

Unit Title:	Use customer service as a competitive tool
Unit number	A14
Level:	3
Credit value:	8
Guided learning hours:	53

Unit purpose and aim

Customer service contributes to an organisation's competitive position. Customers of many organisations have choice about the services or products they use and who supplies them. Often the technical features and cost of the service or product are almost identical. If this is the case, the quality of the customer service offered makes all the difference about which supplier the customer chooses. This unit is about how the learner can play their part in ensuring that their organisation makes the best possible use of the competitive advantage that can be gained from offering superior customer service. It covers how the learner can use customer service as a tool to compete effectively with other providers of similar services and products. The unit is not for a learner whose organisation does not compete actively with others.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	Knowledge, understanding and skills
The Learner will: 1 Organise customer service to gain a competitive advantage	The Learner can: 1.1 Develop their own and colleagues' understanding of the services and products offered by their organisation 1.2 Define their organisation's service offer and the ways in which it compares with those of their competitors 1.3 Set an example for colleagues and present an image to their customers that reinforces their organisation's service offer 1.4 Encourage customer service actions that create and develop customer loyalty	Candidates must have a detailed understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The services/products offered by their organisation• The service offer compared to competitors• How to set a good example to colleagues to include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Presenting a good image- Developing customer loyalty

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	Knowledge, understanding and skills
<p>2 Deliver a competitive service</p>	<p>2.1 Take positive actions and encourage colleagues to take actions that provide individual customers with added value within their organisation's service offer</p> <p>2.2 Remind customers about their service offer and the extra benefit it provides over those of their competitors</p> <p>2.3 Offer additional technical advice to customers within their organisation's service offer</p> <p>2.4 Show awareness of the financial implications of any added value actions that they or their colleagues might offer</p> <p>2.5 Meet customer service targets to ensure that customers see the benefit of dealing with them rather than with a competitor</p> <p>2.6 Re-direct customers to other service providers without offence when their expectations cannot be met by the organisation's service offer</p> <p>2.7 Ensure that customers who have shown a previous interest in repeat and additional services are reminded of this</p> <p>2.8 Encourage colleagues to offer complementary services and products when customer satisfaction indicates that customers would be interested in them</p>	<p>Candidates must have a detailed understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to encourage others to provide added value • How to promote the service office and benefits it provides • The financial implications of offering added value • How to achieve targets • When and how to re-direct customers to other providers to meet their needs • How to encourage colleagues to offer complimentary services and products
<p>3 Understand how to use customer service as a competitive tool</p>	<p>3.1 Identify the factors that lead to customers' belief that they are enjoying value for money</p> <p>3.2 Describe the services and products offered by their organisation</p>	<p>Candidates must have a detailed understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators from customers that they have received added value • The services/products offered by their organisation

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	Knowledge, understanding and skills
	3.3 Describe the services and products offered by competitors 3.4 Identify the features and benefits of services and products that are seen by customers as added value 3.5 Explain the purpose of adding non-chargeable items to the service offer in order to impress customers and develop customer loyalty 3.6 Explain how to portray a positive image that reinforces their organisation's competitive position 3.7 Explain their organisation's customer service targets and cost implications of added value actions to improve the organisation's competitive position 3.8 Describe complementary services and products that may be of interest to their customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The features and benefits of the services/products provided by their organisation • The importance of developing customer loyalty to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adding non-chargeable items to the service offer - Creating a positive image - Complimentary services/products • Customer service targets and costs implications associated with added value

Assessment

This qualification is internally assessed by centre staff and externally verified by OCR Assessors.

Evidence requirements

1. Your evidence should be collected when carrying out a real job, whether paid or voluntary, and when dealing with real customers, whether internal or external to the organisation. Evidence collected in a realistic working environment or a work placement is not permissible for this Unit. Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this Unit.
2. You may collect the evidence for the Unit through work in a private sector organisation, a not-for-profit organisation or a public services organisation.
3. You must provide evidence that shows you have done this over a sufficient period of time with different customers on different occasions for your assessor to be confident that you are competent.
4. You must provide examples of when the benefits of using customer service as a competitive tool enjoyed by customers are:
 - a tangible in that they can be measured
 - b intangible in that they are represented solely by feelings and perceptions of the customer experience.

5. Your evidence must include examples of competitive analysis involving:
 - a direct competitors
 - b competitors offering substitute services or products.
6. Your evidence must include examples of when you have used customer service actions as a competitive tool to attract or maintain:
 - a loyal customers
 - b customers returning from competitors
 - c new customers.

Guidance on assessment and evidence requirements

Please refer to the OCR Customer Service Centre Handbook available from the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk

National Occupational Standards (NOS) mapping/signposting

This unit maps fully to competences outlined in the Customer Service 2010 (Institute of Customer Service) suite of National Occupational Standards.

Additional information

For further information regarding administration for this qualification, please refer to the OCR document '*Admin Guide: Vocational Qualifications*' (A850) on the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk