

# Human Resource Management

## Level-II

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## Acronym

<b>CRM.....</b>	Customer Relationship Management
<b>HRM .....</b>	Human Resource Management
<b>KPI.....</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>MoLS.....</b>	Ministry of Labor and Skills
<b>SLA's.....</b>	Service level agreements
<b>TVET.....</b>	Technical Vocational training and Education
<b>TTLM.....</b>	Teaching, Training and Learning Materials

## Introduction to the Module

Great customer service means following best practices like valuing customers' time, having a pleasant attitude, and providing knowledgeable and resourceful resources, but that you also take things a step further to exceed rather than just meet expectations.

Customer service is important because it inspires customer loyalty and makes employees' jobs easier. This, in turn, helps businesses grow. By providing great customer service, organizations can recover customer acquisition costs, retain talent, and foster brand loyalty.

This module covers performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to manage the ongoing relationship with a customer, creating a relationship with customers, identifying their needs, delivering services or products and processing customer feedback, sustain service provided to customers.

This module is designed to meet the industry requirement under the Human Resource Management occupational standard, particularly for the unit of competency: **Deliver and Sustain Customer Service**

### This module covers the units:

- Customer needs identification
- Customer service delivery
- Service delivery report
- Customer feedback
- Customer needs articulation
- Customer satisfaction
- Customer needs networks

### Learning Objective of the Module

At the end of this module the trainees will be able to:

- Identify customer needs
- Deliver a service to customers
- Sustain and report on service delivery
- Process customer feedback
- Assist customer to articulate needs
- Satisfy complex customer needs
- Manage networks to ensure customer needs are addressed

### Module Instruction

For effective use this modules trainees are expected to follow the following module instruction:

1. Read the information written in each unit
2. Accomplish the Self-checks at the end of each unit
3. Do the “LAP test” given at the end of each unit and
4. Read the identified reference book for Examples and exercise

## Unit One: Customer Needs Identification

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

- Customer needs identification interpersonal skills
- Customer needs and expectation Assessment
- Effective communication skills
- Limitations in addressing customer needs

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

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

- Use appropriate interpersonal skills
- Assess customer needs and expectations
- Determine priorities for urgency needs
- Use effective communication
- Identify limitations in addressing customer needs and Seek assistance from designated individuals



## 1.1 Interpersonal skills to identify customer needs

Good customer service is all about creating a relationship with customers and providing them with a friendly and helpful atmosphere. There are many different avenues and strategies you can follow to provide good customer service. At the end of the day, you're simply trying to give your customers a great experience that will leave a lasting impression.

**Interpersonal skills** are skills that pertain to the relations between people. They are vital to your success as a customer service provider. They govern how you interact with people within your organization as well as your external customers. There are a number of skills that are considered interpersonal. In this lesson, we are going to focus on the following key interpersonal skills.

- **Assertiveness skills**

Assertiveness skills in sharing your thoughts and feelings in a way that is clear and direct while showing consideration for your customers' viewpoints and recognizing the validity of their thoughts,

- **Communication skills**

One of the most important interpersonal skills in customer service is communication. When are you working in customer service you will need to be able to communicate clearly and effectively with verbally, and in writing. Some jobs also require skills in effective public speaking.

- Using appropriate body language
- Providing an opportunity for the customer to confirm their request
- Questioning to clarify and confirm customer needs
- Seeking feedback from the customer to confirm understanding of needs
- Summarizing and paraphrasing to check understanding of customer message

- **Empathy skills**

Part of being a good manager, employee, or colleague is the ability to understand and show empathy to others. If a customer or colleague calls with a complaint, for example, you will need to listen thoughtfully to the person's concerns and express compassion for their issue. Empathy is an important skill that will help you get along with everyone in the workplace.

- **Leadership skills**

Even if you are not a manager, it is important to have some leadership experience and ability. Leadership requires being able to motivate and encourage others and help a team achieve success.

- **Problem solving skills**

Problem solving skills to identify and solve problems when establishing and maintaining customer relationships

- **Listening skill**

Listening is a skill that goes hand in hand with good communication. Listening actively to what the customer is communicating. While you need to be able to express your own ideas, you also need to thoughtfully listen to the ideas of others. This will help your clients, employers, colleagues, and employees feel respected and valued.

- **Negotiation skills**

Negotiation is an important skill for many positions. Depending on the specific job, it might involve creating formal agreements (or contracts) between customers or helping colleagues solve a problem and determine a solution. To be a good negotiator, you must be able to listen to your customers, use creative problem solving, and arrive at an outcome that satisfies everyone.

## **1.2 Customer needs and expectation Assessment**

Customer is an individual, group of individuals or an organization who receive or may receive goods, services, products or ideas from another individual or a company in return of value which can be money or anything of equivalent value. Customer forms the backbone of business. Customer forms the backbone of business. Usually more is the number of customers, more is the business thriving and vice versa. Business needs customers to buy their products or services. A customer may not be buying your product right away but may buy it in future but still remains part of your target customer group.

### 1.2.2 Types of customers

Customers can be of various types depending upon their ability to buy products or services.



*Figure 1 Types of Customers*

Below are the 8 different types of customers:

#### 1. Potential Customer

Potential customer is kind of person who is very likely to buy the product or service offered by the business. e.g. a customer looking for an apartment in a particular area becomes a potential customer for the local realtors who would have a flat which will suit the requirements of the customer. The customer might end up buying the apartment. Potential customers can present an opportunity for the business to sellers and after qualification can convert into a quote stage and eventually result in an order or a sale.

## **2. Loyal Customers**

Those who are loyal to one business and repeat the purchases irrespective of minor changes in parameters like price, quantity etc.

e.g. a customer who buys the same airline's ticket irrespective of price.

## **3. New Customer**

The new customers are customers who have used the product or service for the first time from a particular organization. Such customers can be switching from a competitor brand or may be new entrant into the market.

e.g. a person buying car for the first time after a salary raise. From the perspective of the organization, a new organization would acquire new customers from the market either by launching a new product category altogether or launching a competitive product offering in the market.

## **4. Discount Customer**

Discount customers are those who only buy or use the offering because it was on discount or offered a cashback. These people are more likely to switch brands easily if prices reduce unlike loyal customers. e.g. A customer who takes a different flight based in the discounts offered though the preferred airline brand was different based on past travels.

## **5. Former Customers**

Former customers are those who were once buyer of one business and became buyers of a new business because of some reason. These people would still be potential customers as they have already tried the product or service once.

e.g. A person who used to buy a specific beverage switched to a more healthier option offered by a competitor.

## **6. Internal Customer**

One who is connected to your organization and is internal to your organization. These for example are your shareholders, employees & other stakeholders.

## **7. External Customer**

An external buyer is a buyer of your services and products but external to your organization. An example of your external consumer could be people buying your products in the marketplace.

## **8. Intermediate Customer**

Intermediate customers are those who purchases the goods for re-sale e.g. retailers. The customers are part of a longer supply or value chain.

### 1.2.2 Customer needs Identification

Customer Needs Identification is the process of determining what and how a customer wants a product to perform. Customer Needs are non-technical, and they reflect the customers' perception of the product, not the actual design specifications, although frequently they are closely related.

Identifying customer needs is mission-critical for businesses looking to create a product that truly speaks to their customers' problems. Not to mention, the easiest way to position your brand smartly in the market is to unite your internal teams behind the specific needs of your customers.

Do you feel the number of repeat buyers is low? To turn that around and grow your business, you need to learn what your customers value most. In other words, discover what makes the loyal customers loyal. Customer-centric companies are 60% more profitable than companies that don't focus on customers.

While your business provides a solution to a need or problem, think about a typical customer's needs from an emotional perspective. Grow your business by better understanding the audience.

The following are four ways to identify customer needs

#### 1. Identify what the customers want

66% of customers expect companies to understand their needs and expectations. The best way to identify their needs is to take an organized approach. Some refer to this as a **customer needs analysis**, which provides you with valuable insights about your target audience. Common methods for discovering what customers want include focus groups, social listening, and keyword research.

#### 2. Distribute feedback throughout your organization

Once you've collected data, build insights about your customers and share findings about them with your teams. Use those insights to identify opportunities for improving your products or services—and/or improving the way you describe them on your website—that make the conversion path as easy as possible. Conducting this type of research effort and sharing results regularly with your team will lead to more proactive, strategic, and data-oriented marketing efforts, hopefully replacing more reactive ones.

#### 3. Create product/service features based on customer feedback

Suggestions and feedback from customers can make your products and services even better than they already are, creating loyal customers who refer their friends to your brand. Take Groove, for example.

Groove is a SaaS help desk product that had an onboarding problem in the early going. Too many people churned after signing up for a free trial because the process was confusing.

The team applied customer feedback to their onboarding process. In their first onboarding email, customers were asked a simple question: “Why did you sign up for Groove?” The email’s response rate improved by more than 300%, and the feedback from customers helped Groove uncover features that customers wanted.

#### 4. Collect further customer feedback on changes you’ve made based

Want to turn customers into advocates for your brand? After you’ve made improvements based on customer feedback, it’s time to return to the first step to collect further feedback on the changes you just rolled out. The customer knows best—there could be more areas for improvement or a feature that didn’t quite hit the mark. Continue meeting their needs so they feel valued.

#### 1.2.3 Types of Customer needs

Customer needs are the named and unnamed needs your customer has when they come in contact with your business, your competitors, or when they search for the solutions you provide. These needs may include the following aspects

- Advice or general information
- Accuracy of information
- Complaints
- Fairness/politeness
- Further information
- Values
- Appropriate services
- Specific information

### 1.3 Prioritizing Customer Needs

When a customer reaches out to your company with a question or problem, they expect immediate attention and prompt responses. In an ideal world, you’d be able to respond to each of them immediately. However, it’s not possible to meet customer expectations every single time. Prioritizing your customer needs will not only help you to deliver a seamless customer experience but also improve your customer service metrics. *A prioritization system* is the best

way to create an efficient workflow for your customer support team. It also eliminates the need to scan through each request separately to determine which one needs your attention

### 1.3.1 Best Practices for Prioritizing Customer Requests

How your organization determines priority will always be unique to the size, type, and philosophy of your business. In this section, we'll go over the basics of how to prioritize customer requests, just to get you started off on the right foot.

