**LEARNER GUIDE**

**Handle a range of customer complaints**

**Unit Standard 252210**

**Level 4 Credits 4**

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PERSONAL INFORMATION

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NAME** |  |
| **CONTACT ADDRESS** |  |
|  |
| **Code** |  |
| **Telephone (H)** |  |
| **Telephone (W)** |  |
| **Cellular** |  |
| **Learner Number** |  |
| **Identity Number** |  |
|  | |
| **EMPLOYER** |  |
| **EMPLOYER CONTACT ADDRESS** |  |
|  |
| **Code** |  |
| **Supervisor Name** |  |
| **Supervisor Contact Address** |  |
|  |
| **Code** |  |
| **Telephone (H)** |  |
| **Telephone (W)** |  |
| **Cellular** |  |

INTRODUCTION

#### Welcome to the learning programme

Follow along in the guide as the training practitioner takes you through the material. Make notes and sketches that will help you to understand and remember what you have learnt. Take notes and share information with your colleagues. Important and relevant information and skills are transferred by sharing!



This learning programme is divided into sections. Each section is preceded by a description of the required outcomes and assessment criteria as contained in the unit standards specified by the South African Qualifications Authority. These descriptions will define what you have to know and be able to do in order to be awarded the credits attached to this learning programme. These credits are regarded as building blocks towards achieving a National Qualification upon successful assessment and can never be taken away from you!

Structure

### Programme methodology



The programme methodology includes facilitator presentations, readings, individual activities, group discussions and skill application exercises.

Know what you want to get out of the programme from the beginning and start applying your new skills immediately. Participate as much as possible so that the learning will be interactive and stimulating.

The following principles were applied in designing the course:

* Because the course is designed to maximise interactive learning, you are encouraged and required to participate fully during the group exercises
* As a learner you will be presented with numerous problems and will be required to fully apply your mind to finding solutions to problems before being presented with the course presenter’s solutions to the problems
* Through participation and interaction the learners can learn as much from each other as they do from the course presenter
* Although learners attending the course may have varied degrees of experience in the subject matter, the course is designed to ensure that all delegates complete the course with the same level of understanding
* Because reflection forms an important component of adult learning, some learning resources will be followed by a self-assessment which is designed so that the learner will reflect on the material just completed.

This approach to course construction will ensure that learners first apply their minds to finding solutions to problems before the answers are provided, which will then maximise the learning process which is further strengthened by reflecting on the material covered by means of the self-assessments.

#### Different role players in delivery process

* Learner
* Facilitator
* Assessor
* Moderator

### What Learning Material you should have

This learning material has also been designed to provide the learner with a comprehensive reference guide.

It is important that you take responsibility for your own learning process; this includes taking care of your learner material. You should at all times have the following material with you:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Learner Guide** | **This learner guide is your valuable possession:**  This is your textbook and reference material, which provides you with all the information you will require to meet the exit level outcomes.  During contact sessions, your facilitator will use this guide and will facilitate the learning process. During contact sessions a variety of activities will assist you to gain knowledge and skills.  Follow along in the guide as the training practitioner takes you through the material. Make notes and sketches that will help you to understand and remember what you have learnt. Take and share information with your colleagues. Important and relevant information and skills are transferred by sharing!  This learning programme is divided into sections. Each section is preceded by a description of the required outcomes and assessment criteria as contained in the unit standards specified by the South African Qualifications Authority. These descriptions will define what you have to know and be able to do in order to be awarded the credits attached to this learning programme. These credits are regarded as building blocks towards achieving a National Qualification upon successful assessment and can never be taken away from you! |
| **Formative Assessment Workbook** | The Formative Assessment Workbook supports the Learner Guide and assists you in applying what you have learnt.  The formative assessment workbook contains classroom activities that you have to complete in the classroom, during contact sessions either in groups or individually.  You are required to complete all activities in the Formative Assessment Workbook.  The facilitator will assist, lead and coach you through the process.  These activities ensure that you understand the content of the material and that you get an opportunity to test your understanding. |

### Different types of activities you can expect

To accommodate your learning preferences, a variety of different types of activities are included in the formative and summative assessments. They will assist you to achieve the outcomes (correct results) and should guide you through the learning process, making learning a positive and pleasant experience.



The table below provides you with more information related to the types of activities.

| **Types of Activities** | **Description** | **Purpose** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Knowledge Activities** | You are required to complete these activities on your own. | These activities normally test your understanding and ability to apply the information. |
| **Skills Application Activities** | You need to complete these activities in the workplace | These activities require you to apply the knowledge and skills gained in the workplace |
| **Natural Occurring Evidence** | You need to collect information and samples of documents from the workplace. | These activities ensure you get the opportunity to learn from experts in the industry.  Collecting examples demonstrates how to implement knowledge and skills in a practical way |

### Learner Administration



#### Attendance Register

You are required to sign the Attendance Register every day you attend training sessions facilitated by a facilitator.

#### Programme Evaluation Form

On completion you will be supplied with a “Learning programme Evaluation Form”. You are required to evaluate your experience in attending the programme.

Please complete the form at the end of the programme, as this will assist us in improving our service and programme material. Your assistance is highly appreciated.

### Assessments

The only way to establish whether a learner is competent and has accomplished the specific outcomes is through the assessment process. Assessment involves collecting and interpreting evidence about the learners’ ability to perform a task.

To qualify and receive credits towards your qualification, a registered Assessor will conduct an evaluation and assessment of your portfolio of evidence and competency.

This programme has been aligned to registered unit standards. You will be assessed against the outcomes as stipulated in the unit standard by completing assessments and by compiling a portfolio of evidence that provides proof of your ability to apply the learning to your work situation.



**How will Assessments commence?**

#### Formative Assessments

The assessment process is easy to follow. You will be guided by the Facilitator. Your responsibility is to complete all the activities in the Formative Assessment Workbook and submit it to your facilitator.

#### Summative Assessments

You will be required to complete a series of summative assessments. The Summative Assessment Guide will assist you in identifying the evidence required for final assessment purposes. You will be required to complete these activities on your own time, using real life projects in your workplace or business environment in preparing evidence for your Portfolio of Evidence. Your Facilitator will provide more details in this regard.

To qualify and receive credits towards your qualification, a registered Assessor will conduct an evaluation and assessment of your portfolio of evidence and competency.

### Learner Support

The responsibility of learning rests with you, so be proactive and ask questions and seek assistance and help from your facilitator, if required.



Please remember that this Skills Programme is based on outcomes based education principles which implies the following:

* You are responsible for your own learning – make sure you manage your study, research and workplace time effectively.
* Learning activities are learner driven – make sure you use the Learner Guide and Formative Assessment Workbook in the manner intended, and are familiar with the workplace requirements.
* The Facilitator is there to reasonably assist you during contact, practical and workplace time for this programme – make sure that you have his/her contact details.
* You are responsible for the safekeeping of your completed Formative Assessment Workbook and Workplace Guide
* If you need assistance please contact your facilitator who will gladly assist you.
* If you have any special needs please inform the facilitator

### Learner Expectations

Please prepare the following information. You will then be asked to introduce yourself to the instructor as well as your fellow learners



|  |
| --- |
| Your name: |
|  |
|  |
| The organisation you represent: |
|  |
|  |
| Your position in organisation: |
|  |
|  |
| What do you hope to achieve by attending this course / what are your course expectations? |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

UNIT STANDARD 252210

#### Unit Standard Title

Handle a range of customer complaints

#### NQF Level

4

#### Credits

4

#### Purpose

The person credited with this unit standard will be able to identify customer complaints and assist in the solving of a problem while finding possible solutions. The learner will also be able to communicate effectively and provide practical business solutions.

#### Learning assumed to be in place

It is assumed that learners are competent in:

* Communication at NQF Level 3
* Mathematical Literacy at NQF Level 3

#### Unit standard range

* Marketing including all forms of marketing communications, direct marketing and relationship marketing, sponsorship, event marketing, sales promotions, public relations and alternative strategies.
* Standard applies to marketing management, customer management, marketing communications and marketing research.
* Customers include walk-in customers, canvassed customers, and telephonically contacted customers, customers obtained through marketing communications, e-mail customers and customers contacted through electronic means

**Specific Outcome 1:** Identify the customer's problem

**Assessment Criteria**

* The nature of the complaint is identified and assessed for level of severity
* The origin of the complaint is identified based on the customer's input
* Arrangements are made for the responsibility for the solving of the problem to be accepted by relevant individuals
* The problem is documented according to organisation requirements

**Specific Outcome 2**: Commit to solving customer's complaint

**Assessment Criteria**

* Commitment to resolve the complaint is demonstrated by correct individuals
* Company support for the individuals and the responsible for resolution is provided
* Up to date information about the complaint processing is supplied to the costumer

**Specific Outcome 3**: Arrange appropriate planning and solution to the customer's problems

**Assessment Criteria**

* The appropriate solution for the solving of the costumer's problems is identified
* Contact is maintained with all relevant stakeholders
* Correct solution is applied to the customer's complaint within the agreed timeframe

**Specific Outcome** 4: Communicate with all stakeholders

**Assessment Criteria**

* Relevant internal parties are notified of the complaint and its routing
* Immediate superior is notified of the customer's complaint for further action if escalation requires problem solving
* The customer is informed about the outcome and the progress of the solution

**Specific Outcome 5:** Provide practical business solutions

**Assessment Criteria**

* Appropriate partnership with the purpose of enhancement the solution of the costumer's problem is arranged
* The resolution of customer's complaint is used for relationship development and attraction of further sales

#### Essential Embedded Knowledge

* Company's complaint procedure systems
* Methods and techniques for communicating with stakeholders involved in customers complaints

#### Critical Cross-field Outcomes (CCFO)

* Work effectively with others in the pursuit of solutions for customer complaints
* Organise oneself and one's activities so that alternative solutions and strategies exist to solve the problem in the event current one's failing
* Collect, evaluate, organise and critically evaluate information so that all details required to solve the customer's complaint is obtained, recorded and used
* Communicate effectively with all customers and other stakeholders in the resolution of the customer's complaint.
* Understand the world as a set of related systems in that resolved complaints can lead to improved business in the line of sales

# SECTION 1: IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

#### Specific Outcome 1

Identify the customer's problem

#### Assessment Criteria

* The nature of the complaint is identified and assessed for level of severity
* The origin of the complaint is identified based on the customer's input
* Arrangements are made for the responsibility for the solving of the problem to be accepted by relevant individuals
* The problem is documented according to organisation requirements

#### Unit standard range

* Customers include walk-in customers, canvassed customers, and telephonically contacted customers, customers obtained through marketing communications, e-mail customers and customers contacted through electronic means

#### Essential Embedded Knowledge

* Company's complaint procedure systems

Customer Care

Customers include:

* Walk-in customers – who walk through the door of the business
* Canvassed customers –customers obtained through canvassing
* Customers contacted telephonically
* Customers that were obtained through marketing communications
* Customers that are contacted through electronic means, e.g. e-mails

### Customer Service Attitude

Given the importance of customers, one of the first things to establish is the correct **attitude**.

