures are important

Certain procedures should be non-negotiable: they are a condition of employment. But at the same time you will have more success in getting staff to adhere to these procedures if you make their purpose clear. For instance:

- Wearing name badges and conforming to a dress code help to build a friendly, professional image. If customers have a service problem, they can attach a name to the person who served them. This is enhanced too by greeting all customers, a process that gives them recognition and acknowledges their importance (make sure you ban the off-putting 'Can I help you?').
- Answering the telephone in a standard way again promotes friendly professionalism since following a script ensures that nothing important is left out (such as communicating your competitive advantage to customers).

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Self-Check – 1	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What does it mean by everyone markets the business describes briefly? (5 points)

2. What are the main points considered in recruiting staff? (5 point)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____



Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 2- Applying communication skills

2.1 Introduction

Everyone uses interpersonal communication skills. We use them at home with our families, in the workplace with our bosses and coworkers, on our computers when we answer email, and on the telephone when we order pizza. This manual is intended to help you improve your interpersonal communication skills and develop new skills to become a more effective communicator.

Interpersonal communication applies to all of our relationships, personal and business. Others respect or reject us based on our interpersonal communication skills. People send us messages in every interpersonal communication encounter. Those messages can be explicit (verbal comments) or implicit (nonverbal facial expressions, other body language, and physical space).

2.2 Definition of communication

Communication can be defined in many ways. In simple terms communication is:

- Information transmitted
- A verbal or nonverbal message
- A process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior

2.3 Key elements in communication

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There are three key elements in the communication process, which we will refer to throughout our discussion of interpersonal communication. They are:

- You
- Your audience/customer
- Your message

YOU bring professional experience and education and training to the communication process. You have earned credibility with your employees, your board members, the public, the media, and your fellow workers.

In order to be an effective communicator, you need to know who your AUDIENCE is.

The principles of effective interpersonal communication are the same whether your "audience" is one person, ten people, or one thousand.

The MESSAGE element is equally important. What do you want to say? What is the best way to communicate the message? There is a basic rule used by journalists for writing a newspaper story that can help you focus your message. A well-written story should contain the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the story in the first paragraph or two. If it does not, it will not hold our attention.

The same principle applies to your message in the process of interpersonal communication. If you do not let your audience know quickly the who, what, when, where, why, and how of your message, you risk their losing interest, being inattentive, and tuning out. Therefore, whether spoken or unspoken, messages should contain most of these elements:

- Who
- What
- When
- Where

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- Why
- How

2.4 Communication tools

There are four basic communication tools:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

All four of these basic tools can be learned and improved. First, you must want to improve your communication skills. Next, you must understand them, and recognize their importance in the communication process. Then, you need to learn some new skills. Finally, you must practice good skills to become a better, more effective communicator.

At an early age we begin to learn to speak, early enough that it is difficult to remember the process. However, most of us can recall learning to read and write. These are skills we learn from parents and teachers. We spend most of our communication time listening. Yet, listening is a skill we are not taught, unlike writing, reading, and speaking. Probably, listening is the most important communication skill we can develop. We will explore listening skills in Chapter 2.

2.5 How we get and use information

How much information we retain in the communication process depends on many factors. It is important for each of us to recognize how we learn best. Do we remember most of what we read? Most of what we hear? Owe learn more if someone shows us?

Typically, we retain information at these rates:

- 10 percent of what we read
- 20 percent of what we hear

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- 30 percent of what we see
- 50 percent of what we see and hear
- 70 percent of what we see and discuss
- 90 percent of what we do

Another way to think about how we retain information is this adage:

Tell me and I will probably forget, Show me and I might remember,

Involve me and I will learn.

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Self-Check – 2	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is communication (3 points)

2. What are the three elements in the communication process? (5 points)

3. What are the basic communication tools? (2 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

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Information Sheet 3- Demonstrating Products/services

3.1 Sales pitch

A sales pitch isn't only a presentation of facts and figures. Sales pitch presents information about a product or service in such a way that the person to whom the presentation is made wishes to make a purchase. A successful sales pitch starts with a beneficial product or service. A successful pitch also requires a salesperson who understands the product and has the confidence and insight to help prospective buyers understand how they will benefit from the use of the product or service.

- **Instructions**

1. **Study the product.** The first order of business in conducting a successful sales ground is knowing the product or service you plan to sell. This means studying the product, reading documentation and using the product or service yourself so you know the strengths and weaknesses.

2. **Project confidence.** If you don't believe in what you're selling, no one else will either. Work at projecting confidence in your presentation. Write up what you plan to say and practice in front of a mirror until you know the material and are confident in your delivery.

3. **Learn key elements of the product or service.** Many products and services have reams of documentation. Using a whole lot of facts, figures, surveys and data doesn't promote a sale and instead can simply confuse and overwhelm. Become familiar with the aspects of the product or service that make it different, special and of value to the prospective buyer.

4. **Greet people by name to establish a positive connection.** People respond to those who take the time to know their names. Learning beforehand about the needs of a

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prospective buyer helps him realize you've done your homework and that you offer something of legitimate value to him.

5. **Share stories of how what you're selling has helped others who purchased it.** While your approach or focus may be different for various clientele, always add stories of how the product or service has shown to be of practical value to the user. Add your own story of how the product or service helped you.

6. **Reveal basic facts** that provide a foundational reason for purchasing the product or service. While you don't wish to overwhelm a prospective buyer with too much documentation, briefly point out that the product is backed by surveys, studies and data. Share that documentation does show that the product or service has a proven value. Show one chart or graph of how the product or service has benefited others.

7. **Gear your presentation** toward the person or company to which you're trying to sell. Some prefer a more relational approach, focusing on stories of how the product or service was of benefit to others. Other clients are more the "just the facts" type. With these people, emphasize the documentation and demonstrated value of the product or service. Use stories and facts in each presentation, but emphasize the one that best connects with the particular prospect.

8. **Emphasize any guarantees.** Reassure prospective buyers they won't be left hanging should the product or service not live up to claims made. Go over the guarantee or warranty to let them know the product or service is backed up by the company.

9. **Repeat principle selling points and ask for a decision** as you come to the end of the presentation. Ask if the prospective customer has questions, and listen and answer those questions. Show options for payment.

10. **Leave an opening to approach** the subject again at a later date should the potential client desire more time to consider your product. If he cannot make a decision, ask if he would like more information. Ask if you can leave literature about what you're selling and if you can call back later. Leave on a positive note.

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Self-Check – 3	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is sales pitch? (3 points)

2. Write the instructions that you will follow during a sales pitch presentation?(5pts)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____



Information Sheet 4- Measuring results of sales presentation

4.2 Introduction

Before you can evaluate the performance of your sales team, you must first analyze its components. Measuring results of sales presentation is expressed in the way we measure our sales teams. Here is a simple formula you can use to analyze the performance of your team as a whole or of individual sales representatives:

$$\text{Performance} = \text{Competence} + \text{Motivation} + \text{Opportunity}$$

The components are independent of each other. In other words, a sales representative can be:

- Highly motivated but incompetent,
- Poorly motivated but highly competent,
- Poorly motivated and incompetent, or
- Highly motivated and highly competent.

Regardless of your sales team's level of motivation and competence, if the opportunity component is weak, sales performance suffers.

After you evaluate the components of performance, evaluate another key measure of performance: sales results. After you complete all of your evaluations, you can take action for each sales representative.

4.2 Evaluate competence

Competence includes knowledge of your products, your sales processes and policies, your company, and your industry. It also extends to knowledge of your customers, their

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problems and opportunities, and their industry. Additionally, it includes a basic understanding of how business operates.

4.2.1 Background knowledge

Depending on your industry, sales representatives might need to have a certain amount of knowledge in technology, finance, engineering, manufacturing, or human resources. They can call in a technical expert at the appropriate time.

4.2.2 Sales skills

The second element of competence is sales skills. These skills include:

- Knowing how to prospect for business
- Knowing how to prepare for a sales call
- Knowing how to build rapport and trust with customers
- Knowing how to qualify prospects and assess their needs
- Knowing how to write a proposal and deliver a sales presentation
- Knowing how to overcome objections and close the sale

When you evaluate representatives who manage key accounts, look at their skills in building relationships at multiple levels of the customer organization, managing change, communicating back into your company, influencing, negotiating, and thinking strategically.

4.2.3 Assessment tools

You have several tools to assist you in this evaluation. There are sales competency assessments that you can perform on your representatives. The best assessments list generic sales skills and knowledge and use behaviorally anchored rating scales (BARS). BARS help you rate objectively, fairly, consistently, and precisely.

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Some companies create competencies from benchmarking studies, focus groups, and customer surveys. However, you may find that you can customize off-the-shelf assessments to meet your particular situation. Here is a sample of an assessment of product knowledge used by an electronic publisher of political and economic reports:

Level 1 (Novice) Knows the names of all the products and can review features with customers from the product catalog or sales collateral.

Level 2 (Competent) Knows the names of all the products and can review features with customers from the product catalog or sales collateral. Can list current world economic and political events. Can demonstrate online products at a customer's desk. Answers customers' general questions about the product.

Level 3 (Proficient) Knows the names of all the products and can review features with customers without the assistance of the product catalog or sales collateral, if necessary. Is aware of current world economic and political events and can link them to a customer's business. Can demonstrate online products at a customer's desktop. Answers customers' general and specific questions about the products.

