



## Factors driving customer service performance

- Individual responsibility and customer service
- Collaboration and cooperation
- Managing customers
- Improving community image
- Improving meetings about customer service

## Process

- Review the actions for each factor.
- Identify three things we do well and three things we could do better.
- In relation to the things we could do better, ask – what needs to happen? What do I need to initiate?



## Individual responsibility and customer service

- Each person's individual key responsibilities are clarified and performed to the best standard.
- Each person's individual key responsibilities are clarified and performed to the best standard.
- Responsibilities common to all are clear and performed to the best standard.
- Individual responsibilities that appear to get neglected or overlooked are addressed.
- The consequences on others when individual responsibilities are neglected or overlooked are explained.
- We explore the reasons why individuals may not perform their responsibilities.
- We advise those people who appear to neglect individual responsibilities.
- The unique responsibilities of different roles are clarified and accepted.
- We use a 'responsibility and accountability' matrix which identifies who is responsible and accountable for what.
- We identify areas where responsibilities overlap and agree who has primary responsibility.
- We check that people's perceptions of their responsibilities reflect any new initiatives or changed circumstances.
- We agree how we will follow through on any responsibilities we may have neglected.
- Situations where the circumstances have changed but individuals have not altered their roles accordingly are identified and resolved.
- Each person has the required resources, support, knowledge, skills and motivation to perform their role
- We each understand and appreciate the difficulties associated with the roles of people from other areas.
- The context, space, and boundaries are defined for each role.
- The level of direction and support each person requires is appropriate to the situation and reflects the level of competence of the individual.



## Responsibility and Accountability Matrix

List all key customer service functions/actions (vertical)

List all names of work group/team members (horizontal)

Allocate Codes:

P – performs action

C – is consulted for opinion

D – makes decision

I – provides information

A – is advised of action/outcome

X – not involved in any way



## Collaboration and cooperation

- Review the effectiveness of the team structure.
- Discuss and agree the limits of authority for each member of the team.
- Discuss, agree and document the key roles for each member of the team.
- Identify common areas of operation and areas where duplication of services may exist between team members.
- Identify how responsibilities and roles may be shared to maximise work efficiencies.
- Inform our clients (internal and external) of the roles of team members and of any subsequent changes to these roles.
- Inform any new members to the team of the existing structure and how each person fits into it.
- Discuss and agree our key purpose, values and operating principles.
- Discuss and agree the communication requirements for each member of the team.
- Identify how working relationships need to be improved.
- Identify and implement actions to improve working relationships.
- Establish formalised communication systems to satisfy the individual requirements.
- Ask clients (internal and external) what their communication requirements are in relation to our team.
- Identify, establish and implement the key systems and procedures required of the team
- Discuss with senior management what they need to do to support the establishment of effective working relationships.
- Check that all team members know how the new systems and procedures are to be followed and provide training where necessary.
- Establish a timeline which highlights planning and implementation dates for new initiatives, systems and procedures relevant to the team.
- Conduct regular planning and review sessions.
- Check that the goals and objectives of the team comply with the requirements of the current organisation Strategic Plan.
- Identify other areas within the organisation which may be duplicating services the team is providing to its clients.
- Discuss and agree how the key services provided to clients will be best achieved.
- Consult with and inform other key decision makers about what they need to do to support the key initiatives of the team.
- Ask our clients what the team can do to assist them deliver better service to their customers/clients.