#### 1. First come, first serve.

When in doubt, it's always easiest to answer inquiries in the order that they come in. This doesn't mean that you have to answer the low-priority question about sales before the high-priority troubleshooting request. But once incoming calls have been sorted by urgency, the safest and most equitable way to tackle the list is by doing so in the order received.

#### 2. Allow customers to determine the level of urgency.

While customers might not always have the same set of criteria for calculating urgency that your organization does, letting your users manually mark their level of immediacy is one great way to establish trust between the consumer and your company. On your contact form, mark a dropdown section where your users can mark their request on a scale from "least concern" to "needs immediate attention."

#### 3. Create categories for types of requests.

A sales question from a casual shopper will probably be safe waiting for 6-18 hours, whereas a troubleshooting question from a corporate subscriber should be attended to as quickly as possible. Allow users to categorize the nature of their request, marking them as "sales," "general requests," "troubleshooting," "returns," "product failure," etc.

#### 4. Create categories for types of customers.

Some businesses may choose to prioritize customer requests based on whether they are returning customers, frequent buyers, or more. Urgency should always come before the grade of the submitting customer, however you might find that the urgency of the request in fact correlates with the level of the user. Typically, big-ticket requests are issued by larger companies subscribed to your product, and the issues experienced may have a large-scale affect.

#### 5. Respond quickly, no matter what.

It's an awful feeling, sending your request into the ether with no confirmation of whether or not it was received. Even if the low-priority message that just fell into your representative's inbox has 100

other inquiries in front of it, it is in the best interest of both your organization and the customer to send a prompt confirmation notice that their request was in fact received, and will be addressed in due time.

#### **6. Streamline your reassign process.**

If all requests go to customer support first and are then manually transferred to peripheral professionals, there's bound to be hiccups along the way which cost time and effort. You can smooth out the support operations by automating reassignment using tags or sending specifically marked requests to appropriate support personnel immediately. For example, requests marked "technical issues" might be forwarded directly to IT.

#### **7. Create service level agreements (SLA's).**

When employing urgency as your primary determinant for priority, there is a danger that low-priority requests will back up indefinitely and clog the pipes. This can be addressed by setting first reply time deadlines, which once expired will move up the priority list: for example, a low priority ticket might have 3 days to be addressed before it becomes a medium-priority request.

### **1.4 Using effective communication**

Effective communication refers to the process through which a business shares valuable information with its customers. Such interactions take place over popular communication channels such as email, phone, live chat, social media, online forums, customer portals, and many others. Businesses communicate with customers, mainly for two reasons- to assist them with their requests or complaints and to market their new or complementary products.

The effective communications that businesses should communicate with customers must include

- Giving customers full attention
- Handling sensitive and confidential issues
- Maintaining eye contact (for face-to-face interactions), except where eye contact may be culturally inappropriate
- Speaking clearly and concisely
- Using active listening techniques
- Using appropriate language and tone of voice
- Using clearly written information/communication



- Using non-verbal communication e.g. Body language, personal presentation (for face-to-face interactions)
- Using open and/or closed questions.

### 1.5 Limitations of Customer Need Identification

Customer service challenges don't go away. But if you don't handle them correctly, they could cost you your existing and potential customers. Not providing outstanding customer service generates negative word-of-mouth advertising. No business can afford that.

Turn service challenges into relationship-building opportunities and improve customer satisfaction. Prepare your team to handle these challenges in advance.

Below are 12 common and biggest customer service challenges businesses face daily as well as solution ideas on how to turn them into relationship-building opportunities:

#### 1. Not having an answer to the customer's questions

Handling this challenge is more about what you shouldn't do than what you should do. The key is to avoid being unclear in your response. If you do not have the answer, acknowledge the question's difficulty, ask them for time to find a solution, then guarantee you'll contact them.

#### 2. Transferring calls to another department

There will be times when the best way to help a customer is to transfer the customer to another person. When that happens, you first need to let customers know you're transferring them to someone that will help. But avoid the mistake of doing a "blind transfer." Meaning you transfer the customer to another customer service rep without verifying they are available to take their call. How do you think they will feel if someone is expecting a live person but gets a voicemail?

#### 3. Failing to understand what customers want

Customers can have a hard time explaining what they want. They may not know the technical jargon to tell you exactly what the problem is. If possible, ask the customer to take you step-by-step through their issue. You might find it helpful to take notes while they explain. Consider sharing the problem with another customer support agent. A second opinion could help you solve the issue quickly.

#### 4. Dealing with angry customers

Even the best companies get calls from angry customers. The key is first to calm them down to find out how you can help them. One approach is to use the HEARD technique for helping customers — Hear. Empathize. Apologize.

## 5. Exceeding customers' expectations

The trick to beating this challenge is setting reasonable customer expectations and meeting and exceeding them. Exceeding the expectations of customers can generate repeat business. The key to doing that is to take a customer-centric approach. Then, generate data that tells you exactly what customers want. Use print, electronic, and social media to produce that kind of data.

## 6. Serving multiple customers

Customers are okay with being put on hold if it helps resolve their issues. Telling customers that you're going to put them on hold to solve their problems buys you time to talk with the other customer. Above all, avoid telling the first customer you're talking with a second customer. And don't leave customers on hold for a long time.

## 7. An outage or other crisis occurs

Is there anything worse than having a power failure or a crisis? Severe emergencies, like security breaches, can be deadly. How do you handle them? First, put a crisis communication plan in place. That tells employees precisely what they have to do during a crisis. Then, when customers call, you need to apologize to customers for what they're going through. Also, provide constant updates—say once every 30 minutes—to help reassure nervous customers. Once everything's over, you can publish a post-mortem.

## 8. Customers want a discount you can't give

Discounting can get customers to buy from you. But it also devalues your brand's perception in the customer's eyes. So, use this strategy sparingly. No customer likes to hear “no” from a customer service agent. Explain to them why you can't give them the discount.

## 9. Customers want a feature you won't or can't add

The biggest challenge when speaking to customers is saying no. But sometimes you must. Here's a way to do it gracefully: keep your tone positive, be personal, forget templated responses, offer a workaround if one exists. Sometimes you can find a workaround that provides the functionality your customers want in your product. In other words, do what you can to help the customer.

## 10. Flooded with service tickets

This challenge is common during the holiday season—especially if you don't have an employee working 24/7 or a reputable outsourcing provider like Unicom to provide round-the-clock responses. Many customers expect an answer within six hours. When backed-up like this, focus on responding instead of resolving. You can also have customer service agents write a personal

email telling customers, “We’re backlogged, but we’ll be taking care of you soon.” Also, give customers a hard deadline by which you’ll help them.

### **11. You need to fire a customer**

Some people are better suited for your product or service than others. But letting a customer go is never easy. So, if you need to do it, do it with grace and respect. Use this four-step approach:

- Be positive and appreciative
- Re-frame the situation as your fault
- Make the customer whole
- Apologize and offer an alternative

### **12. Reply/resolution times are slow**

Customers want answers now. Or better yet, five minutes ago. To start, review the ticket handling process you have in place. If you have tickets bouncing around from one department to another, find out why and eliminate the problem. Strengthen your communication channels.

## Self-check-1

### Part I. Say True if the statement is correct and False if the statement is wrong

1. There is only one avenue and strategy you can follow to provide good customer service
2. Assertiveness skills is sharing your thoughts and feelings in a way that is clear and direct
3. The biggest challenge when speaking to customers is saying no.
4. If you are not a manager, it is not important to have some leadership experience and ability.

### Part-II: Choose the correct answer

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is customer that very likely to buy the product or service offered by the business
  - A. Potential Customer
  - B. Loyal Customers
  - C. New Customer
  - D. Former Customers
2. Which one of the following is not among the ways to identify customer needs?
  - A. Identify what the customers want
  - B. Distribute feedback throughout your organization
  - C. Using non-verbal communication
  - D. Create product/service features based on customer feedback
  - E. Collect further customer feedback on changes you've made based
3. The effective communications that businesses should communicate with customers must not include\_\_\_\_\_
  - A. Giving customers full attention
  - B. Handling sensitive and confidential issues
  - C. Using active listening techniques
  - D. Using appropriate language and tone of voice
  - E. Non
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is the process to create an efficient workflow for your customer support team
  - A. Customer feedback
  - B. Prioritizing system
  - C. Complain removal
  - D. Effective communication

### Part III. Give answer to the questions

1. Write and discuss limitations of customer need identification?
2. List the best practices for prioritizing customer requests?
3. Write down types of customers with examples?
4. Write and discuss Interpersonal skills to identify customer needs?

## Unit Two: Customer service delivery

This unit provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics:

- Prompt service to customers
- Rapport with customer's establishment
- Customer complaints Handling
- Assistance to customers with specific needs

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

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

- Provide prompt service to customers
- Establish and maintaining rapport with customers
- Handle customer complaints
- Provide assistance to customers with specific needs

## 2.1. Definition and Purpose of customer service delivery

### 2.1.1 Customer service delivery

Good customer service delivery is all about creating a relationship with customers and providing them with a friendly and helpful atmosphere. There are many different avenues and strategies you can follow to provide good customer service. Customer service delivery means consistently meeting customers' expectations. Great customer service is quick, easy, personalized, and empathetic. Companies that deliver excellent customer service take the time needed to understand the needs of their unique customer base

Good customer service delivery is the quality and timely assistance provided by a business and its employees to the people who use or buy its products and services. Customer service can range from aiding customers with purchases to solving their problems online

### 2.1.2 Provide prompt service to customers

The excellence you put in your customer service can grant you a competitive advantage in a tough and increasingly uncertain business climate. That said, speediness is imperative in providing excellent customer support. Thus providing prompt service to customers means: -

- A positive attitude toward customers and toward your work
- Actively finding out what your customer's needs are
- Meeting or exceeding customer's expectations
- High presentation standards
- Making first time customers into loyal customers
- Handling complaints in a systematic and positive manner
- Knowing your products and service

Here is an Example of how you would offer prompt service to new customer

A first time customer comes into the shop, you need to be polite, listen actively, ask open-ended questions about their needs, make sure you help them by holding dresses, accessories for them as they pick them out, offer them a coffee or water while they are looking for products, know your products(if the customer asks you a question about a particular dress you must know the name of the dress, where the dress originates, the accessories that go well with the dress, the sizes available, the alterations that can be made to the dress, and of all the similar styles you have to that particular dress).Product knowledge is vital to meeting the customer's needs as it will give

you the tools to inform the customer with all the information they need for the product to help them make a decision

## 2.2 Establish and maintain rapport with customers

Customers are more likely to invest in your product when you've invested in your relationship. If you've built rapport with your customer, they will enthusiastically reach out to you again and again for help, advice, and new products or solutions, even if you've yet to deliver results.