Level 4 (Expert) Knows the names of all the products and can review features with customers without the assistance of the product catalog or sales collateral, if necessary. Is aware of current world economic and political events and can discuss them in depth on a collegial level with customers. Can demonstrate online products at a customer's desktop. Answers customers' general and specific questions about the products.

4.2.4 How we can evaluate

- **Skills tests**

There are selling-skills tests that measure various sales traits or aptitude. Many tests claim to measure competencies, and they might even produce a report that reads like a

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competency assessment. But, in fact, they measure only aptitude — useful for the selection of sales representatives, but less useful for evaluating performance.

- **Observations in the field**

The most effective method of evaluating your sales team's competencies is to accompany them into the field and observe them in action. Use a competency assessment as a guide, and record what you see. Your representatives will appreciate the time you spend with them, and they will be much more likely to accept your assessment.

- **Evaluate sales results**

At this point, you have evaluated the competencies and motivation of your representatives. You have also considered the role that opportunity might have played in your representatives' performance. Now it is time to look at the most important measure of performance: sales results.

- **Evaluate performance against sales goals**

The fairest way to evaluate sales results is to measure them against goals. Keep track of whether your representatives achieve or exceed the goals that you set for them.

Be sure to set goals that support your sales strategy. If your growth strategy is to get more revenue from existing customers, it's a good idea that your sales representatives' individual goals state the source of the revenue. Your evaluation measures might include a percentage of total revenues from existing customers, and an increase in revenues from existing customers compared with last year. You would not give much weight to any decline in the total number of accounts.

- **Measure sales results rather than sales activities**

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Be careful of the activity measures trap. If you measure sales activities (for example, number of calls or number of proposals), you get activity from your representatives, but it might be at the expense of results. Instead, measure results such as revenue, profit margins, number of new accounts opened, and increases over last year.

- **Evaluate teamwork in complex sales**

High-value, complex sales with lengthy sales cycles present a different challenge. Consider measuring the financial value of opportunities uncovered during the needs assessment, the cost of proposed solutions, the amount of profit protected during price negotiations, and the value of additional business created during follow-up after the sale.

Remember that complex sales require team efforts. Consider and measure the contribution each team member makes to these sales. A writer revises a proposal. A sales assistant sells, schedules, and coordinates sales meetings with key people inside the customer organization.

- **Sound evaluations deliver results**

A fair and accurate evaluation of your sales team's performance helps you get the best from your team. By evaluating performance against goals, measuring results rather than activity, and choosing the optimal development strategy for each sales representative, you can ensure that your team is always ready to deliver maximum performance and results.

Self-Check – 4	Written test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

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Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What sales competencies include?(3 points)

2. What are the background knowledge's evaluated in measuring sales presentation? (5 points)

3. What are sales skills? (2 points)

4. Why do we evaluate sales result rather than sales activity? (2 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____

Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

LG #16	LO #6- Maintain and utilize a customer data base
Instruction sheet	

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This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics:

- Maintaining customer confidentiality
- Developing, maintaining and storing Customer records
- Identifying and following regular customers
- Utilizing Customer records
- Implementing Customer clubs and reward schemes

This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page.

Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:

- Maintain customer confidentiality
- Develop, maintaining and storing Customer records
- Identify and following regular customers
- Utilize Customer records
- Implement Customer clubs and reward schemes

Learning Instructions:

1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide.
2. Follow the instructions described below.
3. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets”. Try to understand what are being discussed. Ask your trainer for assistance if you have hard time understanding them.
4. Accomplish the “Self-checks” which are placed following all information sheets.
5. Ask from your trainer the key to correction (key answers) or you can request your trainer to correct your work. (You are to get the key answer only after you finished answering the Self-checks).

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Information Sheet 1- Maintaining customer confidentiality

1.1. Introduction

Customer confidentiality means keeping information about people who use your products and services private. When a customer patronizes a business, he may have to give information such as his name, address or financial accounts. Certain services or products may also be embarrassing for a customer to admit he uses. Keeping customer records confidential establishes trust between the business and the client. Certain types of customer information should always be protected, especially social security numbers and credit or checking account numbers.

1.2. Instructions to maintain customer confidentiality

- 1. Encrypt any personal information that consumers give to your company over the internet.** You can do this by installing a Transport Layer Security (TLS) or a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) in your website. TLS and SSL protocols identify your website from a customer's computer, via a certificate of authenticity. The programs tell the customer's computer to encrypt the information it is sending with a certain language that the host computer can understand. Customer information sent from a remote computer to the hosted company computer will be transmitted in a scrambled language that is indecipherable to hackers. Contact a TLS or SSL provider to get the scripts and software (see Resources).
- 2. Black out any important identifying information,** like credit card numbers or social security numbers, before filing paperwork in archives.
- 3. Create employee log-ins for company computers.** Do not let people who haven't been screened by your security to log-in on the computers or access any databases. Create passwords on protected files so that users who illegally gain access to the system will still not be able to access sensitive information.

