

Customer Care

Factsheet

Customer Care

Customer care is the ability of an organisation and its staff to satisfy and/or exceed the needs and wants of its customers by delivering the best understanding of the individual and collective needs of the customers.

What does good customer care look like?

- Invests in staff so that they can deliver
- Meets the criteria and guidelines specific to the service they are providing
- Addresses concerns/complaints in a timely manner
- Seeks feedback on the service provided as part of the quality assurance process

Creating a first impression

- First impressions really matter
- You do not get a second chance to create a first impression
- It can take a long time to change their opinion
- The poor impression can then be passed on to others

Communication

It is the foundation of what we do but studies tell us that 70% of mistakes in the workplace are a direct result of poor communication.

What is communication?

The communication process is complete once the receiver has understood the message of the sender. Feedback is critical to effective communication between participants.

Effective communication

When we identify and use the most effective means of communication for the customer...

- We overcome the barriers that affect that communication
- We listen actively and effectively
- Our body language is appropriate and positive
- We are prepared to manage any difficult conversations

Teamwork

“Alone we can do little, together we can achieve much”

Helen Keller

“None of us is as smart as all of us together”

Ken Blanchard

“If everyone is moving forward then success takes care of itself”

Henry Ford

A good team

- Has a good leader who brings everyone together
- Communicates well with each other
- Focusses on common goals and outcomes
- Everyone contributes - everyone has something to bring to the table
- Everyone respects the knowledge and experience of their colleagues
- Is organised
- Has fun and gets the job done

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Barriers to effective communication

- A person cannot see, hear or receive the message
- Visual disabilities
- Hearing disabilities
- Poorly lit environment
- Noisy environments
- Speaking from too far away

Listening

Sometimes we confuse listening with hearing, hearing occurs naturally for most people whilst listening is a skill that we have to learn.

We need to

- Listen for meaning - we hear what they say but do we understand how they are feeling?
- Respect their viewpoint don't just assume you know it - or that you have to agree
- Realise communication can have underlying meaning i.e.. "will I be seen soon" - may seem clear, but might mean "I need support".

Empathy

Empathy involves the skill of developing an accurate understanding of the feelings and thoughts of another person.

- It involves being able to understand the world of another person
- Empathising is a skill that develops from good active listening
- Empathy is essential when you are delivering a difficult message

Managing conflict

- Recognise changes in behaviour
- Listen don't interrupt
- Manage own behaviour and emotions
- Be assertive not aggressive
- Identify possible causes
- Try to find a compromise

Managing complaints

- Understand and follow your complaints procedure - this is how your response will be evaluated
- Use effective listening and communication skills
- Good documentation at all stages of the process
- Give an initial apology - sets a good platform
- Reflect and learn - "every day is a school day"

Written communication

- Be concise
- Write for a reader
- Be objective – not subjective (stick to facts)
- If hand written, make sure it is legible
- Sign and date where required
- Revise and rewrite if necessary
- Follow Data Protection

Telephone communication

- Answer with a smile on your face
- Listen & give full focus
- Be clear, concise & correct
- Be aware of your tone & inflection
- Check that you have been understood

Different types of complaints

Silent

- Don't say anything but don't come back
- Tell others - vast majority of unhappy customers

Shouting

- Openly display anger
- Can be intimidating - want and need to be noticed

Appropriate

- Use correct procedures
- Allow organisation to deal with the issue