

For any business, it is all well and good offering the best products or services but [customer service](#) is what really matters. While it is important to offer the best products or services, without the right level of [customer service](#), you simply aren't going to succeed. Every customer will expect a professional customer service, regardless of whether they are making a [complaint](#) or seeking advice about something you offer. If you miss the mark, then the client is simply going to look elsewhere and that means more business for your competitors.

In this article, we are going to look at the true meaning of good [customer service](#) and what it entails.

What is meant by [customer service](#)?

Every business has to put the customer first and that is because they expect a certain level of service. It goes beyond providing services or products because customer service is incorporated into the whole experience.

As a result, customer service is essentially [dealing with and meeting the needs of the customer](#). If they have an issue, then you have to do everything possible to put it right and if they have a query about a product, then you have to provide them with the answer they want. [Customer service](#) is about delivering a seamless service that leaves them feeling as though they can trust your business and brand, even in times when they are facing a problem.

What is good customer service?

[Good customer service](#) underpins the success of every business. Your goal should be to deliver satisfaction and to do this, customer service is where you need to begin. Every customer should be aware that you are there for them, whatever their [needs might be](#). Whether it's a major complaint or assistance in choosing the right product or service, you have to be able to listen to their needs and then meet their expectations by finding the right solution and taking the right course of action.

There are many elements that form part of [customer service](#) from empathy to sympathy, having the ability to listen and understand their point of view. If you can find the right balance between all of these things and then

deliver them as part of your customer service, your levels of satisfaction will increase.

How do you meet customer service needs?

There is an old saying, “the customer is always right” and this is the approach you should take when dealing with each customer. It doesn't matter whether they are making a complaint or not, you have to meet their needs by providing a solution to their problem. The aim is to make them feel as though you are listening and are willing to rectify or deal with the situation. You should give the impression that they are most important at that moment in time and that you are going to solve their problem.

From good communication to being able to manage the situation and provide options, they all help to deliver a high level of [customer service](#).

What are the needs of customer service?

[Customer service](#) is a complex role and those who operate within this sector of a business will need to understand what is required to meet the needs of the customer. As a result, they will need to understand the following:

Accessibility

It is crucial that the customer can access [customer service](#) when they need it. This means that it should be easy to communicate with customer service when a problem or issue arises. They should not be expected to spend a lot of time finding out how to contact [customer service](#) because all of the relevant details should be easy to find.

Control

[Customer service](#) representatives have to understand how to control the situation. This is a significant skill that is required but it ensures that the client feels as though they are in control when in fact, customer service is also controlling the direction of the situation. Sometimes, [a situation can be allowed to escalate](#) due to a lack of control and that can leave the customer feeling more irate. The aim is to keep calm and listen intently while allowing the customer to explain in detail. Then it is vital that a response is made with the needs of the customer in mind.

Empathy

It is natural for [customer service representatives](#) to sometimes take a neutral approach to how they feel when [dealing with a problem but this is something that has to be avoided](#) when it comes to customer service. Empathy is vital as you have to show the customer that you have the ability to share their feelings and understand why they feel like they do. Whether it's a faulty product or the fact that you no longer have an item in stock, understanding their feelings and responding accordingly can diffuse the situation and help you to come to a mutual arrangement that works for the customer.

Fairness

Fairness is also imperative and you have to make sure that each customer is treated fairly. If you deal with the same situation with two clients but provide two different outcomes, it could become apparent that you have not acted fairly. Customers have the ability to discuss issues online and through other means and if they discover that they have been treated unfairly, then this will work against your business. Therefore, you have to make sure that fairness is a key element of customer service when dealing with issues.

Information

All customer service representatives [must have all of the relevant information](#) ready to access. This means that they should be able to answer any queries as quickly as possible without having to make the customer wait. Information also relates to customer service representatives understanding all of the information that is being relayed to them as this will enable them to take the necessary action in order to find a solution.

Options

The goal of customer service is to find a solution for the problem that the client is experiencing. Therefore, they should have an [understanding of all of the options](#) that they have available to them and what they can offer the customer. The options can range from things such as offering replacements, offering refunds or escalating an issue so it can be handled by a department that has more authority to take further action. By giving the customer options, you are giving them proof that you have actually considered their issue and want to help them find a solution.

Transparency

Transparency is vital when it comes to [customer service](#). This is down to the fact that honesty and transparency helps to provide the customer with information that is meaningful and useful. If dealing with a problem is going to take time then informing them of this will help them to understand that you are doing all that is required to solve their issue. It might even be a case of explaining that you are unable to solve their problem which requires you to provide an alternative solution. All of these elements of customer service have to be delivered transparently.