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4. **Files that are particularly sensitive should be kept on a machine** that cannot be accessed on a network. Put the computer and the backup files in a locked room that can only be opened by people with the authorization to read the information. If the information is sensitive enough to warrant it, you can install a locking mechanism that only responds to a numbered code or a specific biometric fingerprint (see Resources.)
5. **Separate groups of customers.** If you have one large database with lots of customer information, and it gets hacked, all the information is compromised. If you have separate databases for groups of customers, along with their personal and financial information, you won't lose it all if security on one section is breached.
6. **Create a code to identify customers.** Instead of typing a customer's name on important documents, just enter her code number. This makes it more difficult for a criminal to identify that customer, even if he gains access to her paperwork.
7. **Ask employees to sign confidentiality agreements.** These will put employees on notice that if they give out business or customer information, they run the risk of a lawsuit.

Self-Check 1	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

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What is customer confidentiality? (3 points)

What are the main purposes of meeting? (5 points)

Write the instructions followed in maintaining customer confidentiality? (2 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Information Sheet 2- Developing, maintaining and storing Customer records

Building a Customer Database

This white paper will explain how a customer database could benefit your business and provide a simple guide to what you need to know before you get started.

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A Customer Database - What is it? And how to use it!

Your customer database and potential customer database is the source of your trade. You need it to generate repeat business in the future, or as a fall back when times get tough and as an asset of your company when you want to sell up.

The most important thing, above all else, when compiling your database is 'include everyone' that shows even a minute interest in your company and what it is you do. Everyone that calls or meets you at a convention, venue or meeting is sent information - you should work toward improving and increasing entries. Without any clients your company is worth nothing - so don't neglect keeping records of the people you meet. Remember that it is the value or the information that you can collect; not the computer program you are using!

The smallest and largest companies spend lots of money annually on advertising to increase the amount of business they have and often they don't always target new customers, but the existing ones they have listed in their database. Keeping contact with customers is a good way to get repeat business and promote new products to the right people. There are many different ways that you can maintain contact and interest with different customers and potential customers.

Obviously, the cheapest way to create a customer database is to make your own! Products like Microsoft Excel or Access are capable of doing such tasks or you could purchase database software to install or use online.

A problem that many companies run into is creating duplicate records or being disorganized. This often happens when too many people have access to the database and are continually updating it. Having one person who is in charge of database records is the best way to keep information organized and easily accessible. Allowing others to read the records is fine; just make sure that they do not alter anything! If you have the

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same customer listed 3 or 4 times within a database, and each mailer you send out costs £5, then you could end up wasting £20 for contacting one customer.

Don't have too many different databases. One database with a list of customers and potential customers takes the complications out of record management. A customer is a customer no matter how different they are from each other, so keep them listed in one file so their details are easy to access, locate and update. Customers like to think they have a one-on-one relationship with their suppliers / merchant. Keeping a record of all of your previous activities with each individual client can help you understand the way they operate and what they could expect from you in the future. Listing mistakes and errors that may have been made in previous transactions could be a business-saving strategy if you want to avoid future mishaps/accidents, especially with the same client.

Make sure you can sort all of your information into categories when you need too. This means being able to arrange data into groups - i.e. based on location or relevance. If you spend money on a good database program then this should be easy. You may wish to sort your data so that you can send out mailers, or generate lists ready for phone calls etc.

Always update your database. Never have old, outdated or invalid entries as this could cause confusion and be a waste of time and it could also be illegal. There is no point in sending out mailers or wasting phone calls on companies that have gone out of business or are untraceable. This not only wastes time, but can be a good way of losing money as well. Having endless lists of companies that may no longer exist or are irrelevant to your business is wasteful, so update on a regular basis and have a spring clean of your records once or twice a year. Keep all the records you have collected and ceased to use on a separate system otherwise you could end up buying back the same information from a list broker when you decide to top up your database. Consider having an obsolete folder to retain all of these types of records.

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Consider giving your potential customers some insight into your company. Information is extremely valuable and can attract new business but be careful about how much you tell people, as some things must be kept secret. A little taste of what goes on within the inner workings of your company can help people to understand what you do and who you are. A good way to do this is to send out a newsletter which is another way you can communicate to people, without disrupting them with phone calls during busy working hours. This may however generate a lot of negative interest from rival companies who just want to find out as much as possible about you and your future plans or investments.

Newsletters are a good way to update people with recent events, future plans and anything else you wish to convey on a regular or semi-regular basis. Some companies offer a subscription newsletter, which contains more information and a better insight into your company. Subscriptions are also a good way to gather information about other people and companies that you can add into your database.

How to maintain store an accurate customer database

Don't lose existing customers because of poor data – the cost of keeping your customer database accurate is much lower than gaining a new customer. Follow this easy guide to achieving a professional, up-to-date database.