Without thinking about it, we can acquire many habits that prevent effective conversations with a customer.

As was mentioned before, effective customer service means keeping **control** of the conversation you are having with the customer. This entails:

* Keeping control of **yourself** (for example, speaking clearly, using the correct language, behaving politely)
* Keeping control of the **customer** (managing expectations, managing their attitude, building a relationship [or rapport])
* Controlling the **situation** (resolving and documenting the call)

Some of the main elements of a healthy customer service attitude are:

* Willingness to help and to see the problem resolved - **enthusiasm**
* Maintaining a professional relationship (being courteous **at all times**)
* Ability to overcome **barriers** to communication with the customer
* Encouraging a sense of confidence and trust in the customer - **impressing** them with your service and ability

This may sound easy, but the trick is to retain this attitude in **every single conversation** that you have with a customer.

It is important to realise that 'adequate' service may not be good enough to retain clients. Consider the following list of reasons why businesses lose customers:

 1% Die

 3% Move Away

 5% Other Friendships

 9% Competition

 14% Product or Service Dissatisfaction

 68% Feel an attitude of **indifference** by some employee

### Customers Vote With Their Money

Remember that customers vote with their money. Don’t think that they will automatically continue using your services. Their vote of confidence will only be confirmed once they buy the next product or make use of your services again.

Customer Complaints

No matter how well we do business, sooner or later the law of averages suggests that we are going to have a dissatisfied customer calling to complain. Whether it is we who are at fault or the customer, is not the issue. Being right is not important. What is important is how does the customer feel after they have talked with us? Tact, politeness and consideration are the name of the game.

It stands to reason that a customer who calls to complain is likely to be upset, so that stage one of our responsibilities at this time is to listen, express our regret that they have a problem, explain that you are concerned and want to find a solution. The important point about this is that once a customer knows that you care, that you are not going to fight them but help them, they will relax. After all, it is very difficult to scream and shout at someone who is obviously on your side!

The second stage in handling a complaint is to understand it.

This sounds simple, but sometimes it can take a lot of work to get the accurate facts out of a confused and annoyed customer. The initial outburst probably only gives us less than a quarter of the information we actually need to act on their behalf. So naturally, the all-important third point is that we should ask all the right questions in order to identify the problem quickly. Remember to take notes while you talk.

If you can't solve the problem whilst you have the customer on the telephone, take their number and arrange to ring back. Always, but ALWAYS, ring back at the time you say you are going to, whether you have the answer or not. Remember, the longer the complaint is unsettled, the more upset the customer is likely to become if they do not have your assurance that their problem is receiving attention.

Remember that customers do not necessarily expect that we can solve their problems immediately.

**When a person takes the trouble to enquire or to complain, you can be quite sure that he really cares.** Life is too exacting and busy for people to spend valuable time and cash in communicating with a company's office ‑ whether by telephone, letter or personal call ‑ unless they feel it really imperative to do so.

Having taken this trouble, they watch closely as to what effect their enquiry or complaint has on the company.

They expect a prompt reply dealing

* fully,
* factually and
* courteously with their enquiry or complaint,
* detailing either the information they seek or the action the company intends in respect to the complaint.

Every complaint is an opportunity for you to renew the basis of mutual confidence which existed between yourself and the complainant before there was cause for dissatisfaction.

A complaint badly handled is a blow to a customer's satisfaction and to his goodwill towards you, and unless you retrieve the situation, he may defect to one of your competitors.

Every enquiry satisfactorily handled enhances a customer's goodwill towards you. It may even be a case of converting an enquirer into a customer. But if the enquiry is handled ineffectively, that customer or prospect will either be annoyed and go elsewhere, or his interest in buying one of your products will fade away.

### Typical Areas of Complaint

* Dissatisfaction with your product, or services, ‑ its presentation, performance, pack, content, use or value.
* Damage when your product is delivered or is purchased.
* Delay on its promised delivery date.
* Deterioration during its transit, storage or use.
* Discourtesy by staff, distributors, agents or technical advisers.

Every member of the company's staff who has any part to play in customer service and the sharing of information must be reasonably adept in the art of pleasing people. **Much harm is often done by a casual or discourteous telephone manner.**

The same high standards of courtesy and efficiency are just as important in written communications. Ill phrased letters sent to slow‑paying customers , misspelt addresses or names, and wrong initials, can do as much harm as off-hand telephone technique.

Sales people, as well as anyone else who deals with the public, should ensure that they obtain a wider vocabulary, fluent phraseology, clear enunciation and a positive attitude of goodwill towards customers. Neglect of these basic requirements will inevitably have an adverse effect on the order book of the business.

Handling Customer Complaints And Enquiries

To apply the above process to customer complaints and queries, follow these guidelines:

### Step One: Identify the nature of the complaint

* The first step is to find out what the nature of the complaint is as well as how severe the complaint is.
* Then you have to find out the origin of the complaint based on what the customer tells you

You do this by:

#### Listening to the customer’s complaint with empathy

Empathy is the ability to fully comprehend another person by being in **rapport**.

Empathy means responding to the customer's emotional state and putting yourself in the customer's place and point-of-view.

Empathy has the following advantages in communications:

* Builds a relationship with the customer
* Helps them to develop trust in you
* Helps you to understand the customer and their needs
* Helps you to realize the difficulties that the problem is causing the customer
* Helps you get into the customer's shoes
* Allows the customer to tell you how they feel

Note that empathy does not simply mean feeling sorry for the customer or joining them in hating the particular piece of software that they are being asked to use without any formal training...

Empathy means matching your responses to the customer's without taking on their emotional state, in order to put them at ease and resolve the call quickly. In some cases, you may want to use positive feedback or praise or a sympathetic phrase or two to encourage a customer. However, it is important not to let the call get bogged down in a discussion of how the customer feels.

**Similarly, it is important not to provoke emotions in the customer, if at all possible.**

Much of a person’s emotional state is reflected in the way that he or she speaks. The tones, pitch, pace and volume of a person’s voice will tell you if the customer is upset or angry or friendly. When a customer is upset, he will talk loud and fast, while you will hear the smile of the friendly customer.

When dealing with any client you have to adjust your own tone, pitch and volume of your voice in such a way that the customer cannot rake offence: if the customer is shouting, do not shout back, but reply in a calm and friendly manner.

An angry and upset client must be handled carefully. Take the following steps to calm down an angry client:

* **Acknowledge the conflict**  – speak in a neutral tone and pitch and beware not to be drawn into a shouting match as this will only serve to aggravate the situation
* **Listen actively** – be aware of verbal and nonverbal cues as to the emotional state of the speaker. Talking rapidly at a high pitch and tone, vigorous hand gestures and fidgeting will indicate irritability.
* **Reply with empathy** – when dealing with an irate client you don’t fight fire with fire. Let the speaker experience your empathy by speaking calmly even if he is excited. Do not raise your voice although you might feel irritated yourself. Allow him to voice all his frustration and be ready with suggestions for a workable solution to the problem. Keep the discussion issue-orientated and don’t get personal.

#### Asking questions

You always need full details about the problem if you have to solve it. The client will often not give full details, so you have to ask questions until you have the full details of the problem.

Make sure that these questions are to the point and can once again be summarised in your own words to express understanding and commitment.

### Step two: Identify the origin of the complaint

#### Using Questions Effectively

The purpose of questioning is to find out what the caller knows about the problem as quickly as possible.

There are two types of questioning that you can use to obtain information. Each type of questioning has its particular place in your "knowledge gathering toolkit".

#### Open and Closed Questions

**Closed questions**

A closed question is a question where the answer can only be 'yes' or 'no', or a question which includes only two options, such as

"Would you like tea or coffee?". Another type of closed question is one that can produce only one answer (for example, "What is the error number shown in the dialogue box?").

**Open questions**

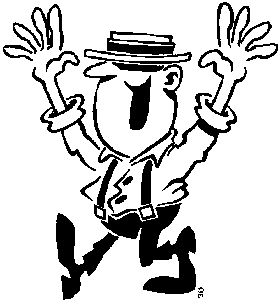
An open question gives the person answering the question some flexibility in their response ("What were you doing when the problem occurred?"). An open question is open to interpretation, so it is important to use the question to guide the caller towards the answer you need.

**When to use open and closed questions**

The basic approach is to use an open question to establish the field of enquiry then use closed questions to narrow the field and isolate the problem.

You may find that the caller is unable to answer your closed questions. This could happen for a number of reasons. At this point, it may be worth asking another open question, to get "back on track". People will find a long series of closed questions quite aggressive and threatening, especially if they are uncertain of the answers. In this case, you need to make sure your tone and manner are as soothing as possible.

On the other hand, several open questions in a row may confuse a user, especially if they are not confident. Closed questions allow you to focus the user's mind on a precise point and help you to retain control of the support call.



