

## LEVEL 2 CUSTOMER SERVICE

### Teacher/Learner Resource

### Syllabus Topic 2 & 3:

#### Delivering Reliable Service / Communication:

- Recognising how personal factors impact on customer service delivery
- Recognise how personal image is important in terms of customer perception and the organisation's overall image
- Explain how good working relationships with colleagues can affect the delivery of the customer service
- Recognise the different needs and expectations in terms of diverse groups of customers and adapt behaviours accordingly
- Outline and explain the basic key elements of the communication process
- Communication – Process and principles of communicating face-to-face, electronically, over the telephone and in writing.

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### **Recognise how personal factors impact on customer service delivery**

#### Personal presentation:



How you appear to the customer is very important. The type of clothes you wear, whether your hair is clean and tidy, clean shoes etc. will impact on your customer impression of you. If your organisation doesn't provide uniforms make sure your appearance fits in with its dress code. You would not expect to see your doctor wearing overalls and a safety helmet would you? To be a professional you need to look the part – dress smartly and professionally.

#### Attitude and approach:

If the customer thinks you are not interested in serving them or can not be bothered to help them this will give a very bad impression. A positive approach and a willing helpful attitude are very important. Be professional at all times.



#### Body language:



Many people communicate with body language without even realising it. The way you stand, whether you have a smile or a frown on your face, even if you cross your arms or not can all send out a message to the customer. Always have a smile on your face when you greet a customer, look them in the eyes and have a pleasant, friendly tone in your voice. When speaking to customers face-to-face, make sure that your body language is consistent with what you are saying to avoid sending mixed messages to customers.

#### Interpersonal skills:

This simply means how well you get on with people. Can you build a friendly relationship with them - do they like talking to you. Do you listen or do you control the conversation. Are you relaxed or tense with them? If customers can relate to you then they will more likely be interested in the products or services you are presenting to them.



## **Recognise how personal image is important in terms of customer perception and the organisation's overall image:**

As a customer service professional it is very likely that you will be the first person belonging to the organisation that a customer meets. The impression and perceptions the customer has of you will have a big effect on how they perceive the organisation as well.



A smartly dressed professional with a friendly and helpful attitude, who gives great service to the customer, will create the impression that this is how the organisation operates. On the other hand an untidy, rude assistant who has no interest in helping the customer will create the same bad image for the company. Remember "The Moments of Truth".

## **Explain how good working relationships with colleagues can affect the delivery of the customer service:**

In many organisations it will need several people to provide their input to deliver reliable service to the customer. Look at the example below of a customer being served with a meal in a restaurant.



The manager orders the stock (food)



The chef cooks the stock (food)



The waiter serves the cooked food



The customer gets their meal

If any member of this service team does not do their job properly:

- manager forgets to order the food
- the chef does not cook it properly
- the waiter is surly and rude

do you think the customer is likely to get good service and be happy?

This shows that in many service operations there is an "internal" customer as well - another member of the staff whose job might depend on how well you do yours - because what you do, might be the starting point for what they have to do. To work well as a team, each member must know their own role as well as the roles of other members.

## **Recognise the different needs and expectations in terms of diverse groups of customers and adapt behaviours accordingly:**

Organisations have different types of customers, each having their different needs, aspirations and expectations. Diversity relates to every aspect of human culture, outlook and experience – gender, race, culture, religion, age, disability, etc. Diversity recognises that each of us is different and unique and as such everyone cannot be treated the same way. Customer service professionals must respect these differences and act accordingly. You should try to recognise these differences by looking for signs of diversity, such as dress, appearance, accent, behaviour etc. Use your questioning and active listening skills to find out more about the specific needs of your customers and adapt your behaviours accordingly. For example, if you are speaking to a customer that is not a native speaker of your language, then you might need to speak very slowly and clearly and use simpler words than you would normally. However, be careful to make sure that your questions are

tactful and respectful and try to avoid stereotyping your customers; not everyone from the same country observes the customs of that country.

**COMMUNICATION: Outline and explain the basic key elements of the communication Process**

The simple model of communication says there has to be A SENDER, A MESSAGE and A RECEIVER.