Have solid foundations

Put someone in charge of your customer database, set objectives and develop a clear strategy that includes regular audits of database quality. When you're building your database ensure that the initial data capture is accurate.

Clean your data

with 13% of the population moving home every year and over 30% of businesses moving, closing down or having a change of senior staff, customer databases can quickly become

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out of date. Update the customer file regularly by matching the database against gone away suppression files.

Use profiling tools

After each database audit, chances are you'll lose some customers from your list. You'll need to replace them to maintain profitability. Use profiling to locate new prospects who are most like your current customers, and do this on a new names basis to avoid acquiring records that you already have on your database.

Be honest

Make sure there's a statement in your Privacy Policy and on the page where you collect data explaining that you might be sending information from a third-party company. Notify prospects fully about how their data may be used in the future and check that you are complying fully with data protection legislation.

Get the customer involved

Ensure each communication offers customers the opportunity to update their details. Catalogues, brochures, order forms and envelopes can all include such reminders. You can also use inbound order and customer care lines by asking for verification in the course of a call or via a recorded message on entry.

Self-Check 2	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

What is customer database? (3 points)

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When are the problems occurred in recording customer database? (5 points)

What is the difference between on line meeting and opening meeting? (2 points)

Write the guide to use professional and up-to-date customer database? (2 points)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

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Information Sheet 3- Identifying and following regular customers

Definition of regular customer

I'm guessing your restaurant has a mix of new customers, regular customers and potentially what I would call out-of-town/tourist customers.

This leads me to the following two questions

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How do you define a regular customer? I'm a numbers guy, so I'm thinking it would be someone who shows up X numbers of times over the past month (frequency), or a burst of visits (recency) or something grander like a steady stream of visits over a longer time period (i.e. twice a month for a year) (sustainability). I'm curious how you define a regular customer for your restaurant.

Is there an ideal mix between new/regular customers in order for a restaurant to be successful?

You obviously want to have regular customers, they will be more honest with you about their experience and how it compares to their other visits. This feedback is so valuable. Regular customers are the backbone of a business. It costs something like 6 times the amount to attract a new customer than it does to retain an existing one.

Self-Check 3	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

What is regular customer (3 points)

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Explain briefly the difference between regular and potential customer?(5pts)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Information Sheet 4- Utilizing Customer records

Meaning of customer records

Customer records are records an organization keeps about the customer like phone messages, emails and evaluation forms etc.

Utilizing customer records

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Offering a demo or trial of your products(s) is the best way for potential customers to see what it is that you are really offering, how it works, how it is useful for them. Make it simple for them to understand and give them a chance to 'play' or test your product, not only will this improve exposure but having people test on your behalf will give you vital feedback about your business or services.

Obtaining names for potential customers is extremely easy now, with companies who specialize in selling the information of individuals who wish to be contacted by relevant businesses. This costs money though, and sometimes-extra cash to spend is not always available. That's why it is important to keep records of all the people you have contact with and develop your own database. This doesn't happen overnight, but a company with many clients and contacts is worth a lot more! Also, good clients who are satisfied with your services might be willing to introduce potential future clients from their own contact lists. This is another way you can build up your business.

If you do decide to buy in data, different prices are generally set for different purposes - i.e., you might pay £0.05 to mail someone, £0.10 to be allowed to mail and telephone but £1.00 if you want to own the data forever.

Ideally the more you know about potential customers, the better chance you have of targeting the right people. Collecting, as much information as possible is vital, so attracting people to your company who are willing to divulge information is what you want. Offering prizes or giveaways with annual competitions through an e-zine or newsletter can do this. Remember that you don't have to offer amazing prizes, cars or holidays to attract people; a case of wine or something similar in value as an alternative (not everyone drinks!) will often be more than sufficient.

With your records stored and organized, implementing new strategies and campaigns should be quick and easy. Future plans can be modeled based on your results from previous projects and helping you to predict trends for sales and marketing. Loyalty is something you need to think about when compiling a database. Make a note of more loyal

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customers or keep them in a separate file within the database so you can differentiate between those who you may consider to be a regular customer and those who you can rely on in the future years.

The more information you have about a client, the easier it will be for you to target them and get results. Often cold calls lead nowhere and the person at the end of the phone will be less than cooperative. Buying lists of companies that may be interested in your line of businesses can be obtained from various sources, and can be extremely useful. These large databases are not always cheap, but they do list people who don't mind getting called from people with relevant business.

Self-Check 4	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

What does it mean by customer records?(5pts)

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Explain how to utilize customer records?(5pts)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Information Sheet-5	Implementing Customer clubs and reward schemes
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Customer clubs

Customer clubs have been established by many organizations. A customer club can be defined as follows:

A customer club is a company-run membership organization that offers a range of value-adding benefits exclusively to members. The initial costs of establishing a club can be quite high, but thereafter most clubs are expected to cover their operating expenses and, preferably, return a profit. Research suggests that customer clubs are successful at promoting customer retention.