Thus to establish and main a good report with customers the following issues must be established.

- Good interpersonal skills are required
- You must build a relationship with the customer based on trust, honesty, integrity and reliability
- Offer sound information and never over promise, only offer them honest realistic information that you can deliver
- Deliver what you have promised
- Be polite, friendly and well presented
- Listen actively
- Ask questions to clarify customer needs
- Make a genuine effort to meet or exceed customer's needs

Here is an Example of how you would Establish and maintain rapport with customers

A customer comes in for the first time, you must greet them politely and friendly, ask them what product they are looking for, listen attentively, assist them with their preferred options as well as make suggestions for other products you think might suit their needs. Make sure you do everything you can to please the customer, little things like holding their options as soon as they choose them, offering them a water or coffee, making sure to secure a changing room for them they can put their stuff in safely while they look for products, complimenting them appropriately to make them feel more comfortable etc. Never make a promise such as cost of alterations unless you are sure of the actual costs as if the customer is quoted a higher price.

## 2.3 Handling customer complaints

Customer complaints are inevitable, no matter how streamlined your business. They must always be acknowledged and dealt with effectively. By ignoring or dismissing complaints, you are effectively telling the customer that you don't value their opinions. Handling customer complaints means the process of attending to and resolving complaints of customers including ongoing interaction with complainants. It is expected that this process meets certain minimum standards. The term complaint handling describes the handling of customer complaints within a company. Criticism is supposed to be evaluated in a way that is systematic and orderly, and used to create a positive impact. It is also supposed to resolve the issue that prompted the customer's criticism. The goal of complaint handling is to strengthen customer loyalty as well as quality assurance.

### 2.3.1 Acknowledging Complaints

It is important to realize that organizations that are customer-focused acknowledge customer complaints in a positive manner. What specific activities does your organization utilize to provide customers with easy opportunities to 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. Therefore, organizations that are truly committed to delivering superior customer performance work hard at providing their customers opportunities to complain. What opportunities exist for your organization to acknowledge customer complaints in a positive manner? No organization is so perfect in the delivery of superior customer performance that significant levels of dissatisfaction (the source of complaints) do not exist. No news from customers regarding your performance is not necessarily good news.

### 2.3.2 Identifying Complaints

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

This is kind of customer that will not complain .

**Response:** Actively solicit comments and complaints, and act appropriately to resolve complaints.

**Danger:** Customer may quietly leave, never to return again.

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## 2. The Aggressive Customer

This is opposite of the Meek Customer. Readily complains, often loudly and at length.

**Response:** Listen respectfully and actively, 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

This complainer expects the absolute best and is willing to pay for it. He/she is likely to complain in a reasonable manner. This complainer is interested in results and how you handle the customer service problem.

**Response:** Listen respectfully and actively, question carefully to fully determine cause, and correct the situation.

**Danger:** Like the Aggressive Customer, the High-Roller Customer is not interested in excuses.

## 4. 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. Rip-Off Complainers aren't really looking to resolve the issue. They're more interested in getting something they're not entitled to receive. A constant, 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 back up 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” response.

## 5. The Chronic Complainer Customer

The Chronic Complainer Customer is never satisfied; there is always something wrong. This customer’s mission is to complain. 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 respectfully and never express frustration. A sympathetic ear, a sincere apology, and an honest effort to correct the situation are likely to be the most productive response. 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. Chronic Complainers are often repeat customers (in spite of their constant complaining) and will tell others about your positive response to their complaints.

### 2.3.3 Customer Complaint Procedure

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

1. Provide customers with the opportunity to complain.
2. Give customers your full and undivided attention.
3. Listen respectfully.
4. Agree that a problem exists; never disagree or argue.
5. Apologize.
6. Resolve the complaint.
7. Thank the customer for bringing the complaint to your attention.

Determine how well your organization does in handling complaints effectively. Use your answers to determine where you need to improve your customer complaint procedure.

## 2.4 Providing assistance to customers with specific needs

Customers with special needs or disabilities represent a large percentage of today's consumer population. Working diligently to serve these customers is not only good business, it's organization's legal obligation under the government law. When you begin focusing on how to better serve customers with disabilities, making your business more accessible and inclusive, it can actually help you service all customers. Here are some helpful tips your business can use to make sure you're not missing out on serving the business needs of this large population.

### Disabilities and Special Needs Come in Many Different Forms

First, it's important to understand that disabilities and special needs come in many different forms. Disabilities may be hidden, permanent, visible, or they might only happen at certain times. Disabilities can happen to anyone, and while some are born with a disability, others develop a disability as a result of an accident or injury. Simply growing older can result in limitations and disabilities. Just a few of the types of disabilities include:

- Intellectual
- Mental health
- Developmental
- Physical
- Vision
- Hearing
- Blind
- Deaf
- Language or speech
- Learning

## Here are some ways you can provide better service to your customers with disabilities:

- Patience, optimism, and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.
- Smile, relax, and keep in mind that people with disabilities are just people.
- Don't make assumptions about what type of disability or disabilities a person has.
- Some disabilities are not visible. Take the time to get to know your customers' needs.
- Be patient. People with some kinds of disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond.
- If you're not sure what to do, ask your customer, "May I help you?"
- If you can't understand what someone is saying, just politely ask again.
- Ask before you offer to help - don't just jump in. Your customers with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.
- Find a good way to communicate. A good start is to listen carefully.
- Look at your customer, but don't stare. Speak directly to people with disabilities, not to their interpreter or someone who is with them.
- Use plain language and speak in short sentences.
- Don't touch service animals - they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Ask permission before touching a wheelchair or a piece of equipment.
- Every business should have emergency procedures for customers with disabilities. Make sure you know what they are

## Tips for interacting with customers with disabilities

Let's take a look at some tips for interacting with customers with different types of disabilities.

### a. Tips for interacting with customers with physical disabilities

When you're interacting with people with physical disabilities, don't touch their device without permission. For example, people in wheelchairs feel frustrated when others sometimes unconsciously lean on their wheelchair— it's very disrespectful to do that.

Maybe you notice that someone is struggling to get over a threshold, and the impulse might be to automatically push their wheelchair over it just to be helpful. Again, that isn't the right thing to do. Always ask for permission first.

Eye contact is very important. Of course, staring is not good, but avoiding eye contact altogether is bad as well, as i mentioned before. Relax and focus on the conversation and what the person is saying, and make a normal amount of eye contact. Finally, if there are chairs around, have a seat so you're at the same eye level and can speak more easily.

#### **b. Tips for interacting with customers who are blind or have low vision**

Verbally identify yourself when approaching a customer who is blind or has low vision. Another thing you should do is to speak normally. One big pitfall is to automatically start speaking loudly and slowly to people with any type of disability. People may not even realize they're doing it, and it's a patronizing thing to do. If a person is blind, and they are not hard of hearing, they can hear just fine with a normal volume of speaking.

Let service animals do their work without any distractions. A friend i know who has a service dog first taught me that even maintaining eye contact with a service animal can be distracting. In an office environment, this may not be a life-or-death situation. However, if a service animal is helping their owner across the street and someone distracts them, then obviously this can have some very dangerous consequences.

#### **c. Tips for interacting with customers who are deaf or hard of hearing**

When interacting with a customer who is deaf or hard of hearing, face the person, and don't cover your mouth while speaking. Some people have the lip-reading ability, and so this allows them to read your lips without them struggling to see you.

Make sure that you speak directly to the person who is deaf or hard of hearing rather than an interpreter if there's one present.

Lastly, it's critical to never brush off a person by saying, "never mind," or, "it's not important." Maybe you try saying something two or three times, and they don't understand you. Rather than just waving your hand and saying, "it's okay, never mind," even if you mean it kindly, it's often interpreted as insulting, so if repeating doesn't work, then try rephrasing what you're saying or even just writing it down.

**d. Tips for interacting with customers who have a cognitive disability**

When interacting with a person with a cognitive disability, it's important to speak normally. I know I'm really driving this point home, but it's very important. Sometimes people will speak like they're talking to a child, especially towards someone with a cognitive disability. Of course, you can modify your speech and slow down if needed. However, don't do this automatically when you first interact with a person.

## Self-check-2

### Part I. True/False

**Instruction: Say True if the statement is correct and false if the statement is wrong**

1. It's must to build a relationship with the customer on trust, honesty, integrity and reliability
2. Customer-focused organizations acknowledge customer complaints in a negative manner
3. No news from customers regarding your performance is necessarily good news.
4. Good customer service delivery is the quality and timely assistance provided by a business

### Part I. Matching

**Instruction; match column B with the corresponding column A put the answer on the Answer sheet**

A	<u>B</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Meek Customer</li> <li>2. The Aggressive Customer</li> <li>3. The High-Roller Customer</li> <li>4. The Rip-Off Customer</li> <li>5. The Chronic Complainer Customer</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Likely to complain in a reasonable manner,</li> <li>B. Doesn't need complaint satisfied but rather to get something that is not entitled to receive</li> <li>C. Is never satisfied; there is always something wrong</li> <li>D. kind of customer that will not complain generally</li> <li>E. Readily complains, often loudly and at length</li> </ol>

## Lap Test 2

Instructions: one of the customers of an organization came with complaints, assuming that you are front line employee of an organization,

- **Task 1;** Handle the customer's complaint by following the step by step of the customer complaint procedure

### Unit Three: Service delivery report

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

- Reviewing Customer satisfaction
- Identifying quality opportunities of service and products,
- Monitoring procedural aspects of service delivery
- Seeking and using Customer feedback
- Ensuring reports

