
Overview

This unit sits within the Customer Service Theme of Handling Problems. This Theme covers the behaviours, processes and approaches that are most effective when handling customer service problems.

In any customer service situation a customer who is not satisfied may resort to making a complaint. Complaints may be justified or unjustified but in either case your customer expects you to respond and to offer some resolution or compensation. Complaints require investigation and the different options for their resolution to be considered.

This unit is all about the process of handling complaints.

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Process customer service complaints

Performance criteria

Recognise the signs that a query or problem is about to produce a complaint

You must be able to:

- P1 identify signs that a customer is becoming dissatisfied with the customer service of your organisation
- P2 take action to change the situation so that the query or problem does not result in a complaint
- P3 take actions to change your customer service approach in order to avoid future complaints when a justified complaint has been made

Deal with a complaint effectively

You must be able to:

- P4 ensure that you have a clear understanding of the nature and details of the complaint
- P5 investigate the facts of the complaint in order to establish whether it should be dealt with as a justified complaint or an unjustified complaint
- P6 identify all the possible options for a solution and consider the benefits and drawbacks of each option for your customer and for your organisation
- P7 assess the risks to your organisation of choosing each option
- P8 report the findings of your investigation to your customer and offer your chosen solution
- P9 escalate the complaint by involving more senior members of your organisation or an independent third party if there is sufficient reason to do so
- P10 give feedback to other colleagues involved which will help them avoid future complaints
- P11 keep clear records of the way the complaint has been handled to avoid later misunderstandings

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 how to monitor the level of complaints and identify those that should provoke a special review of the service offer and service delivery
- K2 why dealing with complaints is an inevitable part of delivering customer service
- K3 organisational procedures for dealing with complaints
- K4 how to negotiate a solution with your customer that is acceptable to that customer and to the organisation
- K5 the regulatory definition of a complaint in your sector and the regulatory requirements of how complaints should be handled and reported
- K6 when to escalate a complaint by involving more senior members of the organisation or an independent third party
- K7 the implications of admitting liability for an error made by your organisation
- K8 how to spot and interpret signals that your customer may be considering making a complaint
- K9 techniques for handling conflict
- K10 the importance of dealing with a complaint promptly
- K11 why the offer of compensation or replacement service or products may not always be the best options for resolving a complaint
- K12 how the successful handling of a complaint presents an opportunity to impress a customer who has been dissatisfied

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