To become a member and obtain benefits, clubs require customers to register. With these personal details, the company is able to begin and services for them. Clubs can only succeed if members experience benefits they value. Club managers can assemble and offer a range of value-adding services and products that, given the availability of customer data, can be personalized to segment or individual level. Among the more common benefits of club membership are access to member only products and services, alerts about upcoming new and improved products, discounts, magazines and special offers. For example, IKEA FAMILY, the home furnishing retailer's club, offers members discounts on selected IKEA products, a free home furnishing magazine quarterly, news updates via e-mail and discounts on exclusive IKEA FAMILY products. There are a huge number of customer clubs. One report estimates that there are 'several hundred' in Germany alone. 26 B2C clubs include

Rebate or cash back: rebates are refunds that the customer receives after purchase. The value of the rebate can be adjusted in line with the quantity purchased, in order to reward customers who meet high volume targets.

Patronage awards: customers collect proofs of purchase, such as store receipts or barcodes from packaging, which are surrendered for cash or gifts. The greater the volume purchased the bigger the award.

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Self-Check 5	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is customer club? (3 points)

2. What is Rebate or cash back?(5pts)

3. What is a Patronage award?(5pts)

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Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____

Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

LG #17	LO #7- Deal with difficult customers
Instruction sheet	
This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledging and supporting Customer complaints/problems• Encouraging Customer Verbalizing issue and active listening• Developing Customer's confidence• Establishing Mutually acceptable resolution of complaint This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledge and supporting Customer complaints/problems• Encourage Customer Verbalizing issue and active listening	

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- Develop Customer's confidence
- Establish Mutually acceptable resolution of complaint

Learning Instructions:

1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide.
2. Follow the instructions described below.
3. Read the information written in the "Information Sheets". Try to understand what are being discussed. Ask your trainer for assistance if you have hard time understanding them.
4. Accomplish the "Self-checks" which are placed following all information sheets.
5. Ask from your trainer the key to correction (key answers) or you can request your trainer to correct your work. (You are to get the key answer only after you finished answering the Self-checks).

Information Sheet 1- Acknowledging and supporting Customer complaints/problems

Introduction

Unhappy customers are bad news for any company, and it only takes one of them to shatter/ruin a perfectly good day at work for everyone. It only takes one of them to steer/direct many more prospective customers away from you.

Unhappy customers have their reasons. Some don't feel well, some have unrealistic expectations, and others may just have lousy dispositions. However, we must be honest; others may have a legitimate gripe/complaint, for somehow, some way, we may have

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been the catalyst that tipped the scale to take them from annoyed to cranky to downright unhappy.

Whatever the cause, unhappy customers are still our guests and our hope for future business, and we want them happy again. Said another way, the customer may not always be right, but he or she will always be the customer we want and we need. So we need to take control of customer complaints and turn them to our advantage.

Here are 7 steps for resolving customer complaints which have proven to work well. Do not let time lapse and make things worse with your avoidance. Approach the customer as soon as you learn they are unhappy, and;

- 1. Listen Intently:** Listen to the customer, and do not interrupt them. They need to tell their story and feel that they have been heard.
- 2. Thank Them:** Thank the customer for bringing the problem to your attention. You can't resolve something you aren't completely aware of, or may be making faulty assumptions about.
- 3. Apologize:** Sincerely convey to the customer your apology for the way the situation has made them feel. This is not the time for preachy reasons, justifications or excuses; you must apologize.
- 4. Seek the Best Solution:** Determine what the customer is seeking as a solution. Ask them; often they'll surprise you for asking for less than you initially thought you'd have to give—especially when they perceive your apology and intention is genuinely sincere.
- 5. Reach Agreement:** Seek to agree on the solution that will resolve the situation to their satisfaction. Your best intentions can miss the mark completely if you still fail to deliver what the customer wants.

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6. Take Quick Action: Act on the solution with a sense of urgency. Customers will often respond more positively to your focus on helping them immediately versus than on the solution itself.

7. Follow-up: Follow-up to ensure the customer is completely satisfied, especially when you have had to enlist the help of others for the solution delivery. Everything up to this point will be for naught if the customer feels that “out of sight is out of mind.”

Problems happen. It’s how you honestly acknowledge and handle them which counts with people. Customers will remember you, and happily give you another chance to delight them when you choose to correct problems with the very best you can offer, proving you value them and their business.

Self-Check 1	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

How do you resolve customer complaint?(5pts)

What does it mean by unhappy customer?(5pts)

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Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____

Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 2- Encouraging Customer Verbalizing issue and active listening

Handle Difficult customers and situations

To provide effective customer service—especially in difficult situations—we need to deal with the customer’s emotions first, then the problem. When dealing with difficult customers and situations, it is important to use the following strategies.