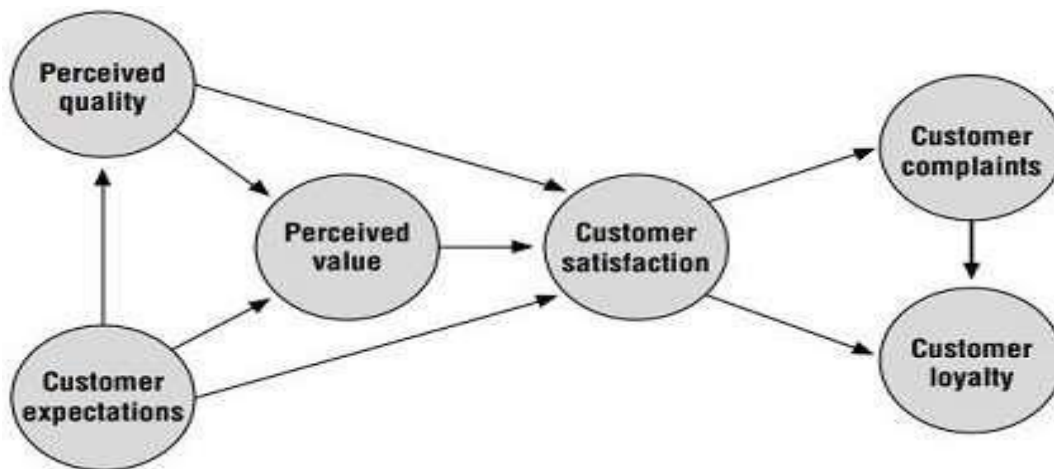
This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcomes stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:

- Review Customer satisfaction
- Identify quality opportunities of service and products,
- Monitor procedural aspects of service delivery
- Seek and use Customer feedback
- Ensure reports

### 3.1. Reviewing Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a measure of how well a company's products, services, and overall customer experience meet customer expectations. Customer satisfaction is the measurement that determines how happy customers are with a company's products, services, and capabilities. Customer satisfaction information, including surveys and ratings, can help a company determine how to best improve or changes its products and services. It reflects your business' health by showing how well your products or services resonate with buyers.

An organization's main focus must be to satisfy its customers. This applies to industrial firms, retail and wholesale businesses, government bodies, service companies, nonprofit organizations, and every subgroup within an organization.



*Figure 2: Customer satisfaction*

#### 3.1.1 The importance of customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is important because it illustrates whether your customer base likes what you're doing. Research shows that high satisfaction leads to greater customer retention, higher lifetime value, and a stronger brand reputation. Low customer satisfaction scores are important, too. They can reveal customer pain points and provide data-backed insights on how to improve your product, service, and overall customer experience. Customer satisfaction is a priority no matter what industry you're in or what you're selling. Modern consumers have more choice than



ever before and if they're not satisfied by your service or products they won't stick around to tell you, they'll just leave and go to your competitors.

Here are some of the reasons you should prioritize customer satisfaction:

**i. Repeat customers represent the best value**

It's widely accepted that it's at least five times cheaper to retain a customer than acquire a new one. If you can keep your existing customers happy they're far more likely to stay with you, leading to greater lifetime value and reduced acquisition costs for your business.

**ii. Customers quickly switch off after a negative experience**

Your customers will stay loyal until you give them a reason not to. Around 96% of customers say customer service is important in their choice of loyalty to a brand, so providing a high-quality customer experience along with consistently excellent products is key to retaining customer loyalty.

**iii. Happy customers won't look elsewhere**

When you provide a positive customer experience your customers won't feel the need to look elsewhere. In fact, loyal customers are five times more likely to make another purchase and four times more likely to refer a friend to your business than customers who don't feel loyal to your brand. Ensuring customer satisfaction by meeting and exceeding expectations is the best way to create loyalty.

**iv. Happy customers will share their experience**

Social proof is key for bringing onboard new customers. Positive online reviews, word of mouth and recommendations are invaluable to your business, with around 88% of people claiming to trust online reviews as much as they would a personal recommendation.

**v. It helps reflect team performance**

Customer satisfaction benchmarks and metrics don't just help you gauge how your audience is feeling—they also tell you how your support team is doing

### 3.1.2 Customer satisfaction reviewing process

#### 1. Create an effective strategy for gathering customer feedback

Customer satisfaction is all about data. You need genuine feedback from your customers that accurately represents their satisfaction levels. To craft your customer feedback strategy, you should:

- Define your ideal target customers
- Choose suitable tools for collecting feedback
- Designate a staff member or team to collect the data
- Decide how the data will be analysed
- Decide how you will implement the findings from that data

#### 2. Determine key customer satisfaction indicators

What are the elements of your customer experience process that influence customer satisfaction? This will vary depending on your industry and business type but factors could include things like:

- Product quality
- Delivery times
- Customer service
- Packaging quality
- Pricing
- Ease of ordering/payment
- Conformity with contract
- Responsiveness

#### 3. Collect and analyse customer feedback

The key to providing a better customer experience is of course obtaining customer satisfaction data. There are a number of ways you can measure customer satisfaction including:

- Surveys and questionnaires
- Focus groups
- Customer complaint analysis
- Product return feedback

- Direct customer communication
- Outsourced feedback collection by an agency
- Churn rates, or customer turnover levels

#### **4. Implement changes based on feedback results**

Once you've collected data in accordance with the satisfaction indicators set out in step two, it's important to not only analyse the data but to implement changes based on your findings. Once you have implemented changes you should commence a new cycle of customer satisfaction reviews to analyse the impact of those changes.

### **3.2. Identifying quality opportunities of service and products**

Improving product quality is essential for achieving long-term profitability and sales growth. While increasing product quality is no easy task, the rewards for doing so surpassed the challenges.

Opportunities to promote and enhance services and products may include:

- Extending time lines
- Packaging procedures
- Procedures for delivery of goods
- Returns policy
- System for recording complaints
- Updating customer service charter.

#### **3.2.1 Increasing quality of Product and services**

It helps build trust with your customer and fuels recommendations and referrals. Excellent product quality also means fewer complaints and returns from your customers. All of these, impact your bottom line and encourage business growth.

With that said, following is how you increase the quality of your products

##### **1. Define product quality**

Quality is often defined in two ways:

- A. Satisfying a set of pre-determined specifications
- B. Satisfying the customer

In general, product quality describes the capability of that product to meet user standards. Here are the questions to evaluate a product's quality.

➤ **Is it tailored to your customers?**

A product that's tailored specifically to the needs of your customers shows that you understand its users and are willing to accept any suggestion they voice.

➤ **Does it solve a problem?**

No product would exist if it weren't improving or solving something. The extent to which a product fixes and intended problems helps in determining its quality.

➤ **Is it polished?**

Dimensions, colors, fonts, and other elements of the design should all be in proper alignment. The product shouldn't appear cheap or have any errors or mistakes in its construction in any way.

➤ **Is it efficient?**

A quality product shouldn't just get the job done but do so efficiently. Meaning, it should deliver quickly with minimal effort from the consumer.

➤ **Is it easy to use?**

Quality products shouldn't complicate the process of solving a problem. Customers should be able to learn how to assemble or use the product easily and effectively.

## 2. **Invest in machinery**

If your production primarily uses human laborers, then your products are more likely prone to errors and defects.

With that said, you need to invest in quality machinery. Production machinery like precision cnc machining ensures accuracy for consistent product quality. Also, machines help increase the production speed and are far more cost-effective than hiring several skilled laborers.

## 3. **Implement a quality management system**

A quality management system (QMS) is a set of internal rules that determines how your business will create and deliver quality products. Whether you're manufacturing your products or outsourcing them, a QMS can keep your organization compliant with the latest regulations and standards in product quality.

## 4. **Spy on competitors**

Checking in on your competitors is a great way to develop and improve the quality of your products. Competitor analysis allows you to understand the weaknesses and strengths in your competitors' products in comparison to your own and find a gap in the market.

### **5. Infuse quality in company culture**

Implementing a QMS is essential, however, it's not enough. These quality principles need to be embedded across your entire organization to work effectively.

Your entire team needs to be on the same page on what constituted a quality product. Encourage managers to constantly reinforce the idea so you can get everyone on board with your vision of quality and more likely become part of the culture.

### **6. Train employees**

Training your employees at all levels can help improve product quality and lessen the problems. Training can take several dimensions. You can set up a new-employee initiation program, train your workers to focus on quality problems and in operating production machinery and equipment from the first day of their job. You can assign existing employees to train new employees since they can provide a firsthand perspective of how your business's operations work.

### **7. Perform product testing**

It's important to test your products before launching. This way, you can anticipate how buyers will react to the product and see what changes you need to do before making an official release to the public.

Product testing allows you to see how your product performs in the real world, ensuring if your product reflects the quality, usability, and efficiency you intended. Also, it provides insight into marketing strategies as well as your positioning against your competitors.

### **8. Listen to customers**

Lastly, don't be afraid to ask your customers. Collecting customer feedback can give you insight into what improvements can be made and how to enhance product quality.

You can use any negative feedback to learn more about your customers' wants and needs and help you in creating products that meet these requirements.

### 3.3. Monitoring Procedural aspects of service delivery

Here are five steps for successful monitoring of your customer service practices that will keep your brand ahead of the game.

#### 1. Analyze service interactions across all channels

It's not enough to loosely monitor your channels or sample some of the calls your contact center receives per month. Rather, it's important to use all the tools at your disposal to get a comprehensive view of your practices. Call quality monitoring and speech analytics can provide insights on the voice channel, while text analytics may be used to understand customer concerns on channels such as email, chat, and SMS. The more in-depth your analysis, the more you will understand where improvements need to be made.

#### 2. Ask customers for their feedback

Asking your customers for feedback on their preferred channels is a great start. However, don't be afraid to ask specific questions and contact specific customers for greater insight. For example, in your post-contact surveys, ask questions that are highly specific to the customer service process—not just the customer's overall satisfaction with your company—and be sure to encourage free response answers. For customers with difficult and ongoing service cases, reach out to them more frequently to make sure you are doing all you can to resolve their issues.

#### 3. Consult with agents to improve practices

Your agents undoubtedly have much to say about their experiences with customers. Are there frequently occurring issues that need to be addressed? Are certain channels understaffed? Do they have tips for best practices? With their comments, your brand can improve practices by taking measures such as revising call scripts, matching agents to the best roles, and better integrating technology for seamless customer experiences.

