

**Note:** This unit has been taken from the National Occupational Standards developed by the Institute of Customer Service (ICS), the standards-setting body for customer service. The format of the unit is different to that used by the Management Standards Centre (MSC) for the units the MSC has developed.

### UNIT OVERVIEW

Your job involves delivering and organising excellent customer service. However good the service provided, some of your customers will experience problems and you will spot and solve other problems before your customers even know about them.

This unit is all about the part of your job that involves solving immediate customer service problems. It is also about changing systems to avoid repeated customer service problems.

Remember that some customers judge the quality of your customer service by the way that you solve customer service problems.

This unit is all about how you impress customers by sorting out those problems efficiently and effectively.

**NB: This is unit 4 from the Customer Service National Occupational Standards at level 3.**

### ELEMENT 1: SOLVE IMMEDIATE CUSTOMER SERVICE PROBLEMS

You need to show that you:

- 1.1 respond positively to customers' problems according to organisational guidelines;
- 1.2 solve customer problems when it is within your own area of authority;
- 1.3 work with others to solve customers' problems;
- 1.4 keep customers informed of the action being taken;
- 1.5 check with customers that they are satisfied with the action taken;
- 1.6 solve problems within service systems and procedures that might affect customers before they become aware of them;
- 1.7 inform the appropriate authority and colleagues of the steps taken to solve specific problems.

### ELEMENT 2: IDENTIFY REPEATED CUSTOMER SERVICE PROBLEMS AND OPTIONS FOR SOLVING THEM

You need to show that you:

- 2.1 work individually or with colleagues to identify repeated customer service problems;
- 2.2 identify the options for dealing with repeated problems and consider the advantages and disadvantages of each option;
- 2.3 work with others to determine an agreed way forward for solving repeated problems;
- 2.4 select the best option for both your customers and your organisation.

### ELEMENT 3: TAKE ACTION TO AVOID THE REPETITION OF CUSTOMER SERVICE PROBLEMS

You need to show that you:

- 3.1 negotiate with the appropriate authority changes to customer service systems and procedures that will reduce the chance of problems being repeated;
- 3.2 action your agreed solution;
- 3.3 keep your customers informed in a positive and clear manner of steps being taken to solve any service problems;
- 3.4 monitor the solutions you have implemented and make any suitable changes to ensure that no further problems occur;
- 3.5 action changes to customer service systems and procedures brought in by your organisation.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You will have a full appreciation of the legal and organisational responsibilities relevant to your job role. You will need to show in your evidence that you have worked within the rules and regulations of your organisation and have applied high levels of knowledge and understanding when dealing with your customers.

You will also need to show that you are aware of the position of your organisation in the wider context. You will be expected to show that you are aware of:

- a major competitors of your organisation;
- b the effects of legislation on the performance of your organisation;
- c the implications of a change of structure, products or services for your organisation;
- d the implications of other market place activities on your organisation.

In addition you will need to demonstrate that you know and understand:

- 1 what your customers' rights are and how these rights limit what you are able to do for your customer;
- 2 the specific aspects of:
  - health and safety
  - data protection
  - equal opportunities
  - disability discrimination
  - legislation and regulationsthat affect the way the products or services you deal with can be delivered to your customers;

- 3 industry, organisational and professional codes of practice and ethical standards that affect the way the products or services you deal with can be delivered to your customers;
- 4 any contractual agreements that your customers have with your organisation;
- 5 the products or services of your organisation relevant to your customer service role;
- 6 the guidelines laid down by your organisation that limit what you can do within your job;
- 7 the limits of your own authority and when you need to seek agreement with or permission from others;
- 8 any organisational targets relevant to your job, your role in meeting them and the implications for your organisation if those targets are not met;
- 9 how to communicate in a clear, polite, confident way and why this is important.

You will also need to show that you know and understand:

- 10 organisational procedures and systems for dealing with customer service problems;
- 11 how the successful resolution of customer service problems contributes to customer loyalty with the external customer and improved working relationships with the internal customer;
- 12 how to negotiate with and reassure customers while their problems are being solved.

### EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit. You must supply all the evidence for this unit from work you have carried out with your customers in your workplace. Your customers can be internal or external to the organisation or a combination of both.

You must prove that you have monitored and solved customer service problems over a period of time with a range of customers.

Your evidence must include examples of:

- problems which are identified by your customers;
- problems which are identified first by you and/or by your colleagues.

The problems included in your evidence must include examples of:

- a difference between customer expectations and the products or services of your organisation;
- a problem resulting from system or procedure failures;
- a problem resulting from a shortage of resources or human error.

When you note repeated problems you may use a company system or one you have set up.

You must show that you have considered the options for solving problems from your customer and the organisation's point of view.

All options you have considered must be based on the existing products or services offered by your organisation unless specifically agreed by a manager.

They must include examples using:

- formal organisational procedures;
- agreed/authorised exceptions to usual practice.

Your evidence must show that you have applied all the knowledge and understanding requirements when you are solving customer problems.