

TOPIC TWO: QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

The aims and objectives of this module are to:

- Introduce the concepts of Quality Customer Service
- Discuss how to avoid 'Moments of Truth'
- Outline own limitations in delivering a service to customers

In your reader:

NSW Department of Fair Trading: Customer Service: How happier customers lead to healthier business



Practical skills validation:

In order to complete this Unit of Competency you will either have to attend a one day practical workshop (or equivalent) or have an assessor visit your workplace to observe you on-job.



Assessment:

See your assessment manual for details of the assessment tasks for this topic.



Quotes for the day:

Quality is providing a service free from errors, omissions and defects.

THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Excellence is about the willingness to provide goods and services **without error, defect and omission** according to the expectations of the customers.

This is not the same thing as perfection which is an unrealistic and non-negotiable goal.

Excellence allows room for improvement and the evolution of better ways to operate. Most defects, errors and omissions come from not being consistent in the way that people do things.

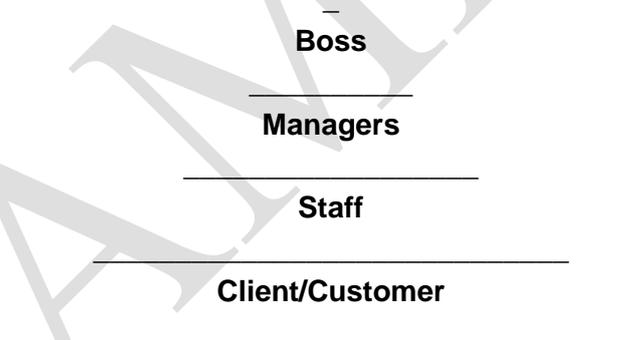
You would be surprised if you added up the amount of time you spent in your job 'doing things over' because of corner cutting or rushing through jobs. Haste does make waste.

Getting things right the first time and being consistent can result in time and money cost savings of as much as 60%.

To achieve excellence, **everyone** has to commit time and **enthusiasm** to set good work habits and processes. If you want more job satisfaction, you have to resist the *Great Australian Apathy*. '**She** **won't** *'be right, mate!*'

How many times have you been the frustrated customer of another organisation organisation that operates 'by the book' and leaves no room for common sense or negotiating to meet your needs?

These organisations often exist for the sake of the management, not the client. If you drew a diagram of their management structure, it would look like the typical pyramid of a hierarchy:



The trouble with this traditional way of organising a business is that the head wags the tail. What happens if we turn the triangle around and make the customers the most important people to any organisation?

Every enterprise who does this reports substantial improvement in customer service, staff satisfaction and profits. The better their bottom line, the better more job security that workers have.

The best way to guarantee they will never come back

On a road that I travelled often, a new business opened up. There were several other 'boutique' bakeries in the neighbourhood but none which displayed in the window such a succulent and unusual variety of savoury pies and gourmet offerings.

Tempted, I walked in.

The woman behind the counter was busy mopping the floor. She continued to do so long after I had entered and attempts to catch her eye were in vain. Her housekeeping task was more important to her than the money in my hand or my willingness to buy. She continued to act as if I didn't exist. I left, still holding my money, never to return. Her shop is still there but she doesn't seem to make much money.

If you like to count the takings, make the customer count!

One of the less endearing traits of the Australian psyche is the *Great Australian Cringe* that makes people equate 'service' with 'servility'.

It is not demeaning to the self to offer a quality service to any client. Your job in customer service is to make other people feel good about themselves and their choices. This should make anyone feel good about what they do.

Nothing beats getting compliments, smiles and a sincere 'thank-you' for a job well done.

No matter how excellent the product or service you are selling, you may as well shut shop if you don't see that **the customer or client is the only reason the business exists.**

The days are long gone when businesses could rely on a steady stream of 'once-only' sales.

Customers expect to be made to feel important from the moment they walk in the door until the moment they leave.

Be willing to go a few extra steps to meet their needs and they will come back and refer you to other people.



Please go to pages 12-15 of your Assessment Manual and complete Task 4

WHEN THEY WALK IN – SOMETIMES THEY WALK RIGHT OUT

Warped priorities

We took a drive down a long valley and spotted a gift shop which also served Devonshire Teas, strawberries and cream. Our dream outing!

The owner sat just inside the door, chatting busily to a friend about how intuitive he was and how that made him really in touch with other people. He certainly did not intuit our needs. He didn't even acknowledge our entry to the store by eye contact, though we gave him several opportunities.

I had already selected an ornament I like. I was ready to buy it. We looked for service in the tea room, only nobody came.

