

Unit 43: Resolve Customers' Problems

Unit reference number: K/506/2169

QCF level: 3

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 19

Unit summary

This unit gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to deal with customer problems in a convenient, cost effective, and timely manner.

Even when an organisation provides excellent customer service, their customers can experience problems because their expectations are greater than the organisation can satisfy. Listening to customer problems and then delivering good solutions requires a well-planned and organised effort. This unit is important to customer service because many customers judge how good customer service is by the way organisations handle problems. It is worth remembering that poorly handled customer problems can easily turn into customer complaints.

In this unit, you will learn how to deal with customer problems in a way that provides a positive outcome for the customer and the organisation. You will understand the different techniques that can be used for monitoring customer problems and how the resolution of customers' problems cannot only inform improvements to the service the organisation provides but also contributes to customer loyalty and business performance. You will be able to assess the suitability of a range of potential solutions for customers' problems and explain these to customers, including their benefits and drawbacks. You will also be able to negotiate solutions that meet customers' and organisational requirements, whilst adhering to organisational policies and procedures and legal and ethical requirements.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

| Learning outcomes | Assessment criteria |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Understand the monitoring and resolution of customers' problems</p> | <p>1.1 Assess the suitability of a range of techniques for monitoring customer problems</p> <p>1.2 Explain how to use the resolution of customers' problems to improve products and/or services</p> <p>1.3 Explain how the successful resolution of customers' problems contributes to customer loyalty and enhanced business performance</p> <p>1.4 Explain the features of negotiating techniques used to resolve customers' problems</p> |
| <p>2 Be able to deal with customers' problems</p> | <p>2.1 Confirm the nature and cause of customers' problems</p> <p>2.2 Explain when customers' problems should be treated as complaints</p> <p>2.3 Explain the benefits to customers and the organisation of the options available to solve problems</p> <p>2.4 Explain the drawbacks to customers and the organisation of the options available to solve problems</p> <p>2.5 Explain to customers the options for resolving their problems</p> <p>2.6 Agree solutions that meet customers' and organisational requirements within their own levels of authority</p> <p>2.7 Inform colleagues of the nature of problems and actions taken</p> <p>2.8 Evaluate the effectiveness of the resolution of customers' problems</p> <p>2.9 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when dealing with customers' problems</p> |

AC1.1: Assess the suitability of a range of techniques for monitoring customer problems

- *Techniques:* e.g. business process monitoring, sampling customer feedback, monitoring repeat customers, measuring customer satisfaction
- *Customers' problems:* types of problems, e.g. identified by the customer, identified by the organisation, caused by a procedure or systems failure, caused by a lack of resources

AC1.2: Explain how to use the resolution of customers' problems to improve products and/or services

- *Improve products and/or services:* e.g. integrating solutions to customers' problems into product and/or service development; recording and sharing unique solutions to problems; analysing trends based on type of resolution; root cause analysis; analysis of problems and resolutions based on customer 'touch points' and 'moments of truth'

AC1.3: Explain how the successful resolution of customers' problems contributes to customer loyalty and enhanced business performance

- *Contributing to customer loyalty:* e.g. keeping existing customers, selling more to existing customers, reducing customer complaints
- *Enhanced business performance:* market leadership, above industry profits, retaining workforce positive corporate brand, creates possible USP for the organisation

AC1.4: Explain the features of negotiating techniques used to resolve customers' problems

- *Negotiating techniques:* including, using tradable concessions or variables; use of persuasion techniques e.g. storytelling and painting pictures, mirroring; use documents to persuade, illustrate position and establish credibility, e.g. position statements, proposals; gather information about partners, e.g. using open-ended questions, active listening, eye contact, use of silence

Information for tutors

Suggested resources

Books

Adair, J. – *Decision Making and Problem Solving: Creating Success* (2nd Edition), (Kogan Page, 2013) ISBN 9780749466961

Customer Service Training Institute – *Rapid & Efficient Problem Solving* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013) ISBN 9781493553693

Assessment

To pass this unit the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meets the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit Assessment guidance* and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

Unit assessment requirements

This unit must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership, in *Annexe A*. Simulation is not allowed for this unit. All evidence of occupational competence should be generated through performance under workplace conditions; this includes evidence of achievement for knowledge-based learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

The main evidence collection methods for demonstrating achievement of learning outcome 2 are likely to be a combination of direct observation and professional discussion with the learner, supported by a review of relevant work products. The evidence collected can be based on situations where the learner is handling and resolving internal or external customer problems, whether face to face, by email and/or by telephone.

Direct observation is suitable where the learner is dealing with customers problems face-to-face and/or by telephone or communicating verbally with colleagues; this would provide evidence for AC2.1, AC2.5 AC2.6 and AC2.7. The assessor can do the observation unobtrusively using professional discussion to evidence the knowledge underlying the performance being undertaken.

Work products seen during an observed performance or separately from observed performance should be evaluated and commented on by the assessor (e.g. emails, letters and/or records of telephone calls from or to a customer or colleague). These could be an alternative source of evidence for AC2.1, AC2.5, AC2.6 and AC2.7 in the instances where the interactions with customers and colleagues are by email. For example, for AC2.6 letters, emails or diary entries detailing the solution that was agreed with the customer; or emails to colleagues informing them of the customer problems or solutions.

The professional discussion could focus on providing evidence for AC2.2 to AC2.4 as well as providing evidence for the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance. For example, for AC2.6 and AC2.8, the learner could explain the rationale for the agreed solutions to customer problems and the process and criteria used to evaluate the effectiveness of the resolutions to customers problems. The evidence for learning outcome 2 can be further supported by a witness testimony from an appropriate person within the workplace. For example, for AC2.9, confirmation from a line manager that the learner has followed the correct organisational policies when dealing with customers' problems.

Evidence to confirm the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be integrated into the professional discussion for learning outcome 2, therefore providing the learner with the opportunity to link and apply their knowledge to their workplace activities as well as easing the burden of assessment for both the assessor and the learner. There are good opportunities to relate the assessment of the knowledge requirements to the competence activities. For example, for AC1.2 the learner could explain how the solutions to specific customer problems could be used to improve the products and/or services offered by the organisation.

Alternatively, evidence could be provided through the use of a reflective account, where the learner could also address the underpinning knowledge and understanding requirements for learning outcome 2. Learner responses or statements to meet the knowledge requirements must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically across the qualification.