



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

1. Each person's individual key responsibilities are clarified and performed to the best standard.
2. Responsibilities common to all are clear and performed to the best standard.
3. Individual responsibilities that appear to get neglected or overlooked are addressed.
4. The consequences on others when individual responsibilities are neglected or overlooked are explained.
5. We explore the reasons why individuals may not perform their responsibilities.
6. We advise those people who appear to neglect individual responsibilities.
7. The unique responsibilities of different roles are clarified and accepted.
8. We use a 'responsibility and accountability' matrix which identifies who is responsible and accountable for what.
9. We identify areas where responsibilities overlap and agree who has primary responsibility.
10. We check that people's perceptions of their responsibilities reflect any new initiatives or changed circumstances.
11. We agree how we will follow through on any responsibilities we may have neglected.
12. Situations where the circumstances have changed but individuals have not altered their roles accordingly are identified and resolved.
13. Each person has the required resources, support, knowledge, skills and motivation to perform their role.
14. We each understand and appreciate the difficulties associated with the roles of people from other areas.
15. The context, space, and boundaries are defined for each role.
16. 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

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



Managing Customers

1. Maintain a professional, courteous and calm manner.
2. Educate customers by informing them of requirements and procedures.
3. When faced with an abusive customer, put on your 'poker face', repeat the procedure required and why it is necessary.
4. Explain their choices about their behaviour on site and the associated consequences.
5. 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.'
6. RESPOND to abuse or non-compliance, do not REACT.
7. Use the 'broken record' technique – that is, do not react to their 'hooks', just keep replaying the request and why.
8. Do not inflame the situation (by swearing, name-calling, retaliation, playing games, etc).
9. Focus on the thought – who is really losing and winning by letting them get under your skin?
10. Practise the 'verbal judo' approach with abusive or uncooperative customers.
11. Show empathy for their lack of awareness or knowledge or ignorance of the requirements and the reasons for those requirements.
12. Allow that for every 10 customers there is going to be one 'dropkick'.
13. When in the transfer station, create an accurate expectation of the likely costs before they come back to the other side to pay.
14. Focus on the thought that what I put out I get back.
15. Focus on the thought that most people respond reasonably if they think that you are treating them reasonably.
16. Disarm abusive customers with politeness, humour and 'agreement' with their views on costs.
17. 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.
18. 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.
19. If the unacceptable behaviour continues after you have attempted to explain the requirements and the consequences on non-compliance, walk away.
20. Speak to truck drivers in a normal tone and volume when explaining a tipping request to them.
21. Use 'Sir/Madam... because of requirements for access to this site, I must request that you.....please (or thank you).'
22. Use 'you may be unaware of this but it is a requirement of this site that you...'



Improving Community Image

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



Improving Meetings about Customer Service

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

Improve Customer Service



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- 21. The effectiveness of our customer service meetings is reviewed appropriately.
- 22. The timing, duration and frequency of customer service meetings are effective.
- 23. Ways to improve the effectiveness of our customer service meetings are explored and applied.