

11

Customer focus – organizations

This self-assessment is designed to help you discover the degree to which your organization is customer-oriented.

It is best undertaken by people from different parts of an organization in order to compare perceptions.

Organizational customer focus self-assessment

Read the following statements and circle a score according to how strongly you agree or disagree.

Choose from the following scores where:

- 1 = Agree strongly
- 2 = Agree
- 3 = Disagree
- 4 = Disagree strongly.

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ● The most important aspect of our business is satisfying customers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● Everybody has a customer – be it inside the organization or outside | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● We have 'heroes' who champion the customer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● Our organization is not bureaucratic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● Customers say we're special | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● Most of our people provide a high quality of service | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● Customer service is a key corporate objective | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● You have to talk the language of the customer to fit into this organization | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● We recruit people whose attitude is oriented towards the customer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● People work together as a team to serve the customer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● Most of the stories which circulate seem to feature customers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● Customer care is evident at Head Office as well as at the front-line | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● Our leaders demonstrate their enthusiasm for the customer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● We are constantly finding new ways to satisfy our customers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● We regard people for going out of their way for the customer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ● We encourage our customers to tell us if things are not right | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- We're always taking steps to implement new ideas to help the customer 1 2 3 4
- Our systems and processes work smoothly 1 2 3 4
- My manager sets a positive example in serving the customer 1 2 3 4
- We talk about the customer in largely positive terms 1 2 3 4
- I have been given training in knowledge, attitudes and skills which help us satisfy the customer 1 2 3 4
- My personal objectives revolve around customer satisfaction 1 2 3 4
- We have a clear understanding of the needs of our customers 1 2 3 4
- Everyone is encouraged to ask for and act on feedback from customers 1 2 3 4
- I refer to my customers by name 1 2 3 4
- The focus of our business is on retaining existing customers as well as attracting new ones 1 2 3 4
- Staff induction includes the importance of customer service 1 2 3 4
- Senior managers spend time with customers 1 2 3 4
- I am empowered to take decisions to help the customer 1 2 3 4
- When a customer comes to me with a problem I take ownership of it through to resolution 1 2 3 4

Now total your scores



The statements included in the self-assessment have been developed from research about what makes excellent customer-focused organizations.

Customer-focused organisations

- Demonstrate commitment to the customer from senior management down
- Employ managers whose behaviours set a positive example of customer care
- Actively listen to their customers and act on their feedback
- Recruit customer-oriented individuals and provide induction to them in customer service
- Train and develop their people in customer-oriented attitudes, skills and knowledge
- Empower their employees
- Encourage problem ownership
- Constantly measure customer satisfaction

- Recognize and reward excellent service
- Encourage continuous improvement
- Focus on customer retention as well as attracting new customers

How to interpret your score

- 60 or under Your organization is customer-focused. Compare your scores with others. Study the areas in the survey where you score high agreement. Discuss those areas where you have indicated there are blockages to providing excellent customer service.
- 61 or over Your organization can do much more to provide excellent customer service. Note the areas where you have scored poorly. Compare your scores with other people in your organization. Agree a plan of action to address barriers to becoming a customer-focused organization.

RECOMMENDED READING

Cook, Sarah (1997) *Customer Care*, Kogan Page, London