#### 4. Offer regular employee training and mentoring

Analyzing your service channels may reveal areas where agents need to improve. Do they need to sharpen their interpersonal skills? Is there confusion about the company's mission or brand values? Use such information to update your training programs and address the weaknesses that may be stalling your service. In addition, agents should also receive regular mentoring on an individual basis to ensure that they have the support and tools they need to perform at their best.

## 5. Provide regular channel maintenance

A true omnichannel brand needs to make sure that all channels are functioning well at all times. In addition to staffing channels to meet customer demand, verify that the technology itself is working correctly. Is self-service well integrated into your omnichannel approach? Is your callback system working efficiently? Regular channel maintenance is imperative to ensuring great customer service at all times. After following these steps, your brand can measure results by closely tracking customer satisfaction scores and feedback. The most important thing to remember is that quality monitoring should be an ongoing process. Evaluating your customer service practices regularly ultimately reaps the reward of customer loyalty.

### 3.4. Seeking and using Customer feedback

Customer feedback is the information, insights, issues, and input shared by your customers about their experiences with your company and whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with a product or service, product, or services. This feedback guides improvements of the customer experience and can empower positive change in any business — even (and especially) when it's negative.

#### 3.4.1 Importance of Customer feedback

Customer feedback is important because it serves as a guiding resource for the growth of your company. In short, feedback is the way to keep your community at the heart of everything you do.

In more elaboration customer feedback is important in the following areas.

##### 1. Customer feedback helps improve products and services

When you introduce a new product, brand, or service to the market, you probably have an idea about customer needs. However, only after your customers use your product or service, can you learn about all the advantages, flaws, and their actual experience. On top of that, their needs and expectations evolve with time.

##### 2. Customer feedback helps you measure customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction and loyalty are crucial factors determining a company's financial performance. Therefore, there is no doubt that you want to ensure your clients are happy with your products and services. Naturally, the best way to determine if you meet their expectations is to get their opinions.

### **3. Collecting customer feedback shows you value their opinions**

By asking your clients for feedback, you communicate that their opinion is important to you. You involve them in shaping your business, so they feel more attached to your company. Listening to their voice helps you **create stronger relations** with them.

### **4. Customer feedback helps you create the best customer experience**

Today's marketing is heavily based on people's experiences with products, services, and brands. They do not buy Apple products just because they are good. They want to demonstrate their status and affiliation to a particular group. Therefore, if you focus on providing the best customer experience at every touchpoint, clients will stay loyal to your brand. And naturally, the most effective way to give them an amazing experience is to ask them what they like about your service and what should be improved.

### **5. Customer feedback helps to improve customer retention**

Customer feedback helps you determine if your clients are satisfied with your service and detect areas where you should improve. Thanks to asking for opinions regularly, you can always keep a finger on the pulse. Each time a dissatisfied customer expresses his disappointment, you can immediately react and find a solution to fix an issue.

### **6. Customer feedback is a reliable source of information to other consumers**

In the times of social media, consumers do not trust commercials or expert advice so much. Opinions provided by other customers who have already used a product or service are the more reliable sources of information these days. When you look for accommodation in a city you visit, or you want to find a nice new restaurant to have dinner with friends, you read reviews beforehand.

### **7. Customer feedback gives you data that helps taking business decisions**

There is no place for business decisions based on loose guesses on a highly competitive market. Successful business owners gather and manage distinct kind of data that helps them develop future strategies. Only in this way they are able to adjust their products and services to perfectly fit customer needs

#### **3.4.2 Seeking and collecting customer feedback**

As a business owner, you know your customers should be your top priority. If you aren't meeting their needs, your success—and the future of your business—will be jeopardized.



To find out what your customers really want, it's important to have a process in place for collecting feedback and, more importantly, putting it into action. Here's what you have to say.

### **1. Use the net promoter score**

Net promoter score (NPS) is a market research metric that takes the form of a single survey question asking respondents to rate the likelihood that they would recommend a company, product, or service to a friend or colleague. The net promoter score methodology is based on asking customers the single question: how likely are you to recommend this company/product/service to a friend or colleague. The response ranges from 0, for not at all likely, to 10, for extremely likely.

### **2. Combine a feedback request with product updates and announcements**

Make your customers a part of your business by asking them to participate in the development of your service or product. This will show them that you really care and make them feel valued.

### **3. Text customers immediately after service**

At the company, you have to use feedback software that sends a quick text survey to customers right after their massage appointment is completed. This allows you to gather accurate feedback in real time, as well as the opportunity to respond immediately to any guest who was unsatisfied with their experience so we can remedy any issues

### **4. Read their comments on social media**

Some customers aren't comfortable speaking directly to brands. Instead, they'd rather ask questions of their peers or share their thoughts in social media comments on each others' pages.

### **5. Check in with customers regularly**

Customer satisfaction must be the no. 1 focus for any business to be successful. To ensure satisfaction at every step in the customer journey, the most important tip you should offer is to regularly check in on happiness, and don't be afraid to ask regularly.

### **6. Talk to customers face-to-face**

In this internet era, we are too reliant on online surveys for feedback. Critical feedback is found when you engage face-to-face with your customers. Even if the sample set is smaller, you will learn an incredible amount. More than 90% of communication is nonverbal—how much more can you glean without saying a word

## 7. Ask the right questions

In order to collect effective customer feedback and make it useful, you need to be asking customers the right questions. For instance, instead of asking, “do you like our product?” And getting a simple yes-or-no answer, you need to be asking questions like, “what is your favorite feature of our product? What is your least favorite feature? How can we improve our product?” And so on.

## 8. Make it easy to provide feedback

If you want feedback from your customers, you can’t make it complicated. Keep questions short and simple, and don’t make your surveys too long either. O, be sure to keep your customer feedback surveys short by including only the most important questions.

## 3.5 Ensuring customer service delivery reports

Customer service reports are important indicators of the productivity and success of an organization’s support team. These reports present valuable insights that are derived from customer service data. They transform raw data into statistics and key metrics, giving you a detailed and digestible overview of customer service requests and how your team responds to those requests

### 3.5.1 Importance of customer service reports

Today, customers have become more empowered and digitally savvy than ever before and expect top-class customer service from companies. If your business falls short of their expectations or offers poor customer service, they will be forced to look for alternatives.

- Customer service reports contain several important metrics that reflect the performance of your customer service team. These reports help you:
- Monitor trends in support performance and quality
- Identify the areas of performance and support quality that need improvement
- Improve the service delivery of your support team
- Check if your customer service goals are being met
- Help meet and exceed customer expectations
- Plan your support team’s work schedule and workload distribution
- Make better strategy decisions that are based on customer feedback

### 3.5.2 Create and Use Customer Service Reports

Customer service reports need to be made frequently — ideally on a weekly basis. The big benefit of this frequency is that you can see trends and spot patterns more easily and use that information to improve customer experience.

Here are some of best tips on how to make the most out of customer service data analysis:

- (i) Learn about your overall customer experience
- (ii) Understand support costs
- (iii) Motivate your team to improve customer experience
- (iv) Improve customer loyalty
- (v) Get a better idea of what's not working
- (vi) Get product feedback
- (vii) See the channels where your customers prefer to reach out for help
- (viii) Create customer profiles and personas
- (ix) Segment your customers
- (x) Map out the customer journey

### 3.5.3 Types of Customer Service Reports

Depending on its exact purpose, there are many ways you can write a customer service report. By choosing to omit or highlight certain metrics, you tailor it to the audience bringing focus on issues that really matter.

So, here are some of the best examples of customer service report types:

#### a) First Reply Time Report

Customer satisfaction is directly correlated with the time it takes for them to receive a reply to a support ticket. First reply time is an important metric, and special attention needs to be paid to the difference in response time (if any) between different channels, agents, and types of issues.

#### b) Customer Wait Time Report

This metric is sometimes called requester wait time and it's a sum of the time a customer spends waiting on responses while their issue is being solved. Even if they get an initial reply quickly, waiting for a long time on the line with a support agent can significantly

degrade the customer experience. Like first reply time, it can be divided by type of issue, agent, and channel.

#### **c) Time to Full Resolution Report**

This is one of the most important metrics when customer success is concerned. Even if agents respond quickly and provide answers immediately, but the customer still has to come back because their issue wasn't solved, this will lead to a negative user experience. Prioritizing speed at the expense of accuracy and helpfulness can have a detrimental effect as that will draw out the overall resolution time.

#### **d) Interactions Per Ticket Report**

If a customer has to follow up on an open ticket because their problem isn't solved or provide additional information (above what's needed to solve the problem and provide customer security) they're the ones who have to do more work. Justified or not, customers often think that agents should do that work.

#### **e) Customer Satisfaction Scores Report**

Asking customers directly what they think about is the best way to determine the quality of customer service. CSAT scores provide an overview of how the customer service team is performing, but they can sometimes be misleading if looked at in isolation.

#### **f) Number of Incoming Tickets Report**

Tracking this metric can help customer service managers determine how many agents they need to provide good customer service. Breaking this metric down allows you to get more information. Checking the number and percentage of tickets per channel helps the management identify who to hire while checking the busiest times allows them to optimize scheduling.

#### **g) Customer Support KPI Report**

Main KPIs that need to be tracked are service level, customer support vs revenue, and customer satisfaction. They will give you insight into how your customer support is performing overall and how cost-effective it is. There's always room for improvement and being on top of these metrics will allow your customer service department to keep improving.

#### **h) Customer Retention Report**

Using a customer retention report will allow you to improve customer retention rates and improve long-term ROI. The main metrics that need to be included are customer churn, net retention rate, revenue churn, and MMR growth rate.

Tracking customer retention and churn, and comparing it to revenue information will allow you to benchmark your success in this area and identify potential strengths and weaknesses.



### Self-check-3

#### Part I: True/False

**Instruction:** write TRUE, if the statement is right and write FALSE, it is wrong

1. Customer service reports present valuable insights that are derived from competitors' data
2. Customer satisfaction reflects your business' harmful by showing how corrupt your products or services resonate with buyers.
3. Call quality monitoring and speech analytics can provide insights on the voice channel
4. Analyzing your service channels will not reveal areas where agents need to improve
5. Customer feedback is important as it serves as a guiding resource for the company growth

#### Part-II: Answer the following questions accordingly

1. What does it mean customer satisfaction?
2. Write down the importance of customer feedback?
3. What does it mean customer service report?