Cranky, tired and disappointed, we dumped our potential purchases back on their shelves and headed for the door. The owner was still on the phone telling someone how marvelous he was.

As we hurried back to our car, the only customers parked in the twenty minutes we had been there, he rushed out. *"Do you want anything?"* he asked.

"Too late. We are fussy about customer service and we can't complain about it in your case - there wasn't any!" I wonder if his car park is still empty!

First impressions count - make sure they are good ones.

People often remember a business only for what goes wrong, not for what it does right. If they experience inferior service, they vote with their feet and spread stories about your bad service.

It takes a long time to build up a profile of excellence and integrity: It takes only a moment to create a climate of disbelief.

Customers are no good if they only come once. Repeat business is the only way to a better profit. Satisfied customers call again.

As the first point of contact for the business, you have a responsibility to make the client feel welcome and valued, no matter how petty the enquiry or how tiresome the person.

Keep in mind that the person you face may be in physical or emotional pain. Pain can have significant impacts on the language and behaviour of customers. Develop empathy and compassion.

Remember, *their life* is more important than your sales or service. They will forget to call back, even if they have promised to do so.

Selling up

Everyone knows the little phrase that keeps boosting Macdonalds' profit margin *"Would you like Coke and Fries with that?"*

Selling-up can also be a good way to boost customer satisfaction.

However, if using the product requires expensive consumables that you do not tell the customer about, it can undo the goodwill of the sale.

If there are any hidden extras, make sure the customers know all about them **before** you close the deal.

ASSESSMENT RECORD

Student Name:

Student Number:

Postcode:

e-mail:

Assessor/Trainer:

Telephone:

e-mail:

Tasks for module:	Date	Pass	
1. Identifying the customers			
2. Establishing client wants and needs			
3. Turning the customer service triangle upside down			
4. The Moment of Truth			
5. Providing quality service			
6. Listeners quiz			
7. Personal values in customer service			
8. Conflict resolution case studies			
9. Two client calls			
10. Case studies: handling complaints			
11. Legal and ethical obligations			
12. Gathering feedback from customers			
Practical skills assessment			

Assessor's comments:

Assessor Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Sign-off date: _____

TASK 1: THESE PEOPLE ARE MY CUSTOMERS

My internal customers are:

The services I provide to them are:

My external customers are:

Extract from 'Introduction to Customer Service'

The services I provide to them are:

My Service Partner customers are:

The services I provide to them are:

TASK 9: TWO CLIENT CALLS

Call One:

Caller: Do you stock aromatherapy oils?
Staff: Yes, we do
Caller: Fine - I'll call in later
Staff: We look forward to seeing you, goodbye

Call Two:

Caller: Do you stock aromatherapy oils?
Staff: I'm not sure, we have a lot of candles and things
Caller: Would you check for me please, I'm in a hurry
Staff: Sure, hang on a minute (delay period). Yes, we do.
Caller: What brands do you stock? Some are better than others.
Staff: I'll go and look (delay period). We have Betta Health and Aromaperfect and Australian Native Scents
Caller: Do you have Lemongrass, White Magnolia and Bluegrass?
Staff: (sigh) I'll check, hold on a minute (delay period). Yes, we do.
Caller: I'll call by later, thank you.
Staff: See you later then, bye.

The above scenarios are two typical telephone sales conversations. In both cases the chances that the client was only being polite in saying they would call by are very high. Why is this?

Part one:

Write out the reasons why you, as a customer, might be put off by the scenarios above.

Then, write your own scenarios:

- * of a positive response scenario which fully answers the callers needs
- * where you do not have what the client wants

Cover as many relevant points as possible from above to make for ideal scenarios. Use the space on the next page for your answer.

Then pick a product line (or set of services) for your own organisation and write a brief script which you can use as a prompt for answering product or service enquiry. Remember that this must also contain all the needed elements of a good and courteous telephone reception response:

Name of business and salutations
Your name
Invitation to tell you about themselves and their needs
Product and service information
Thank you for calling

Use the next page to write your script. (lined page inserted)

TASK 4: WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU TURNED THE CUSTOMER SERVICE TRIANGLE UPSIDE DOWN?

If service became 'bottom up, it would make a difference to the way I treat internal customers because:

If service became 'bottom up, it would make a difference to the way I treat external customers because:

If service became 'bottom up, it would make a difference to the way I treat Service Partner customers because:

Extract from 'Introduction to Customer Service'

In considering the types of customer that uses the services of my organisation, I could establish effective rapport with them by:

In order to assist them to make the most appropriate choices, I could offer them the following options:

I can offer our clients the following 'add-on' and 'sell-up' features to ensure they get access to an enhanced range of services :