**Then, of course, you have to**

* LISTEN to the client’s answer,
* Pay attention to the client’s body language for any hidden messages and
* Use problem solving techniques to get to the bottom of the problem.

**This will help you to identify the origin of the complaint and the nature of the complaint.**

#### Restate the problem

Restate the problem in your own words and check with the client if s/he agrees

It is essential to have a clear grasp of what the customer’s complaints are so that you can address those specific needs and not waste time on irrelevant issues. In order to achieve this you need to create an atmosphere that is conducive to listening. When you are facing the client, do the following”

* Maintain eye contact to indicate sincerity.
* Also use nonverbal cues such as a nod of the head to indicate that you understand what is said. This will make it easier for the client to continue and focus on the issues at hand.
* Repeat the main issues to show the client that you are taking notice of what is said and that you are committed to finding a solution to his problems.
* Focus on these issues and make notes to help you remember them.
* By summarising what the client said in your own words you will indicate to the client that you are paying attention. It will also help clarify any misinterpretation of what the client said and assist you to concentrate by actively involving yourself in the process.

For example, you could say: “Am I correct in saying the problem is this…” and then waiting for the client to confirm or correct your statement.

It is important to note that your own understanding about written or oral text does not depend only on the point of view of the speaker or writer, but also on **your own perceptions** - the way in which you understand another person’s communication.

Your perceptions are influenced by:

* Your own communication skills: how poorly or well you listen to what others are saying
* Your values and norms
* The way you feel about the other person
* Your own opinion of the subject being discussed
* Your willingness to accept that the other person’s point of view might have some essence of truth and value

In the business world, allowing your own perception to affect your judgement can be very bad to you personally in the workplace.

You have to learn to

* listen to other people,
* accept that your point of view is not the only correct point of view and
* that other people’s statements does have value, even if you do not agree with everything.

You have **to learn to listen and understand** the communication of other people. If you do not understand, it is your responsibility to ask questions and start discussions about the subject until you understand. In the business world, the only one who will get into trouble for not understanding a communication from someone else will be you yourself.

When you are listening to or reading a communication from someone else, you make assumptions about what the person IS NOT SAYING – you assume that the other person is leaving out facts and information. It will be necessary for you to identify what assumptions you are making about the other person’s communication.

You will also have to make sure you understand the customer’s point of view or clarify understanding of subjects and issues that you are not sure of.

If you do not understand, it is your responsibility to ask questions and start discussions about the subject until you understand.

In the business world, the only one who will get into trouble for not understanding a communication from someone else will be you yourself.

### Step three: Take responsibility to solve the problem

#### Ownership

Ownership is the problem of who is responsible for the query if the problem is escalated. There are two types of ownership to consider: **actual** and **perceived**.

**Actual ownership**

The person who is dealing with the problem; if you have escalated it to someone else, they have ownership.

**Perceived ownership**

As you initially took the call, your customer perceives that you have ownership even though you may be handing ownership to another level or area of expertise.

So the customer expects you to keep in touch with them and keep them informed at each phase of the problem-solving process.

**Managing ownership**

A query or problem management system in which calls or tasks can be assigned and which can prompt the user with reminders automatically is a great help in managing the complexity of having more than one person work on a query.

When escalating the query, you must provide the customer with a reasonable time frame of **response**. This does not have to be the time when the problem will be fixed, but the time when they can next expect to hear from the Help Desk.

The most important thing is for the customer to be contacted within the agreed time frame.

*It is good practice for the department to contact the customer after the first communication both because of the positive impression it creates and because it is better to encourage clients not to make "progress report" calls, as these waste time. However, a client may prefer to telephone to find out the status of a problem (for example, if they are uncertain of how they can be contacted within the time period specified).*

### Step Four: Document the problem

**Document the problem according to company regulations and requirements.**

From your rough notes you should record a detailed and accurate version of what was said and decided for future reference, giving all the relevant details. This can be done manually or by using your word processor.

* This would normally be in the form of an internal memo, which would include all the details of the communication with the client:
* Date

!!!!!!

* Problem/s
* Action plan
* Follow up dates
* Follow up procedures
* Who is responsible for the follow up
* Feedback to and from the client
* And any other relevant information

The record of the transaction can also be in the form of a report or even a form designed by the company for the purposes. The procedure will depend on the organisation you work for.

What is important is that you are the first contact with the client, so it remains your problem: you have to ensure that

* The action plan is followed,

!!!!

* That the dates are diarised,
* That the follow up procedures are followed correctly
* That the responsible people actually do what is required of them
* And that feedback is given to the client.

There are more steps involved in solving customers problems. These steps will be discussed in the sections that follow.

**The value of documentation in terms of the current call is to:**

* Preserve accurate information
* Provide observation not opinion
* Record details not generalisations

Documentation has additional value in terms of organising and optimising the sales activities of the organisation:

* Analyse call data (frequency of callers, frequency of questions, frequency of particular topics or components). This information can be used to optimise activities in a support centre (for example, establish bulletin boards, Frequently Asked Questions or automated responses to common problems, distribute resolutions of difficult problems, and so on).
* Solve future problems efficiently by storing resolutions in a knowledge management system.
* Analyse the product - information received can be input back into the product development cycle.

However the problem is documented, it is important that the notes be:

* Clear and legible
* Well-organised
* Accessible to other employees

Customer Conflict

Everyone working with customers always remember **'that caller'** or **‘that customer’-** the one that makes them cringe when they hear their name mentioned - the one that's never happy and makes them want to run screaming from the office!

It is never easy to talk to someone who is being unreasonable, abusive or shouting at you but we must consider the possibility since it **will**happen to **you**.

On many occasions it should be a pleasure to help your customers to resolve their problems, but people react in different ways to problems or 'non-problems', with a mixture of emotions, including:

* Frustration
* Confusion
* Anger
* Puzzlement
* Depression

### Dealing with Difficult Customers

This section explains the basics of dealing with the difficult customer and explains the key 'survival tips' that will show you that dealing with a difficult customer is easy!

#### Don't take complaints personally

Provided that you haven't **deliberately** caused the problem about which the customer is complaining, they are using you as a representative of your organisation and any anger expressed in your direction is **not** personal but a symptom of their anger and frustration.

If the customer does start to make abusive 'personal' remarks then this is a sign of weakness on their part. **The remarks are still not truly personal**- but just show that the customer is unable to use good and effective communication techniques. They think they are dominating you by being offensive but, as we know (and so do they, probably) this is totally counter-productive.

It is **totally unacceptable** for ANYONE to be abusive to you but **under no circumstances** should you 'rise to the bait' and 'give as good as you get'... abusive callers can be dealt with very simply and easily.

#### Listen and let the customer 'explain' their problem.

**Dig out the facts and use them as a positive action plan to drive the conversation forward.**

The customer may well have planned their speech to you in advance but this may not give you all the information you need to resolve their enquiry. The information you are given can range from a single, short sentence (see below) to a one-long-sentence, potted history...

By developing the conversation using **positive** fact-gathering techniques you can prove to the customer that you *want* to help them resolve the problem *and* you by confirming that the customer has go their facts right:

*"Your service is rubbish - I want to speak to the manager"*

**"Oh dear, what seems to be the problem - maybe I can help..?"**

*"You ordered the spare for the printer ages ago and the engineer promised it in time for my son's birthday but I have phoned and phoned and no one gets back to me and this is costing me a fortune in phone calls..."*

**"I'm sorry, let's get some details and I will investigate. Do you have a call reference number or the name of the engineer? Oh and can you tell me the make of the printer so I can make sure it's correct on the log.**

**Do not fall into the trap of stringing the customer along with question after question...**

Give the customer the opportunity of contributing to the dialogue as in the last example above; the printer model *should* be on the log but you are steering the conversation away from the customer's frustration by giving them something to confirm.

Hitting the customer with a rapid succession of questions will only increase the possibility that you will have to remind them of the questions again, driving the conversation backwards...

*"I ordered this printer ages ago and the salesman promised it in time for my son's birthday but I have phoned and phoned and no one gets back to me and this is costing me a fortune in phone calls..."*

**"Can you give me your original log number, the engineer's name, the make of printer and I will add a note to the log"**

This dialogue will probably get you the information you need but it does not show the customer that you intend to help - it only shows them that you intend to add more to an existing log.

#### Agree on the steps to be taken

Having established the nature of the customer's problem and worked out what steps can be taken to take the matter forward to a solution, **tell the customer** what you are going to do and confirm that they find your plan acceptable.

You may not be able to offer the customer a complete solution whilst they are on the phone because you may need to obtain further information from elsewhere or talk to other personnel, and you should tell the customer this.

Your plan to drive the problem forward should be realistic. Do not make promises that you can't keep - the customer may be annoyed that your organisation hasn't returned a faulty printer in time but they will be positively ready to explode if you say they will get it within the next few days and nothing turns up!

Contact the customer later to make sure that the problem has been resolved to their satisfaction.

If the customer had valid cause to complain about levels of service or any aspect of your company's operation, resolve their problem and then investigate what can be done to ensure that this type of problem never occurs again.

#### Hanging Up

Hanging up on a caller is fine - provided you have good reason and you do it properly.

The time may come when you get an abusive caller. The caller may have a justifiable gripe about the way they have been treated by your organisation or they may not be able to express themselves in any other way apart from swearing.

Although you are a loyal employee and firmly believe that *'The customer is always right'* no-one is going to expect you to put up with a stream of abuse. Dealing with this type of call is easy and simple:

**1) Don't take the complaint personally**

You just happen to be the person who picked up the call - the customer may not even know you - **the abuse is aimed at your company, not you personally.**

'Step back' from the call and watch yourself on 'mental TV'.

This helps you to tackle the call from an objective point of view - imagine that the caller is speaking to you via an intermediary who is passing the dialogue to and fro on your behalf.

