

# 9 QUALITY CUSTOMER CARE

**Prerequisites:**

**Credits: 3**

## Overview

This introductory course is designed to sensitize students to the crucial role that quality customer service plays in the success of organizations. The importance of delivering quality customer service consistently will be emphasized. Strategies and techniques designed to maintain and exceed customer expectations and thereby enhance customer value and build customer loyalty will be examined. The role of the service provider and the importance of attitude and professionalism will also be explored.

## General Objectives

This course is designed to:

- 1 create an appreciation of the importance of quality customer care for the customer (internal and external), organization and staff
- 2 assist in improving quality customer service techniques
- 3 develop attitudes to quality and value in respect of people, management and customer care

## Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the learner will:

- 1 identify the principles of quality customer service
- 1 identify the differences between customers' needs, wants and desires
- 2 explain how attitudes and habits affect service
- 3 demonstrate the art of dealing with difficult customers
- 4 identify what adds value to the customer's experience
- 5 discuss the importance of listening to the customer
- 6 explain the importance of projecting a professional image
- 7 explain the importance of projecting professionalism on the telephone

- 8 discuss the importance of building winning relationships at work through teamwork
- 9 explain the importance of building customer loyalty
- 10 identify best practices in customer service in the region.

## Topics

### 1.0 Principles of Quality Customer Care

#### Objectives

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 1.1 distinguish between traditional customer service and quality customer service
- 1.2 discuss why quality is important
- 1.3 identify the six key elements to quality customer service
- 1.4 explain the meaning of the word "Perception"
- 1.5 identify the major components of good service

#### Content

- Traditional customers service vs quality customer service
- The importance of quality customer service
- Key elements to quality customer service
- Definition of "Perception"

### 2.0 Knowing the Customer

#### Objectives

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 2.1 identify what distinguishes a good service company from a mediocre service company
- 2.2 identify the four (4) types of customers
- 2.3 distinguish between internal and external customers
- 2.4 identify the eight (8) fundamental needs of customers
- 2.5 identify five (5) major factors customers use to "RRATE" service quality
- 2.6 identify the eight (8) components of the customer's "Bill of Rights"

## Content

- Good service company vs. mediocre service company
- Types of customers
- Internal vs. external customers
- Fundamental needs of customers
- Major factors used to RATE service quality
- Customers' "Bill of Rights"

### 3.0 Attitudes and Habits and Their Effects On Service

#### Objectives

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 3.1 define the word "attitude"
- 3.2 define the word "habit"
- 3.3 distinguish between positive and negative attitudes
- 3.4 demonstrate the behaviour patterns associated with a positive disposition
- 3.5 demonstrate the behaviour patterns associated with negative disposition
- 3.6 discuss the advantages of a good attitude to:
  - the service provider
  - the customer
  - the organization
- 3.7 identify the messages that a service provider transmits to customers in face-to-face encounters and over-the-phone interactions
- 3.8 identify the six (6) major reasons why some customers do not go back to do business with an organization.

#### Content

- Definition of "attitude"
- Definition of "habit"
- Positive vs negative attitudes
- Behaviour patterns
- Advantages of a good attitude
- Body language
- Why businesses lose customers

## 4.0 Dealing with Difficult Customers

#### Objectives

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 4.1 identify the four (4) major reasons why customers get upset
- 4.2 identify the four (4) types of difficult customers
- 4.3 discuss the hierarchy of important outcomes from the service encounter
- 4.4 discuss the conceptual framework of service recovery and fallout
- 4.5 identify strategies to address customer dissatisfaction/service recovery and fallout
- 4.6 demonstrate and explain how to successfully handle customer complaints by using the seven-step (7-step) Customer Complaints Resolution Model
- 4.7 distinguish between "listening" and "hearing"
- 4.8 explain why listening to customers is crucial to the delivery of quality customer service
- 4.9 identify the five (5) steps to active listening
- 4.10 identify the strategies for effective listening/active listening

#### Content

- Dissatisfied customers
- Difficult customers
- The service encounter
- Service recovery and fallout
- Strategies addressing customer dissatisfaction, service recovery and fallout
- Handling customer complaints
- Listening vs hearing
- The importance of listening to delivering quality customer service
- What is a good listener
- What makes an active listener
- Strategies for effective and active listening

## 5.0 Customer Value

#### Objectives

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 5.1 define the term "customer value"
- 5.2 identify the factors that will enhance customer value

- 5.3 identify the strategies that a company can employ in order to deliver extraordinary customer responsiveness
- 5.4 identify the eight (8) ways service providers can deliver prompt service
- 5.5 identify the eight (8) “Hows” of delivering quality service
- 5.6 identify the ten (10) components of “The House of Service Quality”
- 5.7 identify the six (6) strategies service providers can use to re-programme themselves for effective customer relations.
- 5.8 identify the eight (8) principles of hospitality