## Unit Four: Customer feed back

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

- Recognizing and handling customer feedback
- Recording feedback and communication
- Identifying and discuss customer needs
- Supporting policies and procedures to make contact

This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcomes stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:

- Recognize and handling customer feedback
- Record feedback and communication
- Identify and discuss customer needs
- Support policies and procedures to make contact

## 4.1. Customer feedback Handling

Customer feedback handling is the process of integrating and leveraging feedback collected from multiple channels to make your product or service better. It is the process by which you can collect, organize, and implement the feedback you received. Customer feedback handling breaks your overall feedback management into actionable insights, thereby helping you streamline your efforts.

### 4.1.1 Importance of handling customer feedback

Keeping your customers engaged and in the customer feedback loop with what you're working on is key to keeping them satisfied with your product, and the best way to do that is to listen to their feedback and incorporate it into your product.

Proper customer feedback management can help you:

- **Improve Your Product**

By prioritizing what your customers are requesting for your product, you can guarantee that you're creating something that people are going to get value out of and you're bettering your product.

- **Validate Your Product Roadmap**

Proper customer feedback management can help you validate ideas you already have in your roadmap by finding out which items resonate most with your customers. Understanding what your users want can help you nail down a product roadmap and decide what to build next for a more successful customer journey.

- **Get a Pulse on Customer Satisfaction**

If the general consensus is that most users are satisfied with your product, then you can probably focus on adding additional functionality that will enhance the customer experience. But if you find out through their feedback that the majority of your users are unhappy with your product, it may be time to take a look at what you've got and figure out why it isn't resonating with your customers.



- **Reduce Customer Churn**

If customers feel like their feedback is being ignored, they're going to skip town to find a product that they feel resonates better with their ideas and needs. Engaging with your customers, and incorporating their feedback, if it aligns with your roadmap, is a great way to ensure they stick around for the long haul, and the key to doing this is having a proper system to manage all that customer feedback.

#### **4.1.2 Ways to handle Customer feedback**

By following steps will help bridge the gap between customer and product teams and unite everyone around satisfying the needs of your users.

- (i) Define your Objectives
- (ii) Tailor the Feedback Process to your Objectives
- (iii) Collect Feedback across Multiple Channels
- (iv) Categorize the Feedback Collected
- (v) Take Action on the Customer Feedback
- (vi) Track Behaviour to Optimize the Feedback Loop
- (vii) Use Feedback for Internal Brainstorming
- (viii) Establish a Formal voice of customers (VOC) Program

## **4.2 Recording feedback and communication**

Customers are the key stakeholders of any given business. The revenue that businesses aim to generate is acquired by selling products to the customer. Hence, it is no big secret that customers must be satisfied with the products. It is extremely vital that businesses record customer feedback to tweak their products and respond to customer demands. Customizing products according to customer wants and needs will ensure that the business is going in the right direction and that profits are being made

### **4.2.1 key Reasons for Recording Customer Feedback**

Here are 7 solid reasons to record your customers' feedback.

#### **1. Customer Satisfaction**

Analyzing recorded customer data like whether they like certain products, what adjustments should be made, is the pricing satisfactory and the like can help management gain better insight into how to better serve their customers.

## **2. Customer Retention**

Adjusting products by recording feedback can be a great way to ensure customer satisfaction and making sure that customers keep buying.

## **3. Customer Acquisition**

Recording customer data will allow for tweaked products that will help companies gain new customers through positive word of mouth. Niche markets can also be captured by proper targeting and sales force management.

## **4. Customer Relationship**

Recording data on individual customers will help the sales team personalize their services and solutions accordingly and will provide sales reps with real-time data to handle a plethora of situations on the field.

## **5. Customer Profiling**

Unique customer profiles can be created along with the inventories they require that can be scanned through barcodes from a barcode database.

## **6. Trend Analysis**

Certain customers are prone to buying more of something during festive seasons like holly days and ceremonies. Demands for chocolates and sweets usually go up during those times. Businesses can respond intelligently to these trends by stocking relevant inventories so that they can supply items to the market to satisfy demands and meet their goals.

## **7. Capturing Customer Feedback**

Customers should be asked about previous deliveries and should be requested to share insights they have on current deliveries or any trends or modifications they want to request in general. These data should be meticulously captured by sales teams so they become essential snapshots to the product team.

### 4.3 Supporting policies and procedures to make contact

#### 4.3.1 Customer Contact services

Customer contact is the process of handling a query of the customer before, during, and after the purchase of any product or service. It is the process of resolving customer's issues and providing them with an appropriate solution, crafted with excellent call center services.

Customer contact services are necessarily backed by call center services but may also have email and online ticketing systems. The other forms of customer complaints resolution aren't as quick as the call services so customers exclusively look for call support when buying a product or service.

#### 4.3.2 Necessity of customer contact

The success of a business is a result of its relationship with the customers. These customer contact centers help organizations maintain a thriving relation with the clients and narrow down attrition. Customer contact can help companies to enhance their growth and improve their relationships with customers, resulting in the fabricated digital images through online reputation management

A good customer contact benefits your business with –

1. Better customer satisfaction – satisfied customers recommend your product and services to others. Word of mouth helps other potential customers build trust and is one of the cheapest and best methods of marketing.
2. Clients renew services – an unsatisfied customer will eschew elsewhere and happy customers will buy from you over and over again. Customer contact centers ensure that consumer queries are heard and dealt with properly, ensuring happy clients and lower attrition.
3. Better upsell – for what it's worth, customers are willing to pay more for a product and associated services. Up keeping a great contact center will help up your chances of upselling and pitching higher services to your existing customers. As per Statista, businesses that maintain a grievance or customer complaint cell made 30% more upsells than their competitors.

## Self-check-4

### Part-I: Choose the correct answer

1. Which one of the following is not right about the meaning customer feedback handling?
  - F. It is the process of integrating feedback to make your product or service better
  - A. It is using non-verbal communication e.g. Body language, personal presentation
  - B. It is the process of collecting, organizing, and implementing the feedback you received.
  - C. It breaks your overall feedback management into actionable insights,
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is the process of handling a query of the customer before, during, and after the purchase of any product or service
  - A. Customer Contact services
  - B. Reduce Customer Churn
  - C. Customer Retention
  - D. Trend Analysis
3. Which one of the following is wrong about the customer contact benefits?
  - A. Better customer satisfaction
  - B. Customers renew services
  - C. Better upsell
  - D. Non

### Part-II short answering

1. What does it mean by Customer feedback handling?
2. List down the step by step of the process of handling Customer feedback?

## Unit Five: Customer needs articulation

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

- Exploring internal and external customer needs
- Explaining and matching available services and products
- Communicating rights and responsibilities of customers to customers.

This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcomes stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:

- Explore internal and external customer needs
- Explain and matching available services and products
- Communicate rights and responsibilities of customers to customers.

## 5.1 Exploring internal and external customer needs

Customer needs refer to a customer's motives for purchasing a product, brand or service, or alternatively the attributes of a product, brand or service that tempt them to buy. And it's these customer needs that every business or organisation is striving to identify.

### Types of customer needs

When it comes to customer needs, there are two main types to consider; internal and external:



*Figure 3 Internal Customer and External Customers*

### I. Internal customer needs

When we are referring to internal customers, we're essentially talking about the stakeholders that work within your organisation, namely your employees. The needs of this internal audience group are reliant on the assistance they receive from other individuals or departments to complete their work.

For example, a marketing department typically has to liaise with then complete collateral for various departments within a company. These departments are essentially the marketing team's own internal customers, and they need to provide a good service if they are to keep these audiences happy and retain their own jobs.

## II. External customer needs

In contrast, your external customers are those people and businesses that pay for your products and services and not directly connected to your organisation. Unlike internal customers that have no choice about who they have to work alongside, external customers have both a choice and influence over who they choose to liaise with and ultimately buy from.

For example, let's say you were a support provider of IT services. Given the freedom an external customer has over partnering with you. Unless you're consistently delivering timely, high-quality support, they may decide to take their business elsewhere. That's why it's essential that you're able to identify and best meet the needs of your customers.

### 5.2 Matching available services and products to customers' needs

There are essentially two types of customer needs: physical and psychological.

- (i) Physical needs are the simplest to identify, as they often have direct solutions. For example, if someone is hungry, they need something to eat.
- (ii) Psychological needs are sometimes harder to identify, but they are also typically the more powerful driver of customer decisions. For instance, while a physical need tells a customer they need something to eat, a psychological need directs them towards food that provides them with a specific feeling

To better understand the customers' needs and to match available services and products to customers' needs, consider both their physical and psychological needs. Some common types of customer needs include:

- **Price:** A product that fits into their personal budget
- **Experience:** An enjoyable experience while using the product
- **Function:** A product that solves a specific problem for the customer
- **Feeling:** A specific feeling the customer can have while using your product
- **Compatibility:** A product that works well with the other products your customer uses
- **Personal:** A personal experience the customer has when interacting with a brand or contacting customer service
- **Social:** A product that comes with social status, such as buying the latest model car to impress coworkers

#### 4.2.1 Importance of matching product and services to customer needs

Meeting customer needs can provide mutual benefits for businesses and their customers. When businesses meet these needs consistently, it can help drive sales and increase their customers' trust level. Here are some reasons that highlight the importance of meeting customer needs as often as possible:

- a) **Fosters trust:** When a customer trusts a brand or a business, it can help them remain loyal to it over the competition. Trust represents a crucial component of the customer-business relationship that supports long-lasting relationships.
- b) **Provides value:** Customers seek value from the products and services of their favorite companies. The concept of value can extend beyond providing a good or high-quality product. By meeting customers' needs, businesses can make them feel valued as individuals rather than just people who provide revenue.
- c) **Lets customers feel heard:** Customers can feel more trusting of a brand when they feel like it hears them. Listening closely to customers' needs and demonstrating an understanding of them ensures that the business meets those needs and encourages confidence.
- d) **Sets you apart from the competition:** Taking a customer-focused approach can help differentiate the business from its competitors and push your brand to the front of the industry.

