Customer Service Basics

Lesson 1 - Understanding Customer Service

WORKBOOK
Understanding Customer Service Overview

- Describe Customer Service
- Identify Customer Expectations
- Commit Yourself to Providing Excellent Customer Service
Understanding Customer Service

TOPIC A
What is Customer Service?

- Customer service involves anticipating and satisfying the needs of your clients and potential clients in a consistent and dependable manner.
What is Customer Care?

• Providing customer service means caring for your customers and ensuring that every single contact with your organization is a positive experience.

• Providing excellent customer care requires that you consistently:
  • Build relationships with your customers
  • Know your product or service and how it can benefit your customers
  • Communicate effectively with your customers to learn what’s important to them
  • Take responsibility for handling complaints
  • Go the extra mile
Who is the Customer?

- A customer is someone who purchases products or services from you or your organization
- Anyone who provides a service to someone else within your organization
- Customers can be external or internal
Build Relationships

- The key to providing exceptional customer service is in building relationships with your customers
  - Greet them in a warm, friendly manner
  - Treat them with respect
  - Provide them with the information they need
  - Make their buying experience easy and satisfying
  - Thank them for calling or coming in
  - When you make a mistake, fix it
Barriers to Excellent Customer Service

- Customer service requires the commitment of the entire organization at every level
- Many things can interfere with an individual’s ability to deliver exceptional customer service:
  - Organizational policies
  - Poor communication skills
  - Insufficient resources
  - Bureaucracy
  - Inadequate facilities or equipment
  - Poor attitude
  - Inadequate training
Overcoming these Barriers

• Barriers to excellent customer service can cost your organization dearly in terms of lost customers
• Removing barriers is one of the easiest ways to improve customer service:
  • Empower your employees
  • Take training classes to improve your communication skills
  • Take steps to reduce red tape
Identifying Customer Expectations

TOPIC B
Customers Want Someone Who…

- Understands their issues
- Takes responsibility
- Communicates effectively
- Is courteous
- Is honest
Customers Don’t Want Someone Who…

- Can’t help
- Gets defensive
- Continually puts them on hold
- Can’t find them in the database
- Won’t return their calls
Customer Support Stats

- Selling to new customers costs 10 times more than selling to existing customers
- 7 out of 10 switch to competition because of poor service
- 91% of unhappy customers tell an average of 9 people
- Only 4% of unhappy customers complain and give you the chance to keep them
- 82% of customers will purchase again from a company with which they have a compliant if their complaint is handled quickly and pleasantly
Five Service Quality Factors

• According to researcher Dr. Leonard Berry, author of “On Great Service”: customers evaluate service quality based on these five factors
  • Reliability
  • Responsiveness
  • Assurance
  • Empathy
  • Tangibles
Providing Excellent Customer Service

TOPIC C
Characteristics of an Exceptional Service Provider

• In the book *Exceptional Customer Service*, it lists the following characteristics of an exceptional customer care provider:
  • Motivation to serve
  • Flexibility when dealing with daily challenges
  • Energetic and enthusiastic attitude
  • Ownership of customers, situations and problems
Excellent Customer Service Mindset

- Providing excellent customer service starts with YOU:
  - Respond with what you CAN do, not what you cannot do… always
  - Be positive… always
  - Desire to delight your customer… always
  - Adopt a thirst for improvement… always
Developing an Excellent Customer Service Strategy

Four steps will help you to develop a dynamic service strategy:

1. Define the current situation
2. Define all targets and value
3. Implement the excellent customer service strategy
4. Ensure you stay in tune with customers' changing needs
Define the Current Situation

Situational Analysis:
- Analyze your business, current business environment and values of your customer
- Points you in the right direction regarding value
- Gives you the ability to identify what will add value to the customer experience
Define all Targets and Values

The term "value" refers to the overall customer experience

• Assess how you can develop the best value for your customer
• Use creativity to explore how to deliver the best value
• Define how to target the value in ways that will delight customers
Implement Excellent Customer Service Strategy

Implement, or build, the excellent customer service strategy you’ve defined. In other words, you need to put into practice the service level you’ve decided will add value to the overall customer experience.

You may find at this point that you need:

• to develop certain capabilities
• training in certain areas
• relevant skills and knowledge
Stay in Tune with Customers’ Changing Needs

There are ways to stay in tune with the customers’ needs:

• Monitoring, analyzing, and responding to customer feedback
• Gathering information from colleagues that have direct customer contact
• Gathering information from word of mouth
• Ask the customer
Understanding Customer Service Review

• Describe Customer Service
• Identify Customer Expectations
• Commit Yourself to Providing Excellent Customer Service
Review Questions:

1. Which of the following represent "customers"?
   A. People who buy products and services from your company
   B. Coworkers
   C. The general public
   D. All of the above

2. Building a relationship with customers involves:
   A. Making their buying experience easy and satisfying
   B. Sending them to a coworker for assistance
   C. Finding someone to take responsibility for their needs
   D. Taking care of customer phone calls before handling the customer in front of you

3. Which is not a barrier to providing excellent customer service?
   A. Organizational policies
   B. Positive attitude
   C. Poor communication skills
   D. Insufficient resources

4. True or False: The first step of developing an excellent customer service strategy is to analyze your business and the current business environment, as well as the existing and possible needs and values of your customer.
   A. True
   B. False

5. Which is not what customers want?
   A. Someone who takes responsibility
   B. Someone who listens
   C. Someone who gets defensive
   D. Someone who is honest
Answer Key:

1. D
   Customers are not just people who buy products and services from your company. Customers are also those you work with (internal customers) as well as the general public.

2. A
   When you make a customer’s buying experience easy and satisfying, they are more likely to return to buy from you again. This breeds loyalty. Other companies can offer the same product or services. However, by creating relationships with your customers, your business can achieve and sustain a competitive edge over those other companies.

3. B
   The barriers to providing excellent customer service include: organizational policies, poor communication skills, insufficient resources, bureaucracy, inadequate facilities or equipment, poor attitude, and inadequate training.

4. A
   True. The four steps to developing an excellent customer service strategy are: (1) Define the current situation; (2) Define all targets and value; (3) Implement the excellent customer service strategy; and (4) Ensure you stay in tune with customers' changing needs.

5. C
   Customers want to work with someone who understands their issues; takes responsibility; communicates effectively; is courteous; and is honest. Customers do not want to work with someone who can't help; gets defensive; continually puts them on hold; can't find them in the database; and won't return their calls.