Listen

Use active and reflective listening skills.

Empathize

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Empathy means putting yourself in the customer’s shoes, letting him or her know that you understand not only the situation, but also how the situation makes the customer feel.

When we empathize, we connect with the person’s feelings in two ways:

by making a statement that tells the person we understand the feeling, and

By paraphrasing his or her words to show the person we understand the issue, while not necessarily agreeing with him or her.

You can get into trouble if it seems to the client that you are offering legal advice. Stick to what the agency can and can’t do—and let the client seek an attorney if he or she is not sure what he or she should do.

Respond Professionally

Don’t take the anger personally. As a professional, recognize that customers may have legitimate concerns buried somewhere in their anger and venting. They may be overreacting, but you need to remain objective, assess the problem, and focus on solutions.

Whenever possible, use the customer’s name. This personalizes the conversation and makes it difficult for the customer to attack you.

Maintain a friendly manner. Show the customer respect, even in the face of disrespect. Demonstrate no reaction in the face of difficult behavior.

Use appropriate body language. Move closer to the customer and maintain eye contact. Listen for the unspoken message. Focus on subtleties in a caller’s voice—inflection, pacing, and the overall tension level.

Recognize Underlying Factors

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Customers may act angry, upset, demanding, impatient, abusive, and threatening for any number of reasons. These behaviors occur as a result of one or more negative feelings that have been aroused in the situation.

Negative emotions, such as:

I'm frustrated

I'm powerless and a victim

I'm not important

I'm stupid

I'm incompetent

I'm guilty

Self-Check 2	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

How do you handle difficult customer situation? (5pts)

Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

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Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 3 Developing Customer's confidence

Introduction

Commitment is as an essential ingredient for successful long-term relationships. Developing a customer's commitment in business relationships does pay off in increased profits, customer retention, willingness to refer and recommend. Relationship marketing literature suggests customer satisfaction and trust as major determinants of commitment.

Customer satisfaction,

Customer trust,

Customer relationship value, and

Customer commitment asks every variable for successful business relationship management.

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The influence of customer satisfaction on commitment is mediated by trust and relationship value.

The Impact of Customer Relationship Value on Commitment

Customer commitment as the intention of a customer to maintain a long-term relationship with a supplier. We believe that a customer’s aim to stick with a supplier in future is essentially based on positive experience and positive evaluation with the past relationship. Therefore we regard customer relationship value as an essential antecedent of customer commitment and assume the following:

Hyp1: The higher a customer values a business relationship with a supplier, the stronger the customer's commitment towards the relationship with this supplier will be.

The Impact of Trust on Commitment

Trust has a direct positive impact on commitment: Trust diminishes the perceived risk and vulnerability in a relationship and thus leads to a higher commitment to the relationship (Ganesan 1994). Moreover trust reduces transaction costs as there is less necessity to establish expensive control mechanisms. Lower costs in turn increase the probability to continue the relationship in future and therefore increase the commitment to the relationship. Trust can even be called an essential antecedent of commitment: If a supplier is not perceived to be benevolent, honest or competent enough to show useful behavior regarding the relationship in question, the customer cannot rely on this supplier and thus will show no commitment towards the relationship (Morgan&Hunt1994). There is only one exception to this rule we can think of: It might be that the supplier has a high amount of power over the customer, which is usually the case when a supplier is in a certain monopoly position and is thus very difficult or impossible to replace. In this case, even though the supplier may not be benevolent, honest or competent with regard to the relationship, the customer will commit

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himself or herself to the supplier out of dependency (Ganesan 1994, Kumar, Scheer & Steenkamp,1995).

As we understand commitment, however, it does not encompass this form of forced compliance which can only emerge out of a power or dependency imbalance. As soon as the power balance in our example will change at the cost of the supplier – e.g. because a competitor of the supplier enters the market or because the customer will have the opportunity to replace the supplier by producing the goods or services in question himself or herself – the lack of trust in the supplier will usually result in the customer quitting the relationship. Therefore, we assume the following:

Hyp2: The more the customer trusts a supplier, the higher the customer's commitment to the relationship with this supplier will be.

Self-Check 3	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is customer commitment? (3 points)

2. What are the main purposes of customer trust?? (5 points)

3. What is The Impact of Trust on Commitment?



Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above

Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____

Rating: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet 4- Establishing mutually acceptable resolution of complaint

4.1 Customer Complaints and Types of Customers

In this article we will discuss customer complaints and types of customers. The handling of customer complaints is an important component of providing Superior Customer Performance. Three important aspects of the complaint process are actively seeking customer complaints, recognizing the type of customer that is complaining, and responding appropriately based on the type of complainer.