**Content**

- Customer value
- Enhancing customer value
- Delivering extraordinary customer responsiveness
- Ways to deliver prompt customer service
- How to deliver quality service
- “The House of Service Quality”
- Effective customer relations
- Principles of hospitality

**6.0 Projecting a Professional Image**

**Objectives**

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 6.1 define the word ”professionalism”
- 6.2 define the word ”professional”
- 6.3 explain the meaning behind the word PROFESSIONAL
- 6.4 list the eight (8) guidelines to developing professionalism at the workplace
- 6.5 identify the eight (8) ways service providers can deliver prompt service
- 6.6 identify the six (6) strategies service providers can use to re-programme themselves for effective customer relations

**Content**

- Definition of “professionalism”
- Definition of “professional”
- The acronym PROFESSIONAL
- Professionalism at work
- Delivering prompt service

**7.0 Projecting Professionalism on the Telephone and Online**

**Objectives**

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 7.1 explain the importance of projecting professionalism on the phone
- 7.2 explain the importance of positive, service oriented telephone dialogue
- 7.3 effectively use the recognized skills and ideas when interacting with the customers on the phone
- 7.4 explain the basic telephone standards for delivering quality customer service
- 7.5 identify the thirty (30) actions steps for telephone courtesy
- 7.6 explain the importance of professionalism as it relates to online communication

**Content**

- Telephone etiquette
- Positive and service oriented telephone dialogue
- Dealing with customers on the phone
- The role of the telephone in delivering quality customer service
- Steps to telephone courtesy
- Online communication

**8.0 Teamwork**

**Objectives**

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 8.1 define the word “teamwork”
- 8.2 explain the role of teamwork in building relations
- 8.3 identify the advantages of teamwork
- 8.4 describe the disadvantages of poor teamwork
- 8.5 identify the six (6) components of great teamwork
- 8.6 discuss the importance of teamwork in the delivery of customer care

**Content**

- Definition of “teamwork”
- The role of teamwork in building relations

- Advantages and disadvantages of teamwork
- Components of great teamwork
- The importance of teamwork in the delivery of customer care

## 9.0 Building Customer Loyalty

### Objectives

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 9.1 identify the four (4) types of customers
- 9.2 define the term “customer loyalty”
- 9.3 discuss the importance of listening to the customer
- 9.4 discuss the importance of process and procedure (and not just smiles) in delivering quality customer service
- 9.5 explain the impact of “total quality focus” on customer loyalty
- 9.6 explain how proactive approaches to customer contact impact customer loyalty
- 9.7 explain how service guarantees impact customer loyalty

### Content

- Types of customers
- Definition of “customer loyalty”
- Total quality focus
- Proactive approaches to customer contact
- How service guarantees impact customer loyalty

## 10.0 Best Practices in Customer Service – Examples from the Caribbean

### Objectives

Upon completion of the topic the student will be able to:

- 10.1 define the term “best practice”
- 10.2 describe the limitations of the definitions
- 10.3 identify the twenty (20) best practices in customer service throughout the region
- 10.4 describe the advantages and limitations of benchmarking best practices
- 10.5 Customer Indices

### Content

- Definition of “best practice”
- Limitations of “the definition of “best practice”
- “Best practices” in customer services throughout the region
- Advantages and disadvantages of benchmarking “best practices”

### Assessment & Evaluation

The final grade for this course is determined as follows:

- In-class participation (group work) 30%
- Homework Assignment 30%
- Final examination - 40%

### Recommended Text

Quality Customer Care for the Caribbean,  
Dr. Ben Henry

### Resources

Carl Sewell and Paul B Brown, Customers for Life. New York: Doubleday Currency, 1990.

J Griffin, Customer Loyalty: How to Earn It, How to Keep It. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, 1995

B a Gutek, the Dynamics of Service. Reflections on the Changing Nature of Customer/Provider Interactions. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, CA, 1995

William Martin, Quality Customer Service. Crisp Publications, Menlo Park, CA, 1990

Lloyd Finch, Telephone Courtesy and Customer Service, Crisp Publications, Menlo Park, CA, 1990

Guest Service in the Hospitality Industry, 2012, P J Bagdan; published by Wiley

The World of Customer Service, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2011.  
P Gibson; published by Cengage Learning

Customer Service for Hospitality and Tourism, 2013,  
S L Hudson; published by Goodfellow Ltd.

Journal of Retailing

Journal of Marketing

Journal of Marketing Research

Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science

Journal of Consumer Marketing

Service Industries Journal

International Journal of Service Industry  
Management

Journal of Professional Services Marketing

Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration  
Quarterly

International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality  
Management

Irish Marketing Review

Harvard Business Review

Journal of Managerial Issues

Journal of Customer Service

### **Attendance**

Students are encouraged to attend all class sessions, as all information presented may not be covered in the required text. Participation of students is an integral component of the learning process.