

HOW GOOD ARE YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS?

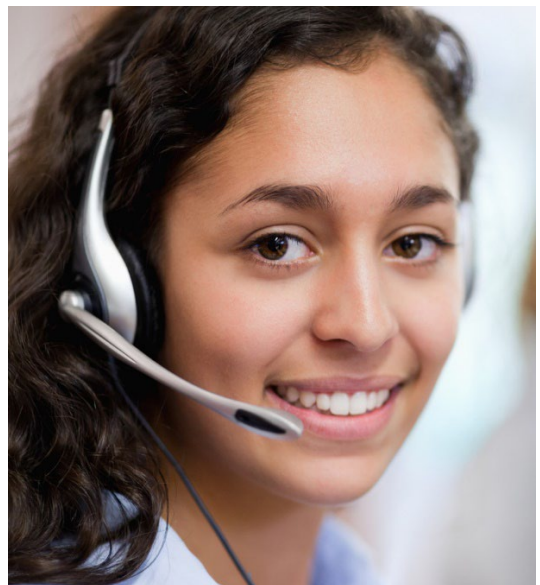
Good customer service means satisfying your customers during your interactions with them. Satisfied customers can become loyal customers and come back for more.

Customer service is also about sending customers away happy enough to pass on positive feedback about your business to others, who in turn may try your products or services and, if they too are satisfied, may become loyal, returning customers themselves.

To be good at customer service, there are 10 important skills you need to have. These skills are outlined below. Rate yourself against each skill. Be as honest as you can. This will help you get a clearer picture of your strengths and help you become more aware of where your skill gaps are — that is, the skills you need to practice more.

Rating Scale

1. I am terrible at this skill. I need to work hard on improving at this skill.
2. I am not great at this skill. I am shy and a bit anxious with strangers. I need more practice to build up my confidence.
3. I am OK at this skill. It depends on how I am feeling and how my day is going.
4. I am pretty good with this skill. Depends on how difficult or demanding the customer is.
5. I have great skills in this area.



Customer Service Definitions

A **product** is what you sell (e.g. A mobile phone, a fridge, shoes, etc.)

A **service** is doing work for someone (e.g. Giving a haircut, fixing a fence, selling clothes, making coffee, waitressing, etc.)

1. Being patient

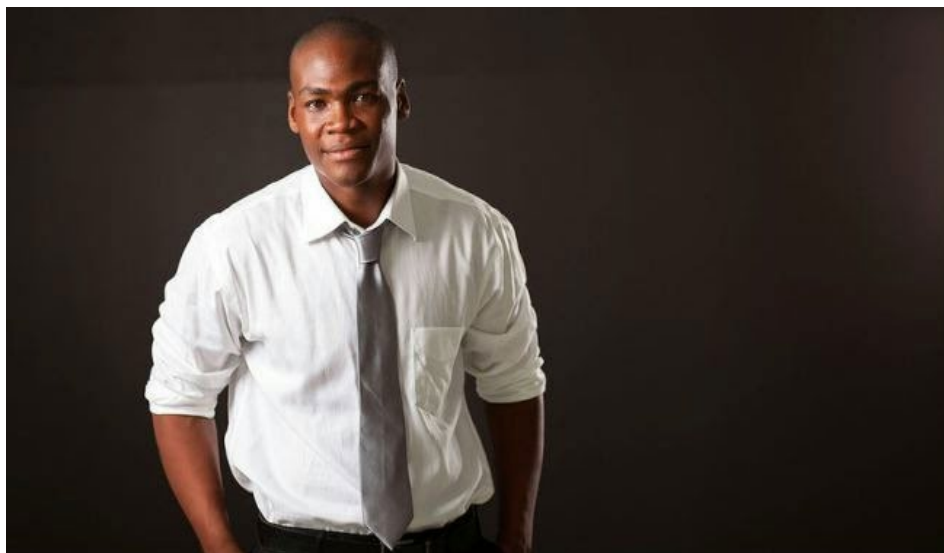
- Taking time to carefully listen to a customer's request or problem.
- Being patient if/when the customer is unclear about exactly what they want.
- Being aware that the customer may be feeling frustrated, angry or anxious (e.g. An elderly person wanting to purchase a mobile phone).

Your Rating:

2. Being astute (having smarts)

- Working out what a customer is asking for and what they need to have happen for them to feel they've gotten a good service. This will be different for different customers.
- For example, if you're working at the AA Service Centre and you're organising car services for customers, one might care most about when they can book their car in, while another might care most about the quality of the service your shop provides. A third might care most about the cost.

Your Rating:



3. Being attentive (paying attention)

- Focusing on the customer and not getting side-tracked with what else is going on (e.g. not getting distracted by a text from your friend).

Your Rating:

4. Having clear, positive communication

- Clearly explaining your company's product or service in a friendly, helpful way e.g. Explaining how a power drill works, setting up an appointment for a beauty treatment or organising for a lawn to be mowed).

Your Rating:



5. Knowing the product or service

- Having a willingness to learn as much as you can about the product(s) you sell or service(s) your business provides (e.g. Being able to talk about different paints for different jobs or what a customer can expect if they get their chimney cleaned or lawn mower serviced).

Your Rating:

6. Managing your time

- Being able to judge how much time to spend on each customer or job.
- Balancing the time spent listening to and helping one customer and the time other customers spend waiting.
- Balancing the demands of working efficiently (because time is money in business) and getting good customer feedback (which can make or break a business).

Your Rating:

7. Keeping your cool

- Staying calm even when a customer is angry or frustrated.
- Understanding that the customer's anger is related to the product or service and not you (so you shouldn't take it personally).
- Taking feedback, if a customer *is* upset with you, without reacting and saying sorry if needed.
- For example, you're an Uber Eats driver and you've got a customer who's angry about how long it took for you to deliver their meal. It was your mistake because you got lost on the way. Apologising can go a long way toward making the customer happier.

Your Rating:



8. Multitasking

- Juggling multiple tasks at the same time, like talking to a customer when the phone rings. You'd need to ask the customer to wait, answer the phone, ask that person to hold, then go back to the first customer and finish your interaction with them before speaking to the person on the phone.

Your Rating:



9. Being persuasive

- Being able to convince someone it's a good idea to buy the product you're selling or service you're providing.
- Convincing someone to upgrade to a better, more expensive product that won't break down or fall apart as quickly as a cheaper one (e.g. Convincing an elderly couple to invest in a heat pump because it will improve their quality of life over their old fire place and save them money in the long run.)

Your Rating:

10. Having tenacity (having grit / not giving up)

- Not giving up even when you've had a rough day.
- Being friendly and helpful right up to the end of the day even when you haven't made any sells or have just had complaints all day.

Your Rating:



Scoring and next steps

For those of you who have scored mostly 4s and 5s, great work! Just remember that we can always work on doing things better. Get lots of feedback from people you work with and trust so that you can always be improving.

For everyone else, you'll need to look at ways to build your confidence and skills. Being aware is always the first step. The second is deciding that you would like to improve. The third is getting lots of practice. Talk to your whānau, your teacher, a youth worker or other person who is a mentor in your life and work out a plan that will help you build these skills. You don't need to be at work to build these skills. You can practice them anywhere. Choose a different one each week and make a start!