**2) Issue a caution**

Point out - **calmly** - to the customer that you cannot help them if they continue to be abusive. For example:

*"I'd like to deal with your problem but I'm afraid I can't do that if you're going to use that kind of language - could we start again and I'll see if I can help"*

**3) Formal warning**

If the caller continues to use inappropriate language, issue an unambiguous warning that the customer must stop being abusive.

*"I'm sorry, but as I said, I am having problems with the language you are using, please will you stop!"*

**4) Hang up**

If the caller is incapable of carrying on a respectful conversation it's time to hang up:

*"I'm afraid that I cannot continue with this conversation. I will refer this call to my manager/supervisor and ask them to call you back." -* ***CLICK****!*

Service Level Agreements

Although service level agreements are used mainly by support centres, call centres or contact centres, it is important to discuss the concept, as you may come across this.

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) is a promise to provide a specific service to a specific standard which has been agreed between the customer and the Contact centre.

The SLA is beneficial to both parties as it establishes the scope of the support to be offered and the scope of the support that can be expected to by the customer. The SLA ensures that no 'arguments' arise about what is covered through the Contact centre.

1) They know what to expect from you as normal service

2) Their satisfaction can be guaranteed

3) You know how you can exceed their expectations

SLAs are derived directly from the Mission Statement.

### The main elements of an SLA are:

What the Contact centre promises to deliver (from the Mission Statement)

* The period of validity of the SLA
* The site(s) covered by the SLA
* List of the hardware and software supported
* List of hardware and software NOT supported (if any - it is best to leave no 'grey areas')
* An overview of the levels of support offered (if more than one) such as 'Gold Support', 'Silver Support'...
* Definitions of priority or severity of the problem with a specified response time for each level
* Standards of measurement to establish quality (from the Mission Statement)
* Hours of business for the Contact centre
* Any provision for out of hours calls
* Responsibilities of the customer to help fulfill the SLA
* Any penalties incurred by either party if they fail to fulfill the conditions of the SLA (based upon measurable performance indicators.
* 'Force majeure' exclusions that permit deviations from the quote response levels (for example, a third party cutting though mains cables).
* How the customer can contact the Contact centre for assistance (that is, contact names, pager, telephone, fax numbers, e- mail...)

*There is a sample SLA in the appendices.*

We may consider that every customer should get the same level of service and they should get all their problems resolved within the same period of time. In reality, however, some customers are more important than others - in the case of internal Contact centres, some *departments* may be more important than others.

In this respect, some customers/departments can be offered different SLA terms according to their needs - or ability/desire to pay!

Service level agreements should be a benefit to both the Contact centre team and the customer. They should not be written as a barrier to effective support and as a way of 'getting out' of supplier/customer responsibilities.

### Service Standards

Service Standards cover the aspects of dealing with a customer that don't quite make it into the Service Level Agreements and allow the Contact centre to define its own ways of working in order to *measure* how effectively the Contact centre team is conforming to its own levels of customer service quality.

#### Developing a Service Standard is very simple:

1) Analyse the Contact centre's main functions

2) Break these goals down into their component 'actions'

3) Analyse how the customer 'fits into' these actions

4) Identify how the action can be done to offer the best level of service to the customer

Service Standards should measurable.

A Service Standard isn't quite the same as a company procedure although they are pretty close - their main purpose is to instruct how an action may be performed in the best way possible from the customer's point of view.

Most Service Standards are simple, single sentences or paragraphs.

Having developed a framework for developing Service Standards, we can apply this method to other aspects of the Contact centre's operation, for example:

* Answering the telephone
* Customer feedback - Monthly reports sent back to the customer or their support contact.
* Logging a call
* Closing a call

### Applying Service Standards to the Contact centre

Consider one of the actions needed to operate Contact centre and develop an applicable Service Standard, along the lines of the example below

#### Answer the phone

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Service** | | **Service Standards** |
| Phone rings... | The customer is waiting | Answer the phone within three rings |
|  | (developing the standard) | Answer the phone within three rings using the  'Contact centre standard greeting' |

SECTION 2: COMMIT TO SOLVING THE PROBLEM

#### Specific Outcome 2

Commit to solving customer's complaint

#### Assessment Criteria

* Commitment to resolve the complaint is demonstrated by correct individuals
* Company support for the individuals and the responsible for resolution is provided
* Up to date information about the complaint processing is supplied to the costumer

### Step Five: Commit to solving the problem

#### Describe and explain a range of relevant options.

Once the problem has been identified and understood by both parties it is time to formulate and agree upon a workable plan of action to resolve the matter at hand.

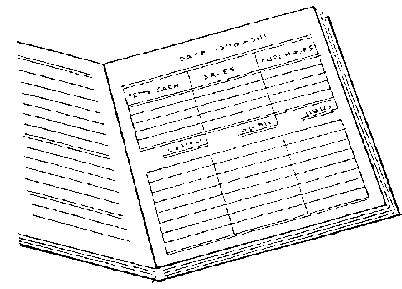
Suggest a range of possible relevant options to achieve this. You can also ask the client for his/her opinion on how to solve the problem. This lets the client feel that he/she is part of the process and will usually help to calm the client down.

The options that you suggest should always be in line with company policy. Many companies have specific ways in which specific situations are handled and any suggestions you make must always be in line with this.

HiFi corporation, for example, do not give cash refunds. They have what is called a carry in warranty, meaning that the client takes the faulty product back to them and they will then have the product replaced or repaired. You cannot then tell the client that he will get his money back, because it’s not going to happen and will irritate the client even more

#### Reach consensus on the most viable option.

When the options have been discussed and understood you and the client must agree on which option is the best in the circumstances.

Once you and the client have agreed on the best course of action, you then have to agree to an action plan on how the issue will be resolved. Included in the action plan should be the following:

* Date of the discussion with the client
* Sate the problem/s or issue
* State the action plan: who will do what
* Follow up dates: when will follow up be done.
* Follow up procedures: what will the procedure for following up be: will you phone or write the client, when will the client do this or that, when will your organisation do this or that.
* Who in your organisation will be responsible for the follow up
* And any other relevant information

#### Outline the proper procedure to be followed.

After reaching consensus on which plan of action to follow this plan of action must be outlined and discussed with the customer step by step.

The plan must outline all the responsibilities of both parties as well as deadlines when different steps need to be completed. **In this step you take personal responsibility for solving the client’s problem.**

If necessary, a letter or e-mail should be sent to the client as confirmation of the discussion.

It is good practice to make rough notes of the main ideas during communication. This will enable you to recall these main points at a later stage.

Rough notes will usually take the form of a summary and you do this while talking to the client.

Always also ensure that you check your summary with the client. You can say something like: “Can I make sure that this is the problem you want resolved…” and then you quote the problem/s from your notes.

Types of summaries:

* Paraphrasing: when you rewrite something using your own words.
* You can summarise in point form
* When you are summarising a big piece of text, you will make use of headings and sub-headings. This manual is an example of using headings and sub-headings to break a big piece of text into smaller pieces
* Another method of summarising is using a mind-map.

### Step 6: Make sure that the customer is satisfied

**Commit to yourself and your customer that you will get their problem resolved. Resolve the problem quickly, professionally and even better than the customer expects.**

To explain the importance of making and keeping a commitment to solve the customer’s problem, we will discuss 8 needs that customers have:

#### Eight Customer Needs

In most cases, customers call you because they have a specific need, request, query, etc. They know exactly what they want and have certain expectations.

1. Fast service
2. Courteous service
3. Consistent service
4. Someone who will listen
5. A knowledgeable Customer Service Agent
6. Expert advice
7. Smooth transactions
8. A commitment

#### Fast service

In many Customer Services, the first response a customer receives is from a voice recording stating that all agents are currently busy and requesting the customer to stay on the line. This often requires that the customer has to wait for long periods of time before his call is attended to by a customer service agent. When his call is finally answered, he may already be agitated. As the customer service agent, you must recognise that he has been waiting for a while already and your duty is to respond to his needs as speedily as possible to avoid further agitation. A simple apology for the long wait is likely to calm the customer. You then have to do all you can to satisfy his needs in the shortest possible amount of time.

#### Courteous service

Never underestimate the value common courtesy. Saying “please” and “thank you” will go a long way towards keeping your customers happy.

* “Certainly Mrs Mokoena. May I please have your account number?”
* “Good day Mr Naidoo. How may I help you?”
* “Thank you for calling and for bringing this to our attention”
* “Thank you for your patience”
* “It’s a pleasure Mrs Niemann” – or – “You’re welcome. Have a wonderful day”

#### Consistent service

Whether a customer is dealing with you or with a colleague, the quality of service he receives should not differ. He should be able to expect and rely on a high level of service, regardless of who he speaks to.

#### Someone who will listen

It is not merely a part of your job to listen to customers. It is most likely the most important function you have to fulfil. Communication immediately breaks down when one party to a conversation is not listening. It will result in the customer repeating his request / information, etc., which will lead to annoyance. When he hangs up the phone, he probably won’t be too happy with the service he received.

#### A knowledgeable person to talk to

Customers expect, and deserve, to speak to someone who is knowledgeable about the organisation’s products and services, and who won’t waste their time. They want an immediate response to their problem, rather than a call-back at a later stage.

#### Expert advice

There is often more than one product / service option that could satisfy a customer’s needs, each with it’s own benefits. Therefore, when they call, they need advice on which option will best suit their needs. Your product knowledge and experience with other customers will assist you in making the correct recommendations. Remember, it is in your best interest that the customer does not make a wrong decision.

#### Smooth transactions

It is your duty to make sure that everything works smoothly for the customer. When new policies are introduced, or other obstacles are presented to customers, you need to smooth these over with the customer. It may mean taking extra time to explain something, but you will retain happy customers.

“Don’t worry. It’s not that confusing. Let me explain it for you.”

“I can quickly show you how the new policy will help you.”

“I understand why you don’t like the changes. Perhaps we can go over them together and I can point out some of the benefits.”