#### 4.2.2 Matching products and services with customer needs

Once you know how to identify customers' needs, you can develop strategies to meet them. You can use the following 16 tips to help your business meet customer needs in both the short and long term:

- Listen to customer feedback
- Acknowledge your customers
- Solve the customers' problems
- Build a customer-focused company culture
- Demonstrate empathy
- Interact with your customers
- Analyze your reviews
- Be honest with customers
- Collect information
- Adjust your prices
- Improve your response times
- Involve the customers in the business development process
- Keep your customer service channels consistent
- Understand customer success vs. customer service
- Exceed expectations whenever possible
- Make continuous efforts toward improvement.



### 4.3 Rights and responsibilities of customers.

#### 1 Rights of customers

You know that today consumers face various problems on account of competition in the market, misleading advertisements, availability of inferior quality of goods and services, etc. Hence protection of consumers' interest has become a matter of serious concern for the Government as well as public bodies. It is to safeguard the interest of consumers that Government has recognized certain rights of consumers.

- (i) **Right to safety:** Customers have a right to be protected against marketing of goods which are injurious to health and life. As a customer if you are conscious of this right, you can take precautions to prevent the injury or if injury is caused in spite of precaution, you have a right to complain against the dealer and even claim compensation.
- (ii) **Right to be informed:** Customers also have the right to be informed about the quantity, quality, purity, standard or grade and price of the goods available so that they can make proper choice before buying any product or service. Also, wherever necessary, the customer must be informed about the safety precautions to be taken while using the product to avoid loss or injury.
- (iii) **Right to choose:** Every customer has the right to choose the goods needed from a wide variety of similar goods. Very often dealers and traders try to use pressure tactics to sell goods of inferior quality. Sometimes, customers are also carried away by advertisements on the TV. These possibilities can be avoided if customers are conscious of this right.
- (iv) **Right to be heard:** This right has three interpretations. Broadly speaking, this right means that customers have a right to be consulted by Government and public bodies when decisions and policies are made affecting customer interests. Also, customers have a right to be heard by manufactures, dealers and advertisers about their opinion on production and marketing decisions. Thirdly, customers have the right to be heard in legal proceedings in law courts dealing with customer complaints.
- (v) **(v) Right to seek redressal:** If and when any customer has a complaint or grievance due to unfair trade practices like charging higher price, selling of inferior quality or unsafe products, he has the right to seek remedies. He has a right to get the defective goods

replaced or money refunded by the seller or dealer. He also has the right to seek legal remedies in the appropriate courts of law.

- (vi) **Right to customer education:** To prevent market malpractices and exploitation of customers, customer awareness and education are essentially required. For this purpose, customer associations, educational institutions and Government policy makers are expected to enable customers to be informed and educated about the relevant laws and mechanisms to get their rights

## 2 Responsibilities of customers.

There is a well-known saying that ‘there cannot be rights without responsibilities’. Having examined the customer rights and the purpose served by them, it is necessary to consider whether customers should also be responsible enough to be entitled to exercise their rights. Specifically, the responsibilities of customers may include the followings:

- (i) **Responsibility of self-help.** As a customer, you are expected to act in a responsible manner to protect yourself from being deceived. An informed customer can always take care of his/her interest more than anyone else. Also, it is always better to be forewarned and forearmed rather than getting remedies after suffering a loss or injury.
- (ii) **Proof of Transactions:** The second responsibility of every customer is that the proof of purchase and warranty /guarantee cards documents relating to purchase of durable goods should be invariably obtained and preserved. For example, it is important to get a cash memo on purchase of goods, you should remember that in case you have to make any complaint about defects in goods, the proof of purchase will enable you to establish your claim for repair or replacement of the goods.
- (iii) **Proper claim:** Another responsibility that customers are expected to bear in mind is that while making complaints and claiming compensation for loss or injury, they should not make unreasonably higher claims. Very often, customers have to exercise their right to seek redressal in a court. There have been cases in which customers claimed huge compensation for no apparent reason. This is regarded as an irresponsible act which should be avoided.
- (iv) **Proper use of Product/services:** They should always use the products properly. Besides the above responsibilities, customers should be conscious of some other responsibilities. They should stick to the agreement made with manufacturers, traders and service providers. They should make timely payment in case of credit purchases.

## Self-check 5

### Part I True/False

Write true, if the statement is correct and/or write false, if the statement is incorrect

1. There is no need for businessmen to inform their customers about the quality of products because they can judge the quality themselves.
2. Service providers are not responsible for allowing customers to seek remedies for poor quality of services supplied.
3. Right to be heard will enable consumers to ensure due consideration of their interest at the appropriate forum.
4. The right to be heard can effectively be exercised if the consumers are unorganized.
5. The consumer has the right to choose goods of his own choice and the business should give full freedom to consumers to

### Part-II: Choose the correct answer

1. Referring to internal customers, we're essentially mean all the following Except\_\_\_\_\_?  
 A. Employees  
 B. Owners  
 C. Representatives  
 D. Suppliers
2. Which one of the following is among the tips will help meet your customer needs?  
 A. Hesitate to customer feedback  
 B. Always adjust your prices higher  
 C. Improve your response times  
 D. Keep your customer service channels inconsistent
3. \_\_\_\_\_describes a product that works well with the other products your customer uses  
 A. Price of the product  
 B. Experience of the customer  
 C. Feeling of the customer  
 D. Compatibility of the product
4. Responsibility of Consumer includes  
 A. Proper use of Product/Service  
 B. Right to Education  
 C. Must fight for its rights  
 D. Should always visit consumers' courts
5. Which right provides due compassion to consumers?  
 A. Right to be informed  
 B. Right to seek redressal  
 C. Right to be heard  
 D. Right to choose

### Part -III Matching

Instruction; match column B with the corresponding column A

A	B
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Right to safety</li> <li>2. Right to choose:</li> <li>3. Right to be heard</li> <li>4. Right to seek redressal</li> <li>5. Right to customer education</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Seek legal remedy in court of law</li> <li>B. Consultation with consumers regarding policy decision</li> <li>C. Select the best quality item</li> <li>D. Protection against marketing of hazardous goods</li> <li>E. Information about relevant laws of consumer protection</li> </ol>

## Unit Six: Customer Satisfaction

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

- Possibilities for meeting customer needs
- Assisting Customers to evaluate service options
- Determining and prioritizing preferred actions.
- Identifying Potential areas in customer service delivery
- Taking appropriate action in customer service delivery

This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcomes stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this learning guide, you will be able to:

- Meet customer needs
- Assist Customers to evaluate service options
- Determine and prioritize preferred actions.
- Identify Potential areas in customer service delivery
- Take appropriate action in customer service delivery

## 5.1 Meet customer needs

In order to understand customer needs better, it's very important to know who your customers are. By defining your target audience and segmenting them based on their industry or other attributes, you not only get a clear view of what's your selling proposition but also identify their needs.

Here are four simple steps to follow in order to meet customer needs successfully.

- **Identify** – Follow customer needs analysis via surveys, interviews, focus groups, or social listening.
- **Distribute** – Once identified the needs, you can distribute it across the right teams and departments.
- **Create** – Tailor product features, create detailed content that speaks about customer needs.
- **Collect** – Obtain customer feedback regularly to learn how your efforts meet their expectations.

## 5.2 Assisting Customers to evaluate service options

A customer service evaluation is an assessment of your customer service representative's performance when it comes to delivering customer service during a specific period. It takes into account the representative's customer service skills and knowledge, ability to solve problems, and manner with the customer. It evaluates how the employee has contributed to the business and highlights strengths and weaknesses in their performance.

### 5.2.1 Importance Customer Service Evaluation

Companies that conduct customer service evaluations are looking for honest feedback about the levels of service their employees provide to consumers. On the other hand, customer service evaluations provide an opportunity for customers to suggest areas for improvement and provide insight into what kinds of things would make the business even better. For example, a customer might like a sandwich shop but be disappointed it has early closing times on the weekends. Specifically, companies undertake customer service evaluation to get to know

- Employee Knowledge
- Employee Attitude
- Customer Satisfaction
- Areas for Improvement
- Input on Products and Services

### 5.2.2 How do customers evaluate customer service

Following are the five customer service factors that customers use to evaluate service quality provided by companies:

1. **Faith:** It deals with the trust shown (presented) by a company by way of offering guarantees, warranties, exchange and return privileges.
2. **Reliability:** Locating a reliable company has always been a difficult task. Reliability stands for a company's ability to satisfy all written promises. It includes:
  - (i) Accuracy of bills with regard to quality and quantity ordered.
  - (ii) Meeting delivery commitments.
  - (iii) Offering discounts as and when promised.
  - (iv) No false advertisement (Bait Advertisement)
3. **Recognition (Empathy):** It is the company's ability to recognize your details like name, address, choices, likings and disliking. It includes:
  - (i) Offering personalized service like, address and other related details.
  - (ii) Acknowledgements of e-mails, letters, suggestions and complaints.
  - (iii) Remembering by name
4. **Sense of Responsiveness:** It is the company's ability to be responsive towards customers' queries, complaints, doubts and communications. It includes:
  - (i) Call back to customers as and when required
  - (ii) Offering quick service
  - (iii) Attending complaints
  - (iv) Returning e-mails, SMS and other modes of communications.
5. **Tangibility:** It is the company's ability to establish a long-lasting business image (business positioning) in customers' minds. It includes:
  - (i) Store layout and appearance
  - (ii) Uniform (dressing) of sales staff
  - (iii) Hygienic and suitable store environment
  - (iv) Welcome and assistance by store staff
  - (v) Air conditioning in the store
  - (vi) Store location and geographic coverage
  - (vii) Shopping experiences
  - (viii) Type and extent of personal assistance (attention)

(ix) Merchandise quality, assortment, and fashionability

(x) Community services

## Identifying Potential areas of Service delivery

What are the different areas of customer service? Knowing them allows you to focus on mastering and improving the most impactful areas of customer service.

Each area is valuable on its own - but it's when they're combined that your business will really see exceptional results and your customers will receive excellent service. Here are the potential areas of customer service delivery

### i. Responsiveness

Responsiveness is how quickly your company responds to questions or problems from customers. Customers dislike waiting a long time to hear back when they contact your company. And it doesn't matter what channel they use to contact you - whether it's via email, a phone call, or a social media comment - they expect a timely response.