This is very simple though, as there are other things that have to be considered such as:

- The message - what is it you want to communicate?
- The format you are going to put the message in:
  - spoken words
  - in writing
  - in pictures
  - using signs, symbols or gestures



This is called **ENCODING**.



- How will you transmit the message to the receiver:
  - face to face
  - by telephone
  - by a written note or letter
  - by fax machine
  - by an advertisement in a paper, magazine or on radio or television
  - by a leaflet or a poster?

This is called **THE MEDIA** (the method used to communicate).

- The person receiving the message has to be able to receive it and understand it:
  - in a common language
  - words they know and understand



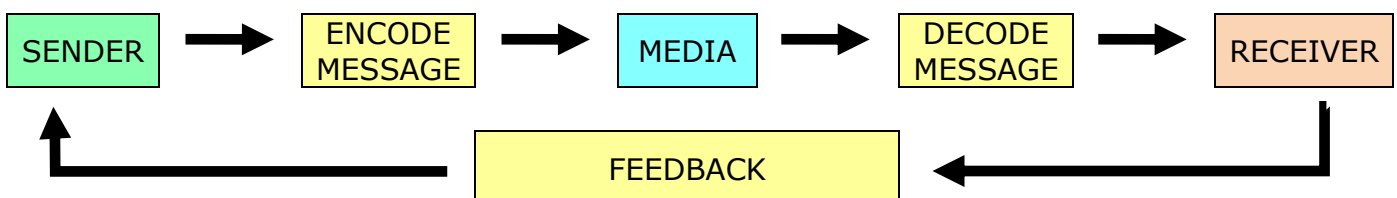
This is called **DECODING**.



- And a very important part of the communication process is called **FEEDBACK**. This may be in the form of:
  - a message sent back
  - an action
  - a look or a gesture.

Feedback tells the sender if the message has been received and understood.

Now we have all the parts needed for the communication model we can draw a more complete diagram.



**Identify the recognised principles of communicating face to face, electronically, by telephone and in writing.**

Communication is a two way process and so the method of communication must be suitable for you and the customer. The table below give guidelines on how to best use the different communication methods.

<b>Face-to-Face</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Letters</b>
<p>Dress professionally and in line with the dress code.</p> <p>Acknowledge and greet the customer politely. Use the organisational procedures if any exist.</p> <p>Smile – be positive and helpful. Let the customer feel important and valued.</p> <p>Be aware of your body language – don't fidget or look bored.</p> <p>Make sure you have the relevant knowledge (products/services, procedures, people etc)</p> <p>Be attentive – listen and ask questions where appropriate, speaking clearly.</p> <p>Empathise with the customer, if necessary, but still be assertive.</p> <p>If the customer gets angry or difficult – don't argue or get defensive – be calm and professional.</p>	<p>Prepare to take or make calls – have everything ready before</p> <p>Use the organisation's greeting procedures. If there are no procedures, greet the customer with <i>'Good morning/afternoon, company or department or your name'</i> in a positive and friendly tone.</p> <p>Listen carefully and ask questions to find out what the customer wants. Find out their name to make the call personal.</p> <p>Acknowledge what they said to show you understood.</p> <p>If the customer has a problem, empathise – let them know you understand.</p> <p>Give direction to the call – be decisive and agree with the customer what next – ensure they understand</p> <p>Don't pass customer onto anyone else unless you have to.</p> <p>If you have to put them on hold ask if they don't mind holding – upon return apologise for the wait.</p> <p>Summarise the call and follow-up, if necessary.</p>	<p>Use a business-like style and tone – be friendly yet professional</p> <p>Ensure accuracy of email – use a spell check and visual proof-reading. Don't use jargons, company or text messaging abbreviations.</p> <p>Use an email 'signature block' at the end of your emails to provide contact information. Use the organisation's house style if one exists.</p> <p>If you mention an attachment in your email, ensure that you attach it before sending.</p> <p>Don't use email if talking to a customer would be a better option.</p> <p>Try not to use email to sort out problems.</p>	<p>Use your organisation's house style, if one exists. If none exists, use an accepted standard business letter layout and style. Don't mix different layouts and styles.</p> <p>Make sure the language and tone is business-like and matches with the organisation's mission and image.</p> <p>Check for spelling and grammar errors – ask someone else to check if you are not sure.</p>