What are the 3 most important things in [customer service](#)?

[Customer service](#) is a detailed role that has many different elements to it. However, not everyone can become a [customer service](#) representative because it does require a certain number of skills in order to deliver a service correctly.

Professionalism

Acting professional is always a must for any [customer service](#) representative. This is because every customer will want to feel as though they are being dealt with by someone who completely understands what they are doing but it also helps to maintain the image of the business. Even if a problem cannot be solved, if [customer service representatives](#) have acted professionally then it can help to soften the situation and enable the customer to accept the outcome.

Patience

When a problem arises, it is common for customers to become irate but they can all act differently. Some might decide to shout and some might be more persistent in the way that they expect a solution. This is where patience is a skill that is required because customer service representatives have to be able to deal with the situation calmly so that they can take the correct action. When a [customer service representative](#) loses their patience, it can lead to them becoming rude and even taking the wrong action in order to end the confrontation with the customer.

A “people-first” attitude

We have already covered how important it is to make the customer a priority but this is what the customer expects. They want to feel as though they are the most important person in the world and that is something that [customer service](#) has to get right. By ensuring that you recognise their issue or query and ensuring them that you will do all that is necessary to find a solution, it will prove that you are putting their needs first.

What are the 6 qualities of customer service?

To deliver [customer service](#) correctly, then it requires individuals to possess certain qualities. This is down to the fact that this is a unique role that requires [customer service representatives](#) to deal with different people with a range of problems. These qualities will enable them to deal with issues efficiently and professionally while keeping customers calm and assured. They all work together to create a complete service and that is the reason why they are so important.

Communicative

[Communication](#) is key when it comes to delivering [customer service](#). While customers will want to be heard, they also want to hear what action will be taken or what options are going to be taken. Whether this is spoken [communication](#) or written communication, it all has to deliver the right message which is to ensure that customers feel as though you have listened to them. Furthermore, [communicating](#) effectively will ensure that customers understand that you will do everything possible to handle the situation in a way that is favourable to them.

Conscientious

[Customer service](#) is a role that has to be carried out thoroughly because cutting corners or attempting to pass off customers will only lead to further issues. When [customer service representatives are conscientious](#), they will come across as being determined to carry out the role effectively. This will come across as being professional and courteous to customers, helping them to feel calm and in good hands because they will have a certain outcome in mind and will want you to meet their expectations.

Loyal

It takes loyalty and dedication to be a customer service representative. There are many different sides to the role that requires you to be accepting because you will deal with an array of customers. From different temperaments to different personalities and a range of issues, you must be loyal to the role and the customer by ensuring that you deliver the same level of service to all, regardless of how big or small their problem might be.

Patient

A client will do everything possible to get the outcome they want and to do this, they might constantly and persistently attempt to force you into losing your patience. However, being patient is a key element of [customer service](#) because it enables you to [assess the situation](#), listen to the client and find a solution. With patience comes clarity and when you have this kind of mindset, it means that you can deliver [customer service](#) to the highest possible level.

Persuasive

There might be instances where the solution you are offering might not be the solution that the customer was looking for. However, you might also be aware that this is all you can offer and so, you have to be able to [persuade the customer to understand the situation](#) and why this is being offered to them. It might be [persuading them](#) to accept a refund or choose a different product but the aim is to turn it into a positive situation from the perspective of the customer.

Polite

Being polite can help to calm situations and diffuse awkward situations where customers are irate. Furthermore, it also creates a feeling of professionalism and understanding because you are seen to have a clear mind and a willingness to deal with the issue. With politeness, it can go a long way to helping find a solution, even if the solution was not the one they were hoping to have.

Five good customer service examples

Customer service is not just about having the right skills but also about ensuring you take the [right steps to provide a complete service](#). If the customer feels as though they have not been understood then they will have no issue in escalating the situation. As a result, it makes perfect sense to do everything possible to create a perfect experience as this will end up with the customer likely to return again.

Being proactive

There are those issues that you have to deal with regularly that you know what is required to deal with the problem but then there are those that can come out of the blue. However, being proactive can help you to look efficient and caring at the same time. Once a customer has [raised an issue](#) or query, if you can show them that you have already understood their situation and can come back quickly with a solution, then this is going to work in your favour. While each customer will want to have their problem rectified quickly, they don't want to spend too much time dealing with it either. As a result, if you take a proactive approach, this will work in your favour and leave them feeling satisfied with the overall outcome.