4.1.1 Actively Seeking Customer Complaints

It is important to realize that organizations that are totally customer-focused do not just respond effectively to customer complaints; they actively seek them out. What specific activities does your organization utilize to provide customers with easy opportunities to

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register their dissatisfaction? Are these activities sufficient? Remember, research indicates that for every complaint expressed there are over 25 unregistered complaints. Many dissatisfied customers just quietly take their business elsewhere. No news from customers regarding your performance is not necessarily good news.

4.1.2 Types of Complainers and How to Respond Effectively

At least five types of complainers can be identified. Each type is motivated by different beliefs, attitudes, and needs. Consider the following definitions of the types of complainers, how one might respond to them, and the danger of not handling complaints effectively.

1. The Meek Customer. Generally, will not complain.

Response: Must work hard at soliciting comments and complaints and act appropriately to resolve complaints.

2. The Aggressive Customer. Opposite of the Meek Customer. Readily complains, often loudly and at length.

Response: Listen completely, ask: "what else?," agree that a problem exists, and indicate what will be done to resolve it and when.

Danger: Being aggressive in return. The Aggressive Customer does not respond well to excuses or reasons why the product or service was unsatisfactory.

3. The High-Roller Customer. Expects the absolute best and is willing to pay for it. Likely to complain in a reasonable manner, unless a hybrid of the Aggressive Customer.

Response: Is interested in results and what you are going to do to recover from the customer service breakdown. Always listen respectfully and actively and question carefully to fully determine cause. Ask: "what else?" and correct the situation. Like the Aggressive Customer, the High-Roller Customer is not interested in excuses.

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- The Rip-Off Customer. The goal is not to get the complaint satisfied but rather to win by getting something the customer is not entitled to receive. A constant and repetitive "not good enough" response to efforts to satisfy this customer is a sure indicator of a rip-off artist.

Response: Remain unfailingly objective. Use accurate quantified data to backup your response. Be sure the adjustment is in keeping with what the organization would normally do under the circumstances. Consider asking "What can I do to make things right?" after the first "not good enough."

- The Chronic Complainer Customer. Is never satisfied; there is always something wrong. This customer's mission is to whine. Yet, he is your customer, and as frustrating as this customer can be, he cannot be dismissed.

Response: Extraordinary patience is required. One must listen carefully and completely and never let one's anger get aroused. A sympathetic ear, a sincere apology, and an honest effort to correct the situation are likely to be the most productive. Unlike the Rip-Off Customer, most Chronic Complainer Customers will accept and appreciate your efforts to make things right. This customer wants an apology and appreciates it when you listen. Tends to be a good customer (in spite of his constant complaining) and will tell others about your positive response to his complaints.

4.2 Handling Customer Complaints

All good managers want to hear about every complaint their customers have. Only when a complaint has been expressed can the appropriate corrective action be taken. Without customer complaints management often assumes that everything is okay.

It is estimated that for every customer complaint received, there are at least 26 complaints that are never expressed. What are the implications of this statistic? Furthermore, a customer with a complaint is likely to tell 20-25 other customers and potential customers

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about his complaint. Therefore, every organization needs a procedure for resolving customer complaints.

4.3A Suggested Customer Complaint Procedure

Consider the following eight-step customer complaint procedure for handling customer complaints in your organization:

- Provide customers with the opportunity to complain.
- Give customers your full and undivided attention.
- Listen completely.
- Ask the key question: “what else?”
- Agree that a problem exists; never disagree or argue.
- Apologize.
- Resolve the complaint. (Ask again: "what else?")
- Thank the customer for bringing the complaint to your attention.

As you examine these eight steps, determine which ones your organization does most and least effectively. Use your answers to determine where you need to improve your customer complaint procedure.

Conclusion

All customer service personnel need to be trained in handling customer complaints effectively and being empowered to respond in a positive manner. Upcoming articles will address this issue in detail.

Tips & Warnings

Some customer-service complaints can be resolved with one visit or one phone call. Lengthy issues should be tracked and reviewed to ensure that progress is being made. Some solutions do not require prolonged contact with the customer.

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Never call the customer names, tell them they are stupid or use hand gestures to indicate impatience. You will never win an argument with a customer, but you could lose the customer.

If you can't understand a customer because of a language barrier get help. Don't say, "I can't help you unless you speak English."

Don't let an interruption to help someone else stop the conversation. The longer the customer stands waiting for you, the angrier they will get.

Self-Check 4	Written Test
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Directions: Answer all the questions listed below. Examples may be necessary to aid some explanations/answers.

Test I: Short Answer Questions

1. What is customer compliant (3 points)

2. Why do we actively seek customer compliant? (5 points)

3. Explain the different types of complainers? (2 points)

4. How do you respond to the different complainers effectively? (2 points)



Note: Satisfactory rating - 20points & above Unsatisfactory - below 20 points

You can ask you teacher for the copy of the correct answers.

Answer Sheet

Score = _____
Rating: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

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