#### A specific commitment

It may happen that a customer calls and requires specific information that you possibly cannot supply him with at that time, in which case you will have to make a few inquiries and call him back. Never be vague in your commitment to call him back, for example:

“I will call you back towards the end of the week.”

“I will get back to you sometime later today, or perhaps tomorrow.”

**Then you have to do what you said you would do**

### Step 7: provide support for the individual and the customer

#### Support for the customer

If you follow basic customer service principles and procedures, you will ensure that you provide the customer with support every time that you interact with a customer.

### Moment Of Truth

A moment of truth is possibly the single most important item of this entire programme. During this delicate interaction with the customer, we as key staff members can keep a loyal customer satisfied, or hand him or her to the competition forever.

A moment of truth can be defined as

* any interaction
  + or contact

between

* the customer
  + and the company,
    - its staff or its products and services.

**During this moment the customer can decide to use your product or service or not.**

Every moment of truth may result in a decision by the customer, either positive or negative.

“Every time that we are in contact with a customer, it is a moment of truth, a point in the ongoing relationship between us which is going to guarantee the future of our business…or turn that customer over to our competitors.”

**“Every time that we are face-to-face with a customer we are on trial, and at the moment of truth, the customer is both the judge and jury, and has ultimate power. They can use you or drop you.”**

Moments of truth are critically important in securing customer loyalty.

An important question that should be answered is **What’s In It For Me?** This is the most important question that the customer asks, what’s in it for me.

If the customer does not perceive that there is something in the deal for him, the deal would not go through. Maybe this is the reason why there is a tendency to lose customers after a fare increase. At that moment that customer perceives that the value of the ticket is more than the value he or she will get. There is not much in the deal.

#### Support for the individual

The organisation’s procedure for dealing with customer queries, how to document queries, how to escalate a problem and how to follow up are the mechanism by which support is provided for the individual – you.

When you follow procedures and you know how to do your work, you will know who you should refer the query to – this is your support, someone to help you solve the problem.

SECTION 3: SOLVE THE PROBLEM

#### Specific Outcome 3

Arrange appropriate planning and solution to the customer's problems

#### Assessment Criteria

* The appropriate solution for the solving of the costumer's problems is identified
* Contact is maintained with all relevant stakeholders
* Correct solution is applied to the customer's complaint within the agreed timeframe

#### Essential Embedded Knowledge

* Methods and techniques for communicating with stakeholders involved in customers complaints

### Step 8: apply the correct solution to the problem

You and the customer have agreed to the best workable solution to the problem, now you have to make sure that the solution is implemented.

Check with the stakeholders such as your supervisor that the solution is the correct one and then take steps to implement the solution. For example:

* Update the customer’s account and send out correct statements, invoices etc.
* Change the incorrect product for the correct product
* Adjust the price of the product and send the correct invoice
* Send a technician to fix the problem
* Order the product the customer needs from the supplier or from another branch

DO WHAT YOU SAID YOU WOULD DO

### Step 9: Maintain contact with stakeholders

It happens at times that you cannot solve the problem but that you have to refer the problem to someone else. When this happens, we suggest a procedure to follow:

#### When you cannot solve the problem but someone else can

1. If you need to refer the customer, do not just say, “I will transfer you” but rather explain why you cannot help and the other person will be able to.
2. Make sure you summarise the situation to the new person dealing with that particular customer and don’t expect the customer to explain his complaint all over again. When you do this, you are irritating an already dissatisfied customer.
3. Make sure that the customer is not transferred from one person to the other to another one and to another one again. This is silly and childish – the customer does not want to talk to five or eight or twenty people in your organisation to sort out his problem. He wants to talk to one, maybe two people and then, if the problem can still not be solved, **he wants you to go and talk to all those people in order to sort out his problem!**

Unfortunately, we seem to have gotten into the habit of passing customers with complaints backwards and forwards between employees, without solving the problem and without thinking of the effect this might have on the customer! And then we expect the customer to do business with us again! What a cheek we have – the customer owes us nothing and we owe the customer everything – out jobs, income, home, clothes, food –EVERYTHING. Without customers no business will survive and if the business does not survive you will not have a job. If you do not have a job, you have no income and no income means no food, no clothes, no house, no car – it means you have nothing. Look after your customers!

Understand this – it is not the customer’s job to talk to many people in your organisation in order to sort out his problem – that is part of your job. The customer has already paid for the product or service, which is faulty, how can you expect him to pay even more with his time, his telephone bill and his peace of mind in order to get the problem sorted out?

If the customer had wanted bad service or faulty products, he would surely not have paid the price charged for good service or products with no faults, would he? No, of course not.

1. If you cannot solve the problem and the person who can is not in the office or not available, tell the customer that you will refer the problem. Tell the customer who you will refer the problem to and also tell the customer by when the responsible person will contact him. Then you had better make sure that you refer the problem with all the relevant details to the responsible person and then make sure that the problem is solved.
2. Always end by thanking the customer. The last thing you say is the one most likely to be remembered. It also says that you are glad the person brought the problem to your attention and that will make him feel cared about.

#### Escalate queries

There will be times when you are unable to resolve the customer's enquiry using the resources at your immediate disposal.

*There is no shame in admitting to the customer that you are unable to answer their enquiry* **provided***that you escalate the problem correctly and see the enquiry through to a close.*

*Escalation is also referred to as "Elevation". Sometimes either of these terms are used to mean making a call higher priority.*

#### When to Escalate a Call

You may find yourself in a situation where you need to refer your call to your manager/supervisor; for example, if the customer becomes difficult or abusive or begins to raise other, company-wide issues. As soon as you run into problems resolving a customer's enquiry, you should immediately take steps to identify your next source of assistance. Other examples could include:

* Customer requests it or wants to speak to a manager
* The problem impacts the business
* It is a personnel issue (for example a Senior Level Manager or Executive is affected)
* No apparent solution
* More than one person is affected
* More than one department is affected

***The general rule for escalation is if you can't deal with it find someone who can!***

You should also remember to get back to the customer within the time stated. It is so easy to become engrossed in finding a solution that you forget to keep in touch with the customer!

#### Query Escalation Routes

Some of the alternatives for call escalation include:

* Senior staff within the department or branch
* Staff at another department
* Customer services department

#### Call Escalation Procedure

The key points to remember when escalating a call can be summarized as follows:

1) Identify as soon as possible the need to escalate a call.

2) Pass on as much detail as possible.

3) Obtain an estimate of likely 'time to fix'.

4) Stay in control of the query - maintain dialogue with the customer.

Do not close the communication until the customer agrees.

**Never use terms like;**

**“I Can’t…”**

**“That’s ridiculous…”**

**“Impossible…”**

**“Forget it…”**

**“My company does not believe…”**

**“You should not…”**

**“It’s not my job…”**

**“Don’t shout at me, it’s not my fault…”**

In the customer’s eyes you represent the organisation and IT IS YOUR JOB TO LISTEN TO THE CUSTOMER

#### Maintain contact with stakeholders

You have escalated the call to someone else to implement the solution. This does not mean that your job is over – you are the contact with the customer and this means that you have to:

* Follow up with the other person to find what progress is taking place
* Contact the customer and advise the customer about the progress

This has to be done regularly, daily if needed.

Customers find it frustrating if they do not hear anything from the company and the problem has not been sorted out.

If you have to solve the problem, make sure that you contact the customer regularly to advise him/her about progress.

Do not wait until the customer contacts you – you have to contact the customer first

### Step 10: Solve the problem within the timeframe agreed

You and the customer have agreed on a timeframe within which the problem will be sorted out.

Make sure that this happens by following up with the responsible people and reporting to the customer as well as other stakeholder, for example your supervisor.

If you find that you are not going to solve the problem within the agreed time, contact the customer and negotiate a later date for the completion.

Make sure that you explain to the customer why you are having difficulty in sorting out the problem within the agreed time.

SECTION 4: COMMUNICATE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

#### Specific Outcome 4

Communicate with all stakeholders

#### Assessment Criteria

* Relevant internal parties are notified of the complaint and its routing
* Immediate superior is notified of the customer's complaint for further action if escalation requires problem solving
* The customer is informed about the outcome and the progress of the solution

#### Essential Embedded Knowledge

* Company's complaint procedure systems
* Methods and techniques for communicating with stakeholders involved in customers complaints

### Step 11: Report the problem

You have to report the problem to the relevant stakeholders, which could include:

* Your supervisor
* Other departments
* External suppliers

For example, the problem could be a faulty part that was received from the supplier. You have to advise at least the following people of the problem:

* Your supervisor: who has to report to management
* Stores or the warehouse: so that they are aware that faulty parts have been received. This gives them an opportunity to improve their methods of receiving and checking goods
* Purchasing department: who might want to source another supplier
* Admin department: who may want to stop payment to the supplier until the problem has been sorted
* The supplier: who may not be aware of the problem but will be willing to replace the faulty part

It will not always be your responsibility to report the problem to everyone, you have to be guided by the policies and procedures in your organisation.

When you report a problem, you also have to follow the procedure as laid down in your organisation. This could include:

* Completing a form that gives details of the problem such as date, cause, client involved, solution arrived at, etc.
* Discussing the problem at weekly or daily departmental meetings
* Writing a report about the problem giving full details
* Sending e-mails or faxes

Make sure that you always follow the correct procedure and complete all the relevant forms and documentation.

### Step 12: communicate with the customer

As mentioned in the previous section, you have to communicate with the customer regularly. This includes advising the customer that the problem has been solved.

If possible and depending on the procedures in your organisation, get confirmation in writing from the customer that the problem has been solved to his/her satisfaction.

This could be telephonically where the telephone calls are recorded, completing a form and having the customer sign or requesting confirmation from the customer by e-mail or fax.

Customer Care

An important key to being a successful customer service agent is the ability to understand customer behaviour. It is necessary to accurately assess their specific behavioural style in order to respond accurately to their needs, which in turn will lead to increased customer satisfaction.