## Managing customers

- Maintain a professional, courteous and calm manner.
- Educate customers by informing them of requirements and procedures.
- When faced with an abusive customer, put on your 'poker face', repeat the procedure required and why it is necessary.
- Explain their choices about their behaviour on site and the associated consequences.
- Use 'if you do this....., you'll be welcome on site. If you continue to do this....., you'll be banned from site. It is your choice.'
- RESPOND to abuse or non-compliance, do not REACT.
- Use the 'broken record' technique – that is, do not react to their 'hooks', just keep replaying the request and why.
- Do not inflame the situation (by swearing, name-calling, retaliation, playing games, etc).
- Focus on the thought – who is really losing and winning by letting them get under your skin?
- Practise the 'verbal judo' approach with abusive or uncooperative customers.
- Show empathy for their lack of awareness or knowledge or ignorance of the requirements and the reasons for those requirements.
- Allow that for every 10 customers there is going to be one 'dropkick'.
- When in the transfer station, create an accurate expectation of the likely costs before they come back to the other side to pay.
- Focus on the thought that what I put out I get back.
- Focus on the thought that most people respond reasonably if they think that you are treating them reasonably.
- Disarm abusive customers with politeness, humour and 'agreement' with their views on costs.
- Remember that the customer is frustrated, angry (even intimidated) by the situation or by the cost or the requirement – not you personally – but at this moment you are the focus of their frustration.
- Ask others what they think and do to handle abusive or uncooperative customers. Raise problems at meetings so that we can support and learn from each other.
- If the unacceptable behaviour continues after you have attempted to explain the requirements and the consequences on non-compliance, walk away.
- Speak to truck drivers in a normal tone and volume when explaining a tipping request to them.

# Improve Customer Service



- Use 'Sir/Madam... because of requirements for access to this site, I must request that you.....please (or thank you).
- Use 'you may be unaware of this but it is a requirement of this site that you...'

# Improve Customer Service



## Improving community image

- Agree the reasons why we need to improve our image.
- Explain the connection between effective services and a good public image.
- Explain the connection between reduced stress levels, increased job satisfaction and a good public image.
- Agree incidents and behaviours which give us a bad image.
- Agree the causes of these incidents or behaviours.
- Agree the things we can do to improve our image.
- Discuss new, different and better ways to help us improve our image.
- Identify ways to involve customers in our activities.
- Identify policies and procedures which need to be changed.
- Identify the support required from senior people to improve our image.
- Ask customers how we can improve our image.
- Develop skills in non-confrontational conflict resolution techniques.
- Participate in community activities.
- Thank people when they have helped us.
- Train people in ways to improve our image.
- Coach offending people in better ways to deal with the customers.
- Implement new, different and better ways to improve our image.
- Practise responding to conflict situations not reacting.
- Seek opportunities to explain to customers what we are trying to do and how we are trying to help them.
- Discuss within the team the best ways to implement required changes to the way we do things that will improve our image.
- Acknowledge and support people who actively promote our services in a positive way.
- Check that the new changes now become a standard practice customer service.
- Seek the assistance of community groups to help us communicate to their members.
- Speak with people on the street – foster relationships.
- Seek the co-operation of local media to publish examples of helping the community.
- Counsel/discipline people who continue to create a bad image.





## Improving meetings about customer service

- The need, importance and benefits of improving meetings about customer service are agreed.
- Participants raise issues to include on the agenda.
- Prior to the meeting, we circulate the agenda and its objectives and agree the expectations regarding the input required from relevant people.
- We think through the issues prior to the meeting to plan our contribution.
- We set a time limit on the meeting's duration which will allow enough time for the discussion of all agreed objectives.
- We start the meeting on time, even if some people aren't present.
- We end the meeting on time, regardless of whether objectives are achieved.
- The number of objectives is limited to those that can be achieved within the time available.
- We employ different ways of making the meeting interesting.
- The discussion is managed by nominating who is to talk, and when.
- The objectives, format and expectations are clarified at the start of the meeting.
- The key points and decisions reached during the meeting are recorded by all relevant people.
- The leadership role is rotated so that other people develop the confidence and competence to conduct effective customer service meetings.
- Participation is encouraged by ensuring that every person's contribution is heard and by asking questions of non-contributors.
- We ensure that all discussion is relevant to the objectives of the customer service meeting.
- We ask talkative members to clarify how their comments relate to the objectives of the customer service meeting.
- We maintain a record of what is agreed, who will do what and by when. (I call this a Task Accountability Record).
- Ground rules governing the way we conduct ourselves during customer service meetings are agreed and applied.
- Customer service meetings are held at a frequency and duration to maintain a constant focus on customer service.
- Decisions made during customer service meetings are followed through.
- The effectiveness of our customer service meetings is reviewed appropriately.



# Improve Customer Service



5

- The timing, duration and frequency of customer service meetings are effective.
- Ways to improve the effectiveness of our customer service meetings are explored and applied.