Random acts of kindness

Sometimes, [customer service](#) representatives have to go above and beyond to ensure the customer is satisfied. Most situations will have an outcome but once you have listened to the client, you might realise that they have done more than most to seek out a solution. You might also realise that if they leave without a solution then it could lead to further problems. They might report you for a lack of care or they could leave bad reviews online, all of which can have a negative impact on your business. Therefore, you might have to do something differently such as giving them a refund when they weren't expecting or giving them an item for free. All of this helps to prove that you are willing to go the extra mile to help your customers.

Showing transparency

The customer wants to feel as though they are the most important person in the world but they know that businesses are not going to want to roll over instantly and give them what they want. However, if you show transparency then they are going to feel as though you are not attempting

to get a quick solution. Instead, they will understand that you are being upfront and honest about the situation and how you are going to help them achieve the outcome they are looking for. Furthermore, as soon as they recognise that you are being honest, it can help to put them at ease which can make them easier to deal with.

Taking ownership

While the customer has to achieve an outcome that delivers satisfaction, you have to ensure that you take ownership of the situation. If a customer can see that they are in control, then they are going to continue making demands and that can escalate the situation. By showing your authority in a way that is not overpowering but makes your customer feel as though you clearly have an understanding of what you are doing, this is going to help them feel like you will find a solution. You need to avoid a situation where the client can see that you are simply not committed to dealing with the situation as this will cause them to take the matter further.

Turning a negative into a positive

In the majority of instances, when a customer contacts customer service, it is because they have a problem. Now, it might seem like bad news to have a customer that is making a complaint because you might think that this is going to go against the reputation of your business but that is not the case. The reality is that if you turn a bad experience into a good one, it could actually work in your favour. So, if a customer has an issue, they are naturally going to be angry, frustrated and disappointed. Furthermore, they are going to want to know how you are going to deal with the situation but this is where you can change the direction of the outcome by finding a solution. If you can find a solution that they are satisfied with then they are going to feel as though the experience was more of a positive one. As a result, they will actually talk highly about your company and are likely to return.

Five types of customer service

In a traditional sense, [customer service](#) is always considered to be face-to-face but the modern world has opened up the options and made it possible to offer this service across multiple formats. Therefore, the following are five types of customer service that you can offer:

Traditional, brick-and-mortar support

This kind of [customer support is offered on-site](#) and it provides customers with the opportunity to deal with customer support face-to-face. It is a traditional way of providing customer support but it allows you to deal with issues rapidly. However, it can mean that others using your store can see the situation and it could work against you. Despite this, it is also seen as a positive as customers do like to deal with someone directly when it comes to dealing with any problems that they might have.

Email

Since the introduction of the internet and the growth of online retail, more businesses are now offering customer service via email. For many customers, this provides them with convenience and simplicity as they are able to put their concerns down in words. Furthermore, for many, they don't like to complain in person and prefer this option but it also provides businesses with the opportunity to deliver customer service in a unique way. Every conversation has a trail which can be used for future reference but customer service can become conversational without the need for personal feelings or facial expressions to be misunderstood. This is something that can occur when customer service is delivered in person.

Messaging and chat

More websites are now implementing chatbots as a way of beginning the customer service journey for customers. Chatbots will take the initial complaint or query and attempt to deal with a problem but if a solution is not possible then the problem will then be passed to a customer service representative. This is a quick and efficient way to deal with issues while ensuring the conversation can be calm and controlled. It is also a simpler way of reassuring the client that your aim is to find a solution while it also gives customer service the opportunity to explore solutions while the customer waits from the comfort of home. Much like email, it is convenient but can prove to be a lot more effective when delivering satisfaction.

Phone

[Customer service](#) that is delivered by [phone](#) is somewhere in between dealing with customer service in person and dealing with them by some online means. It enables the customer to at least hear the voice of a person which can be reassuring but it also allows conversations to evolve more naturally and that can lead to a solution that satisfies the client. Of course,

there is more of a personal interaction using this method and again, this can mean that customers can become irate but it also works in the other way for the customer service representative. They can adopt a calm tone and can continuously reassure the customer to inform them that it is possible to find a solution.

Self-service

This type of customer support does depend on what you offer as a business. However, this kind of customer service can provide [online support](#) that allows customers to find their own solutions. Along with this, it also enables them to find a solution in their own time and it can prove to be faster in some instances. There is no immediate interaction with your customer support team because they can make use of online discussion forums, FAQs and a knowledge base, all of which can help them to find what they are looking for.