*Samantha received several calls from customers who were experiencing problems with their accounts. The company had recently changed their computer accounting programme, which resulted in a delay in processing the accounts that month.*

*Mr Bell called to ask why he had not received his monthly statement yet. Samantha apologised for the inconvenience and explained that there was a delay in processing the accounts due to the fact that they had changed their accounting programme. She stated that all the accounts would be processed by close of business that same day and posted first thing the following morning. Mr Bell was not entirely satisfied with this response and demanded to know the reason for the change in their accounting programme.*

*Samantha patiently explained that, due to the launch of their new product and the resulting increase in the number of their customers, the previous programme was no longer able to cope with the vast volumes of data. Mr Bell seemed satisfied with this answer.*

*The next call Samantha received was from Mrs Gordon, who also wanted to complain because she had not yet received her account. Samantha explained the cause of the delay to Mrs Gordon and promised her that the account would be posed to her the following morning. Mrs Gordon thanked Samantha and hung up. Both customers had exactly the same need, but required different responses from Samantha.*

#### Types of customer behaviour

There are TWO TYPES of customer behavioural styles we will be focusing on:

**The Analytical Customer**

This is the customer who wants accurate information and pays great attention to detail. Mr Bell was not satisfied with Samantha’s explanation concerning the delay in the billing that month. He needed more information before he was entirely satisfied.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Characteristics** | **Adapting your response** |
| * Needs a great deal of information before making a decision * Prefers to work with facts and figures, rather than with people * Not focussed on the social / relationship aspects, but on the business aspects * Quieter and more introspective * Is a good listener * Dislikes being rushed * Prefers an organised approach to things * Is patient * Is not very direct or assertive * May seem abrupt at times * Uses a slower, more careful rate of speech than an assertive person | * Be very accurate * Discuss the relevant details of the situation * Don’t rush * Remember this customer needs time to think before making a decision * Present your services in logical and concise terms * Answer questions with appropriate details * Don’t expect much social conversation * If you are assertive, slow down a little * Listen to their needs |

**The Assertive Customer**

The assertive customer wants results. They are generally perceived as difficult being customers because they demand action. Because they are very direct in their approach, they often come across as being angry.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Characteristics** | **Adapting your response** |
| * Wants and usually demands action * Their approach is very direct and to the point * Clearly state exactly what they want * Lacks patience * Speaks at a faster rate * Makes decisions quickly * May appear to be rude and abrupt * Is interested in results, not relationships * Wants an immediate answer * Not too concerned with details * Very assertive, not necessarily angry | * Keep in mind the assertive customer wants action and results * You may have to pick up the pace of the conversation * Provide only details that are essential * Don’t mistake the assertiveness you hear for anger * Be direct and to the point * Don’t expect much social conversation * Don’t be offended by the abruptness you hear. Remember that they are more interested in efficiency than personal pleasantries |

#### Why Do We Lose Customers?

Research has shown that it costs five times more to attract a new customer than to keep an existing one. We pour thousands of rand into advertising and promotion drives, and then lose the customer a short time later because of poor, uncaring service

The following reasons are quoted why we lose customers:

* 3% move to another area.
* 5% develop other contacts and friendships and change to another brand or supplier.
* 9% leave for competitive reasons such as price and service.
* 14% are dissatisfied with the service.
* 68% are lost due to an attitude of indifference or negligence by a member of management or staff.

#### Typical Customer Relationship Roles

It is clear that there are different customer relationship roles which can be summarised as follows:

* **Information role.** Providing information is a key role in nurturing the customer relationship.
* **Supporting role.** Sometimes the customer needs support.
* **Caring role.**  The caring role is probably the most important. Customers should always get the feeling that they are taken care of.
* **Understanding role.** As official of the company you should always understand.
* **Problem solving role.** A customer approaching you always has some problem that he or she needs a solution for.
* **Guiding role.** Guiding customers is critically important. With much more choice today, we should guide them and attract their attention to our product or service.

#### Earning Satisfied and Loyal Customers

* Satisfied customers are not automatically loyal
* Satisfied means different things to different people
* We must understand what our customers expect so we can Wow! them
* Customers don’t expect us to give them so much that we drive ourselves out of business
* Customers will be loyal to an organisation that exceeds their expectations
* A loyal customer has had a customer experience that he or she wants to repeat over and over again
* A loyal customer may forgive us when there is a problem
* A loyal customer will recommend us
* Competitors can easily lure “satisfied” customers away, but competitors have to work hard to capture loyal customers
* Earning customer loyalty is everyone’s responsibility

#### Steps to Customer Loyalty

* Provide the service or product the customer wants, when they want it and the way they want it.
* Then, we have to go a step further – we have to exceed their expectations by doing something they don’t expect.

SECTION 5: BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

#### Specific Outcome 5

Provide practical business solutions

#### Assessment Criteria

* Appropriate partnership with the purpose of enhancement the solution of the costumer's problem is arranged
* The resolution of customer's complaint is used for relationship development and attraction of further sales

#### Unit standard range

* Marketing including all forms of marketing communications, direct marketing and relationship marketing, sponsorship, event marketing, sales promotions, public relations and alternative strategies.
* Standard applies to marketing management, customer management, marketing communications and marketing research.

The Importance Of Marketing and Sales In An Organisation

Industry and Commerce have changed their marketing attitudes quite dramatically since the beginning of the 19th century. The sort of policy which was in force was one of 'We make what is best for our plant and best for our pocket ‑ and sell it! In other words, the profits of the owners and their shareholders were the main concern.

This changed after World War Two. Since then buyers have emerged as a vital, combative force on a global scale time signaling the end of the 'seller's market'. Today, people buy what. they choose ‑ not necessarily what the producers want to sell them. We are now in the era of the **'buyer's market'**.

It thus follows that, in order to remain in business profitably by increasing the company's share of the market, we now have to sell **satisfaction** to our prospective customers ~ and on a highly competitive basis

Note Think about this: there are many departments in any organisation, such as Finance, Accounting, Production, Human Resources, and Sales. Of all these departments the only department that brings money into the organisation is the Sales and Marketing Department. All the other departments cause money to flow out of the organisation.

We live in a **customer-orientated** society and this trend is visible throughout the world.

Customer-orientation means that the emphasis falls on

* the **individual** customer,
* the **society** to which he or she belongs and
* the **government** which has the authority over both.

### What Is Selling?

Selling is the creation and transference of ideas. Prospective customers are well aware that your job is to sell them ideas, and they expect you to do so well and convincingly. If you can do this, it is likely that they will consider buying, provided always that your proposition is the best buy for them. Selling is, therefore, very much a matter of effective communication

To put it more simply, selling is satisfying the customer’s needs and wants (requirements) with a product and service for which the customer is happy to pay.

### What Is Marketing

Marketing is the process in a society by which the demand structure for economic goods and services is anticipated, enlarged and satisfied through the conception, promotion, exchange and distribution of such goods and services.

This means that marketing includes anticipating what customers will need, developing the right products or services to meet the need, making the product available at a reasonable price and also selling the product to the consumer.

### Market research

Market research is a science focussing on the gathering of valid and reliable information on markets, consumers and the environment to enable the organisation to take informed management and marketing decisions on the market, consumers and the products and services of the company.

It is clear that planned market research enables the company to determine which markets to serve, which products and services to develop and expand to ensure that the objectives of the company are realised

### Marketing focus

In today’s highly sophisticated and complex market in most industries, it is essential that an organisation decides on which segments of the market to focus. It is impossible to sensibly focus on all segments of the transport market, for example. The various sub sectors of the transport industry are very complex and require a diverse asset base and skills. Transport operators and more specifically small transport operators normally focus on only one of the segments, for example bus operations, taxi operations or freight operations. By scope of activity segments such as the shipping and rail industries are well beyond the scope, interest and level of affordability of the small business owner. This guide therefore has as primary focus he road transport industry.

### Promote Your Product Or Service

#### Advertising

**Advertising** is a form of communication whose purpose is to inform potential customers about products and services and how to obtain and use them. Or you could look at advertising as an impersonal transfer of a marketing message that is paid for.

* The purpose of advertising is to inform consumers where they may buy a product or service and at what price.
* The need-satisfying qualities of the product are also mentioned
* The trademarks or brand names that identify the sponsor of the advertisement must be mentioned: the address, telephone number, name of your business and the contact person
* The advertisement should persuade the target audience to buy or use your product or service

#### Launch

Motor car manufacturers often use an event to launch a new model car; this is why it is called a launch. Prospective corporate clients such as motor car dealers, managers of company fleets and other high-profile clients are invited to attend the launch. at the launch snacks and some drinks are provided, there is opportunity for clients to mingle and the main event is the launch of the new car. this provides opportunity to show the car and to describe all its features and benefits.

Anybody can use a launch to introduce a new business, product or service to prospective customers. A launch can be very expensive, so the launch should be planned carefully and you have to make sure that you invite the press and customers who are in your target market. If you do not, the event will not be successful.

#### Informal Selling

Informal selling happens when the customer walks through the door to buy your product, or when you phone an existing customer to find out if they need anything. Advertising is also informal

#### Formal Selling

Formal selling is when you make an appointment to see a customer or a prospective customer. You will prepare a formal presentation to introduce yourself and your business to the customer and to explain the advantages of your products or service to the customer. A launch is also formal selling.

#### Seminars

Aseminar isameeting called for the purpose of increasing understanding of a subject under discussion. A seminar can be held to introduce a new product to the market. By using a seminar, you communicate with more than one customer at a time. Techniques used include:

* Speeches
* Audio-visual presentations
* Question and answer sessions after the presentation

A seminar offers your company a chance to maximise exposure, and to exploit one of the few occasions in a company's life when it is inherently newsworthy, such as when launching a new product.

### Sales Techniques

Tip It is not possible to sell ‘anything to anybody, anytime’. You have to believe in your product or service, your company, yourself and your customer to sell successfully

Everybody, on a day-to-day basis, buy things that are not sold to them. They buy on their own initiative to satisfy their needs and wants and they do this almost without thinking. This changes when something is being sold to them: they start to think.