### ii. Competence

It's essential for your business to offer competent, knowledgeable customer service. When a customer calls in for help with an issue, reps shouldn't struggle to understand simple issues or give the same basic advice to every caller. Customer service reps should be trained to be experts in the products they service, or have resources they can call upon to help them

### iii. Reliability

Can customers rely on your business? That question is at the heart of this area of service.

To deliver on this area of customer service, your business needs to be more reliable than your competitors. And you especially need to be reliable in the areas that matter most to your customers.

### iv. Timeliness

In today's fast-paced world, customers are impatient. They know that when they send an email or leave a comment on your company's Twitter post, it's received instantly - no more waiting for a response to an angry letter.

So they expect that your company will respond in a timely manner. There's no one definition for how quickly you should respond to any request



#### **v. Value**

Value is a subjective but important part of the customer service equation. Customers expect to get a certain value from the items they purchase and the companies they patronize. That expected value depends on your brand messaging, place in the competitive landscape, and pricing.

#### **vi. Friendliness**

Friendliness can make a significant difference in how customers perceive your brand. Training your customer service teams to speak to customers in a warm, personal, engaging way can diffuse difficult situations and leave customers feeling welcomed as a person, instead of treated like a case number.

## Self-check 6

### Part I- Matching

**Instruction; match column B with the corresponding column A**

A	B
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Faith:</li> <li>2. Reliability</li> <li>3. Recognition (Empathy</li> <li>4. Sense of Responsiveness</li> <li>5. Tangibility:</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Hygienic and suitable store environment</li> <li>B. Call back to customers as and when required</li> <li>C. Offering personalized service like, address</li> <li>D. Offering discounts as and when promised.</li> <li>E. Offering guarantees, warranties, exchange and return privileges.</li> </ol>

### Part II-Give short answer

1. List down at least five reasons why customer service evaluation is undertaken?
2. What are criteria used by customers to evaluate customer service?

## Unit Seven: Customer Needs Networks

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

- Establishing effective regular communication with customers
- Establishing, maintaining and expanding Relevant networks
- Ensuring procedures based on up-to-date information
- Maintaining Records of customer interaction

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

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

- Establish effective regular communication with customers
- Establish, maintain and expand Relevant networks
- Ensure procedures based on up-to-date information
- Maintain Records of customer interaction

## 7.1 Establishing effective regular communication with customers

Customer service communication refers to the exchange of information between a customer and a company while resolving the customer's issue. From email responses to social media updates and phone calls – there are so many different ways to communicate with your customers and offer assistance. Excellent customer service communication requires skills like speaking and writing clearly, effectively, efficiently, and politely. You need to employ empathetic listening when you're communicating with customers. Remember, communication is a two-way street

### 7.1.1 Establishing Effective regular communication

Enhancing and developing better customer service communication skills should be part of your overall customer service strategy. Here are areas to focus on to improve your customer communication.

- Giving customers full attention
- Handling sensitive and confidential issues
- Maintaining eye contact (for face-to-face interactions), except where eye contact may be culturally inappropriate
- Speaking clearly and concisely
- Using active listening techniques
- Using appropriate language and tone of voice
- Using clearly written information/communication
- Using non-verbal communication e.g. Body language, personal presentation (for face-to-face interactions)
- Using open and/or closed questions.

## 7.2 Establishing, maintaining and expanding Relevant networks

### 7.2.1 Customer network

One of the most powerful business tools for attracting customers and increasing revenue is a strong network. A customer network is: the set of all current and potential customers of an organization, linked to the organization, and to each other, through a web of digital tools and interactions

## 7.2.2 Establishing and Maintaining Customer networks

A strong network is a reputable company's best asset. Your company, no matter how small, can compete against the largest enterprises by embracing its authenticity and credibility to build a loyal customer network. Here are five ways that businesses can customer network

- (i) **Build your network**—it's your sales lifeline. Your network includes business colleagues, professional acquaintances, prospective and existing customers, partners, suppliers, contractors and association members, as well as family, friends and people you meet at school, church and in your community. Contacts are potential customers waiting for you to connect with their needs. How do you turn networks of contacts into customers? Not by hoping they'll remember meeting you six months ago at that networking event. Networking is a long-term investment. Do it right by adding value to the relationship, and that contact you just made can really pay off. Communicate like your business' life depends on it.
- (ii) **Harness the Internet**—Another crucial step to building a strong network is to maintain your brand's authenticity, transparency, and accessibility. Use your online presence to plainly state what your company does and what you value. And then allow your network of customers to vouch for you. The Internet and social media are great democratizers; they give everyone a voice.
- (iii) **Promise and deliver**—Most people have the best of intentions, but sometimes they just don't follow through. While that's annoying in personal relationships, it's downright deadly to a business.
- (iv) **Keep in touch**—The worst thing for a business is to get a reputation for failing to do this. People like to know that their friends are thinking about them. They also like to know that the companies they care about have a vested interest in them (and not just financially). A quick e-mail or telephone call speaks volumes.
- (v) **Use loyalty programs that go beyond earning points**—Most businesses already have loyalty programs to encourage customers to come back. One of the most popular programs involves earning points for every purchase that can later be exchanged for goods. While this is a good start and certainly better than nothing at all, savvy companies will get more creative.

### 7.2.3 Expanding customer network

The following are 5 ways that you can use to expand the customer network: -

#### 1. Offer a free newsletter

Free is something that everyone can afford, from small businesses to global corporations. When you offer a free newsletter, you are informing your potential customers that you are willing to provide free information from the start. If you provide good content, customers will know more about your business.

#### 2. Increase your customer base by asking for opinions

Before a web visitor leaves your website, request that they complete a short survey related to your business. People are happy to express themselves and often enjoy telling you about their online and offline experiences. You can use a survey to conduct industry research, customer experience or measure customer satisfaction.

#### 3. Keep up and maintain excellent customer support and service

A customer who contacts customer support about their first order is just as important as a customer who contacts customer service about their tenth order. Treat each customer with respect and take appropriate action. A happy customer is likely to tell at least three friends about a positive experience and great customer service leads to increased sales.

#### 4. Keep your website content fresh

Fresh and informative content is one of the main elements that pull in new visitors and potential customers. Keep your content fresh by publishing a blog that reports the latest business news, key-takeaways from whitepapers and hot topics within your industry. Fresh content will also help your website be found in search engines.

#### 5. Promote your business on social media networks

Facebook users have an average of 338 friends. When you create new content, launch a new product or run a new campaign, be sure you share this across the social media channels you are active in. There is no easier way to grow your customer base than providing value and then having your customers promote your brand for you.

## 7.3 Records of customer interaction

A customer interaction refers to any communication between a customer and a company. Every interaction with a customer is a chance to connect with them, delight them, and increase their retention and advocacy. On the other hand, a customer interaction record holds critical data about a customer, including the standard data, such as name, order data, billing information, interaction information and credit information

### 7.3.1 Importance of customer interaction recording

Here are five important areas that customer interaction recording is essential to the organizations which are customer-centric culture:

**a) Information shared is information made useful.**

You never know what will be relevant. This does not mean you should document everything (see below), but the information can only be useful if it is well done and accessible.

**b) A client's past experience is often essential to their future experience.**

How would you treat your client differently if you knew that on their last visit they showed up for an appointment that was not on the books or that they have been through three replacement products already.

**c) Knowing a client's history is great service in and of itself.**

It is one of the greatest annoyances in all of customer service, when customers have to repeat their story and details repeatedly to different people in the organization. Recording the history of customer so that the next team member can use it automatically improves the customer experience.

**d) It helps to know the facts.**

In our post Win the Argument, Lose the Customer, we discussed how important it is to know the facts of a case. While it does not always mean you will use that information with the customer, it can still be important to know whether you are right or wrong. If a client claims that they never received a phone call from your organization and you have recording showing 4 different calls, it might affect how you approach resolving the issue.

**e) Documenting resolved issues shows who on your team gets it.**

If given the proper training and tools, creating a culture that believes in proactive recording will quickly show you who your most customer-centric team members are. These are the team

members who care about setting up the next team member for success, who have a proactive mindset and the ability to anticipate what information might be relevant in future interactions with the customer. This skill is one that separates a good customer facing professional from a great one.

### 7.3.2 Recording a Customer Interaction

Following are 7 Keys to Recording a Customer Interaction

1. **Time and Date** -So simple, yet so overlooked. You need to mark when or over what time period the issue occurred, and the date and time of the conversation you are having.
2. **All Appropriate Names**- Most customer service issues come down to a series of human interactions. Work for a large company? Make sure you record who in the service chain you involved in the issue.
3. **Important Account Information and Identifying Information**- How may Bill Smiths does your national company have in its database? Make sure you have the right one's account information and make it clear in your CRM system which Bill Smith it is.
4. **Important Transaction Information**- Bill has three years of orders with your company. Make sure you notate not only what happened but also which order it pertains to.
5. **Details That Matter Later, Not Just Now**-These can include things like what the client says went wrong or what a person says they prefer. As we discussed in 5 Reasons Customer Documentation is at the Heart of Great Service, details that preempt or presume future issues are immensely helpful.
6. **What Needs to Be Done to Resolve the Issue**- If the customer states what they are looking for as a resolution, that information should be recorded. That way, the next person in the chain will begin with the customer's end-goal in mind.
7. **Scheduling a Follow Up**-If a follow up is relevant, it should be scheduled and noted at the time of your interaction. Of course, this is a generic list that should fit most organizations. However, each business is unique, and you want to look at the specifics that are relevant to your business.



## Self-check 7

### **Part I- True/False**

**Instruction:** Write true, if the statement is correct and/or write false, if the statement is incorrect

1. Customer interaction is often high for manufacturing processes, but low for services.
2. When you answer a call, and the customer really needs to resolve the issue with another department, it's your responsibility to make sure the customer reaches someone who can help.
3. Maintaining eye contact (for face-to-face interactions), except where eye contact may be culturally inappropriate

### **Part II- Short answer**

**Instruction** Give answer clearly

1. Write and discuss the process of customer interaction recording?
2. Write and give short explanation at least five reasons why customer interaction is recorded?
3. Write at least five effective communications that can improve your interaction with customers?

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