

# Information Pack-Unit 225 Satisfying Customer Requirements



## INTRODUCTION

One of the main reasons why organisations fail at satisfying customer requirements is because theirs and their customers' expectations aren't aligned. It presents a major setback since then you will never meet your consumers' requirements because you never really know them. You can make sure you have realistic expectations by ensuring everyone in the company understands your goals and how to realise them.

Meeting customer expectations plays a major role in experience. The gap between expected and actual value that customers get is key to customer loyalty. It also influences propensity to spend and brand perception.

Creating experiences that generate more value than competitor offerings helps to create unforgettable memories. But, to meet customer expectations, businesses must first understand what their customers expect.

Customer relation(ship) is a special bond created between buyers and a brand as a result of numerous marketing, sales, and customer service processes.

Customer relationship management methods will vary depending on the type of customer and business sector. But total reliance on technology cannot build the most effective relationships. Technology can provide and collate valuable information. But to see results, you must analyse this data, integrate knowledge, and offer good customer service skills.

Organisations today find themselves operating in an environment that is quick changing. The process of analysing the implications of these changes and modifying the way that the organisation reacts to them is known as business strategy.

*'Strategy is the direction and scope of an organisation over the long term, which achieves advantage in a changing environment through its configuration of resources and competences'*

(Johnson et al, 2009)

This information pack will assist you in analysing customer needs and expectations. This in turn will allow you to reflect upon the customer journey and review different ways to collect and interpret customer feedback.

## GUIDANCE

This document is prepared to break the unit material down into bite size chunks. You will see the learning outcomes above treated in their own sections. Therein you will encounter the following structures;

### Purpose

Explains *why* you need to study the current section of material. Quite often learners are put off by material which does not initially seem to be relevant to a topic or profession. Once you understand the importance of new learning or theory you will embrace the concepts more readily.

### Theory

Conveys new material to you in a straightforward fashion. To support the treatments in this section you are strongly advised to follow the given hyperlinks, which may be useful documents or applications on the web.

### Example

The examples/worked examples are presented in a knowledge-building order. Make sure you follow them all through. If you are feeling confident then you might like to treat an example as a question, in which case cover it up and have a go yourself. Many of the examples given resemble assignment questions which will come your way, so follow them through diligently.

### Question

Questions should not be avoided if you are determined to learn. Please do take the time to tackle each of the given questions, in the order in which they are presented. The order is important, as further knowledge and confidence is built upon previous knowledge and confidence. As an Online Learner it is important that the answers to questions are immediately available to you. Contact your Unit Tutor if you need help.

### Challenge

You can really cement your new knowledge by undertaking the challenges. A challenge could be to download software and perform an exercise. An alternative challenge might involve a practical activity or other form of research.

### Video

Videos on the web can be very useful supplements to your distance learning efforts. Wherever an online video(s) will help you then it will be hyperlinked at the appropriate point.

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## The Purpose of Customer Service

Definition of customer service:

All interactions between a customer and a product provider at the time of sale, and thereafter. Customer Service adds value to a product and builds enduring relationship. (business dictionary 2018)



Good customer service will support the organisation in many ways:

- ❖ Checking that the needs of customers have been met
- ❖ Encouraging customer loyalty
- ❖ Developing and maintaining customer relationships
- ❖ Ensuring customers are happy and return
- ❖ Ensuring that customers recommend you to family and friends.

If customer service is good, the affect on your organisation will be positive, customers will become loyal, they will recommend the company to others and return in the future. This can give you a competitive edge over other organisations offering similar services and/or products.

## Types of Customers

We often hear the term “customer,” but who truly is defined as a customer? Simply put, everyone is.

Whether we realize it or not, we all have customers and we’re all somebody else’s customer. Customers can be categorized as both internal and external, and as employees of an organization we actually have both. Each one needs to be treated equally and with the same amount of care and respect.

So, what are the differences between internal and external customers? Internal customers are our co-workers such as the person in the cubicle next to you, your team manager, Human Resources, the sales

representatives who bring in new clients, or even the care taker who cleans the building. External customers are our clients/customers/consumers. These are the people, businesses and organisations outside of the company who buy products from us, give us their business or pay us for the services that we provide. The business of securing external customers drives revenue and is essential to the success and survival of an organisation.

The natural tendency for any company is to pay more attention to and focus on external customers, consequently placing less importance on internal customers. As we know, it is very important to satisfy external customers. Content external customers will remain loyal to the company longer, make repeat purchases, and will refer the company to others. Conversely, an external customer who suffers through a negative experience with the company, such as being treated rudely by an employee, can harm an organisation by discouraging others from using it. With the advent of social media, negative comments and reviews can be devastating to an organisation.

But what happens if part of a negative customer experience was the result of poor internal customer service? What if one of our employees was, for some reason unhappy on any given day and that unhappiness was deflected onto the customer by way of poor service? In my opinion, there is definitely a direct correlation between internal employee happiness and a positive external customer experience. In order to produce happy external customers (those who buy our products and services,) it is important to build good customer satisfaction and rapport with our internal customers. Everyone uses the analogy about how a chain is only as strong as its' weakest link. Well, the same applies here. Having weak links only hurts the organisation.

## What is the customer journey?

Think of the customer journey as a roadmap detailing how a customer becomes aware of your brand, their interactions with your brand—and beyond. Here's the customer journey definition:  
The customer journey is the complete sum of experiences that customers go through when interacting with your company and brand. Instead of looking at just a part of a transaction or experience, the customer journey documents the full experience of being a customer.