As a sales person you will be responsible for more than just selling a product or service. Your activities will include:

* Explaining the benefits of products
* Demonstrating how products work
* Answering questions and dealing with objections
* Organising the terms of the sale
* Seeing that buyers are satisfied
* Gathering information that can be used by the company to improve the marketing strategy

You will apply different sales strategies in different situations.

#### Person-To-Person

Person-to-person selling is one-on-one communication between you and the customer with the purpose of convincing the customer to purchase your product or service. This includes direct sales such as door-to-door sales and party-plan selling. Direct selling involves products sold to the final customer.

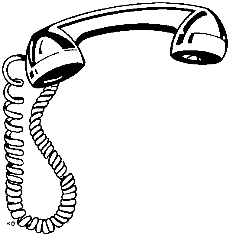
You will engage in person-to-person sales in the following circumstances:

* Where the price is negotiable rather than fixed, for example second-hand motor cars or a garage or boot sale
* Where the product is technically complex and requires a demonstration with a question-and- answer session. Most industrial equipment and specialised instruments are sold this way.
* Where the product is new and relatively unknown on the market and the persuasiveness of the salesperson can convert a conservative customer
* Where retail outlets have a great variety of sizes, qualities, colours and designs and the customer needs to talk to a sales person in order to make a choice and come to a decision
* Large department stores where the knowledge of the sales person saves the customer time and effort and encourages the customer to buy instead of window-shop

**The Advantages Of Personal Selling Are:**

* Flexibility: you as the sales person can adapt you sales presentation to suit the needs and behaviour of the individual customer. You can also monitor a prospective customer’s reaction to your sales pitch and make adjustments where necessary
* Your focus is on potential customers so there is little wasted effort
* Person-to-person selling usually results in an actual sale

#### Telemarketing Or Cold-Calling

Cold calling is when you approach a prospective customer or client, by telephone, where the customer was not expecting such an interaction. The word "cold" is sometimes thought of as being used because the person receiving the call is not expecting a call or has not specifically asked to be contacted by a sales person.

Telemarketing happens in the following ways:

* You dial up listed telephone numbers, e.g. from a telephone directory, in a planned fashion. You will use the same sales message for each telephone call.
* You can use a specific database. Your sales presentation will be less structured.
* Prospects phone the company as a result of an advertisement on TV, radio or in the printed media.

**The Advantages Of Telemarketing Are:**

* It is flexible
* You can get immediate feedback from the prospect
* The service is more personal
* You have an opportunity to develop two-way communication with the client

The difficulty of telemarketing is that people are often less willing to listen or respond than they are in a face-to-face situation. You have to be courteous and to the point to encourage a positive response from the customer.

The timing of the phone call is also important. Call them when it is convenient for them to take the time to listen. If you call when they are about to leave for lunch is not a convenient time for the customer.

When you deliver your sales presentation, be natural. Do not sound as if you are reading from a script, as it shows a lack of creativity.

#### Direct Mail

Promotional material is sent directly to customers and potential customers. When you make use of direct mail to sell to customers, you have to make sure that your mailing list is up-to-date..

Direct marketing should be well researched to ensure that it is aimed at the target market. Mailing lists can be obtained from firms that specialise in compiling mailing lists of customers who have bought products through direct mail in the past and are likely to do so in the future.

Because using a single mail shot has no value, it is customary to plan a direct marketing campaign that consists of a series of letters, brochures, computer disks or audio tapes. One letter or brochure leads to the next and the combination of the mailings has a cumulative effect.

Direct mail is popular because it can be personalised and aimed at a specific target market and encourages a direct response from the customer. An incentive to respond quickly, such as an end date for the promotion, is usually included, as is a response aid, where the customer is requested to fill in something.

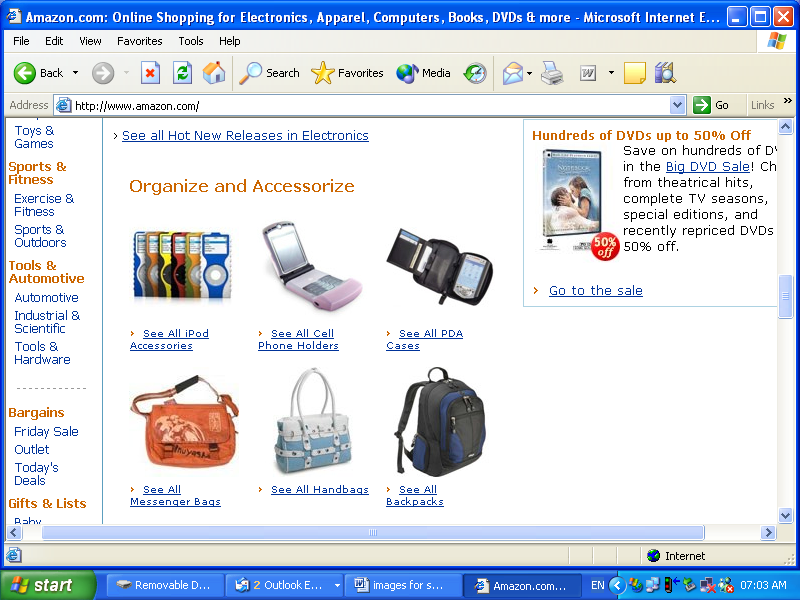
Direct mail items have to be attractive to the customer or they may throw it away unopened without reading it.

#### E-Mail

Sending e-mails to prospective customers is the same as direct mail, the difference being that it happens electronically. All the same principles apply:

* You must make sure of your target market
* Use mailing lists from firms that specialise in compiling data of prospective customers who have responded in the past and will probably do so again
* Make the e-mail visually interesting to encourage the prospective customer to read and respond to the e-mail
* Run a campaign where one e-mail leads to the next to ensure that the mailing has a cumulative effect
* Include incentives such as a buy by date, a response aid and special offers
* Use the advantage of sending photos and graphics of the product or service with the e-mail

#### Web



Selling goods and services on the World Wide Web is becoming very popular. The product is advertised on the company’s web site and a means for the customer to place the order and pay for the product or service is included.

In fact, electronic sales has reached the stage where the regular customers of a manufacturer and wholesaler have access to certain areas of the sales processing system of the manufacturer or wholesaler, where the customer can place the order on-line, track the progress of the order and find out the delivery date on-line.

It is easy for customers to access a web site and browse through the product range, place orders on the web site and arrange payment through the website. In future it is possible that most sales will happen this way.

The web site can include visual displays of the products, animated demonstrations of the features of the products, the range of designs, colours, sizes, and qualities of the products. If the customer needs advice, a response aid in the form of e-mail is provided on the web site.

Many companies include a section where customers can give feedback or contact them. As can be seen, Amazon.com has an interactive web site where customers can track their orders, view and change their orders, return an item and even visit their Help department

#### AIDA

Whether you are advertising, launching, cold-calling or selling person-to-person, the basic sales process must have at the very least the following steps:

* A - Attention (Awareness): attract the attention of the customer – do something or say something or show something that will catch the person’s attention
* I - Interest: raise the interest of the customer interest by demonstrating features, advantages, and benefits.
* D - Desire: convince customers that they want and desire the product or service and that it will satisfy their needs.
* A - Action: lead customers towards taking action and/or purchasing – close the sale

Because we live in a world where the customer has many options to choose from, the following letter has been added, to make the acronym AIDAS:

* S - Satisfaction – make sure that the customer is satisfied so that s/he buys from your again and become a repeat customer. You will find that repeat customer will recommend you to their friends, family and colleagues.

#### Selling Networks

**Multi-level marketing** (**MLM**), also known as **Network Marketing** is a business distribution model that allows a parent multi-level marketing company to market their products directly to consumers by means of relationship referral and direct selling. The housewives who sell Tupperware and make-up products are part of a network marketing business.

The people responsible for selling the product are independent and do not earn fixed salaries, they earn commission on the products they sell. These people are called distributors, associates, sales consultants, independent agents and so on. The distributors build an active customer base and actively recruit other sales people who then fall under their control. In this way, the sales person develops what is called a downline and is then called an area distributor or area manager or whatever the terminology in the parent organisation is. Area distributors then earn commission on the sales of the distributors in their downline, as well as commission on their own sales directly to customers.

Selling networks can have many levels, where the people on the higher levels earn commission from the sales of people in their downline.

New salespeople may be asked to pay for their own training and marketing materials, or to buy a significant amount of inventory

The main difference between network marketing and pyramid schemes is that in network marketing there are products that are sold and commission is earned on these products. In a pyramid scheme, there are not products that are sold.

Internal and External Suppliers

Everyone in the organisation should understand the very important role they play in achieving the business objectives.

Every employee of the organisation should be willing to work with everyone else. Different departments should also work together so that the business objectives can be achieved.

It is a fact of life that whenever people make the effort to work well together and in the process build good relationships with each other, they will achieve what they set out to do. A relationship is when two or more people come together and form a common understanding, interact with each other, and work together to achieve a common goal.

Internal relationships that work well between individuals and departments are important if the organisation is to succeed.

Good communication between individuals and departments is also important, as this helps co-operation in the organisation. So, we have to listen to each other and check to make sure that we understand each other. Good communication will result in both parties being in agreement as to when, why and how a task should be done.

Many employees when asked “Who is your supplier or support service provider?”, will answer that they do not have a supplier because they do not deal with people from the outside.

Your supplier or support service provider is anyone from whom you receive completed work output. That person can be within the business or outside the business.

On the opposite side you will find an internal or external customer. An internal customers is anybody inside the business who depends on your work output before they can start their own work, for example your supervisor.

We can therefore say that a supplier is an individual or a business that supplies us with goods, materials and/or services that is needed to make or provide the product/service.

**Example**

If we look at production, stores and despatch, the process of internal suppliers can be summarised as follows:

The **production** department produces finished products, which are then sent to the stores. The output from production becomes the input for stores. Production is therefore the supplier to stores.

**Stores** add the products to their inventory, ready to deliver to customers. When they get sales orders, they prepare the finished products for despatch. The output from stores becomes the input for despatch.

**Despatch** delivers the products to the customers. The output from despatch becomes the input for the customers.

### Good supplier relationships

It is very important that you develop and maintain good relationships with your suppliers, both internal and external. If suppliers do not supply us with the right quantities, quality and at the right time, we will be unable to supply our customers with their products/services on time. We may lose our customers if this happens.

* We may receive special discounts and credit from our suppliers if they are satisfied with our dependability in ordering and paying our debts.
* They may introduce us to new customers.
* In emergencies, they may help us out by providing special deliveries and services not normally given.

Practical Business Solutions

By maintaining good relationships with your suppliers, you will go a long way to arranging a partnership between your suppliers and your organisation.

Having good relations with your suppliers will mean that you could give your customers better service, for example:

* If you know that the lead time for delivery is 7 days, but you have an urgent order that has to be delivered within 3 days, your relationship with your supplier should be so good that you could request an urgent order
* Or, if you find that a certain batch of products received from your supplier is faulty, you should discuss this with the supplier in such a way that a mutually beneficial solution, a win-win solution, is found.

To build partnerships with suppliers, follow all the rules for good customer service.

When you solve customer’s problems, you will find that customers will not go to competitors, but will remain loyal to your organisation. This means that you will have the opportunity to sell more goods and services to the same customer, thereby building sales.

### Relationship marketing

Relationship marketing is a form of marketing which emphasises customer retention and continual satisfaction rather than individual transactions and per-case customer resolution.

The practice of relationship marketing also includes tracking and analysing each customer's preferences, activities, tastes, likes, dislikes, and complaints. This is a powerful tool in any company's marketing strategy. For example, an automobile manufacturer maintaining a database of when and how repeat customers buy their products, the options they choose, the way they finance the purchase etc., is in a powerful position to custom target sales material. In return, the customer benefits from the company tracking service schedules and communicating directly on issues like product recalls.

The latest trend in relationship marketing is personalised marketing. In personalised marketing, the main preference is given to the consumer. The consumer shopping profile is built as the person shops on the website. This information is then used to compute what can be his likely preferences in other categories. These items are then shown to the customer through web cross-sell, email recommendation and other channels.

Personalised marketing has also migrated into direct mail, allowing marketers to take advantage of the technological capabilities of digital, toner-based printing presses to produce unique, personalised pieces for each recipient. Marketers can personalise documents by any information contained in their databases, including name, address, demographics, purchase history, and dozens (or even hundreds) of other variables. The result is a printed piece that (ideally) reflects the individual needs and preferences of each recipient, increasing the relevance of the piece and increasing the response rate.

#### Satisfaction

Relationship marketing relies upon the communication and acquisition of consumer requirements solely from existing customers in a mutually beneficial exchange usually involving permission for contact by the customer.

This is beneficial as you are targeting what your client specifically wants or needs, but on the other hand, you are focusing only on existing clients and not attracting more clients, which is done usually through direct marketing.

#### Retention

A key principle of relationship market is the retention of customers through varying means and practices to ensure repeated trade from preexisting customers. This is done by satisfying requirements above those of competing companies through a mutually beneficial relationship with existing clients.

The importance of retaining existing customers cannot be overstressed as it may cost 5 times more to attract new customers than it would to retain current customers.

### Key Concepts To Remember

* **Continuous Improvement** – you must always work towards improving your customer service
* **Care for the Customer** – you must show the customer that you care
* **Decide to be the Best** – when you decide this, you will always deliver excellent customer service.

### Continuous Improvement Checklist

You can use the questions quoted below to help you to continuously improve your customer service:

* What’s the benefit to the customer? Will the customer easily understand the benefit?
* What impact will this have on our employees/team
* How will it affect our existing systems?
* Is anyone else doing it successfully? What can we learn from their experience?
* What could go wrong?
* Will it give us an advantage over our competitors?
* When should we improve our service?
* What can we change and improve to make it easier for the customer to work with us?
* How can we respond faster to customer requests?
* What have we learned?

Appendix D: Sample Service Level Agreement

This sample SLA is for **guidance only** and it is not intended to be a 'model' for a working SLA, but to highlight the principal contents of such a document. Professional advice should be sought when drafting a formal SLA.

**Service Level Agreement**

**Between**

**Our Contact centre Company Ltd (OHC) And**

**The Customer's Company Ltd (TCC)**

**Scope of the Service Level Agreement (SLA)**

This SLA is intended to cover all aspects of the service (the 'Service') provided by Our Contact centre Company Ltd ('OHC') to The Customer's Company Ltd ('TCC') under The Contact centre Support Contract commencing xxx xxx xxx.

'This SLA should be read in conjunction with The Contact centre Support Contract ('The Contract') dated xxx xxx xxx. All Terms and Conditions of the Agreement shall apply to this SLA unless expressly specified to the contrary. In the event of conflict between the Agreement and this SLA, the provisions of the SLA shall prevail.

**Purpose of this SLA**

The purpose of this SLA is to provide information to both parties so that: The levels of Service to be offered by OHC to TCC are quantified

OHC's level of Service in fulfilling The Contract can be measured.

This SLA does not form part of the contractual agreement between OHC and

TCC and may be updated as required to account for changes in the levels of service required. Regular meetings will be held to discuss amendments to this

SLA and no amendments will be binding unless agreed in writing by both

parties.

**SLA Period**

This SLA will remain valid from xxxx until xxxx whereupon it will be automatically renewed unless either party agrees to its termination.

Early termination of this SLA can be effected by mutual written agreement at

any time.

**Location of Equipment and support offered**

OHC will support the hardware and software currently located at TCC's main plant at Little Dumberley, North Eshire in accordance with the attached schedule of *Supported Hardware and Software.*

The Service offered is summarized as follows:

 Management of the 3 PC network servers, their operating systems, attached printers, CD-ROM units tape units and uninterruptible power supplies.

 Management of the 220 PC workstations, applications software and attached printers.

 Management of the PC network cabling systems and associated networking equipment.

**The Service does not include**

 The supply of hardware or software, hardware maintenance, disaster recovery facilities, office equipment and supplies, consumables or user training.

**Service Review**

During the period of the Agreement, service review meetings will be held approximately every two months. The meetings will be held between the OHC **Support Service Manager** (who will chair and document the meeting) and the **OHC Technical Support Manager**. Other representatives from either side may attend, with prior notice, as required.

A meeting agenda will be generated and distributed at least one week before

the Meeting.

**Customer responsibilities**

The customer will endeavor to:

 Provide a schedule of projected work loads for the service to be provided. The schedule should be updated regularly to allow planning for future capacity.

 Give advanced notification of internal changes which could affect the OHC service.

 Give notification of personnel changes affecting contact points.

**Escalation Procedures**

The OHC *Support Service Manager* will be notified immediately when a particular service level has been breached.

**Call Reception**

Calls will be logged into a system which will record who made the call, a problem/enquiry summary, the date and time of call and the priority agreed with user.

The 'OHC Contact centre' will attempt an immediate resolution of the call, but if this is not achieved will allocate a person to take responsibility for resolving the problem/enquiry.

The 'OHC Contact centre' will be responsible for progress chasing the problem/enquiry, feed-back to the caller and closing and recording actions taken on the system.

The 'OHC Contact centre' will be responsible for tracking the problem through to satisfactory completion. If the originator of the Contact centre call is not satisfied with the progress of a call or the response offered, they should first contact the OHC Support Service Manager.

**Service levels**

*Contact centre Service*

Operating hours: 08.30 - 18.00 Monday - Friday excl. bank holidays

Maximum calls logged/month : 800

*Response targets*

Priority A call clearance < 4hrs : >90% Priority B call clearance < 8hrs : >80%

Priority C call clearance < 3 days : >75%

Server availability (06:00 - 18:00): >98%

**Supported Hardware and Software**

*Software*

MicroStart DOS V3.3 to V6.x

MicroStart Curtains V3.x, Curtains 95 and Curtains NS Workstation

WareNet TN network operating system.

*MicroPerfectPro* applications software suite

**All other PC software not listed is unsupported**

*Hardware*

PC Servers

3-off PH Supaserva Pentium 166, 64Mb RAM, 2Gb Disk, 8GB DAT Tape streamer

*Network equipment*

All network infrastructure cabling as installed on xxx xxx xxx and as upgraded to a maximum of 250 points

22-off Baycom 12-port UTP network hubs

**Contact Points**

*OHC*

Contact centre

Office Hours 01234 567 8900

Fax 01234 567 8901

Out of Hours 01234 567 8999

Pager 01111 123 3212

Support Service Manager

Office Hours 01234 567 8989

*TCC*

Technical Support Manager

Office Hours 01999 220 2222 Ext. 3233

**Rebates**

Should OHC meet or exceed the response targets for Priority A and B Call Clearance for 95% or more of calls, measured over each calendar month, then the service fee remains unchanged. However, should the service fall below

95% of the agreed target, then the rebates listed below will be applied to the subsequent contract invoice for each service level breached.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Percentage of target achieved | Rebate |
| 95% - 100.00% | 0% |
| 94% - 94.99% | 3.00% |
| 93% - 93.99% | 4.00% |
| 92% - 92.99% | 5.00% |
| 91% - 91.99% | 6.00% |
| 90% - 90.99% | 7.00% |
| 89% - 89.99% | 8.50% |
| 88% - 88.99% | 10.00% |
| 87% - 87.99% | 12.00% |
| 86% - 86.99% | 13.00% |
| 85% - 85.99% | 15.5% (Max) |

**Signatories**

Signed for and on behalf of OHC

Name: Signature:

Title: Date:

Signed for and on behalf of TCC

Name: Signature:

Title: Date:

References

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