

Managing Customer Experience In Your Organisation

About This Guide

In this brief guide we've provided an overview of how to manage customer experience. We've included a definition of customer experience and explained how customer experience can be split into three components.

This guide doesn't go into specific detail about how to improve the experience of your customers, because each business and organisation is different. Instead, the guide includes ideas that could help you manage customer experience within your organisation.

We can help you implement the ideas contained in this guide through consultancy support and training and development activities for your people.

Use of the Guide

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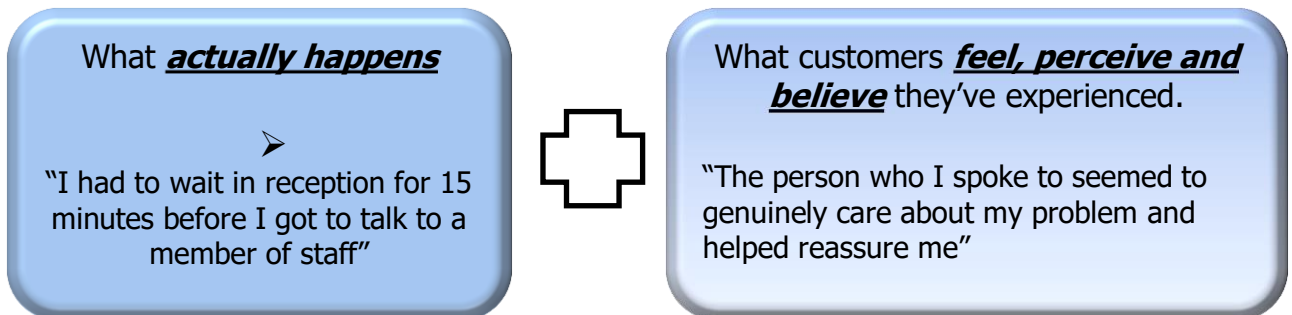
A definition of Customer Experience

We use the following definition of Customer Experience:

"A combination of *all* the interactions a customer has with a supplier including brief single *transactions and long-term relationships...* seen from the customer's perspective.

An organisation creates an experience every time it interacts with its customers. The aim is to make sure that each customer experience is a **positive** experience.

The word 'Experience' has two meanings. Customer Experience relates to both the 'real' experience of customers – what **actually happened** and also to the 'perceived' experience – what customers **feel and believe** they've experienced.



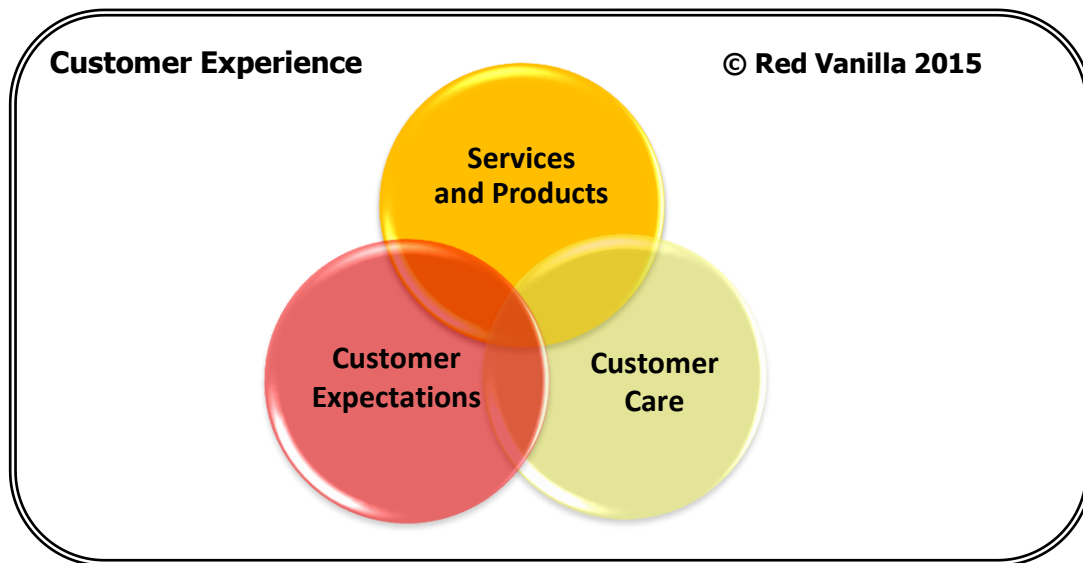
Customer experience therefore has two aspects:

- What a customer experiences
- What a customer **feels** about their experiences

Every time someone from your organisation interacts with an external or internal customer they are contributing to the Customer Experience.

The Three Components of Customer Experience:

A customer's experience is made up of three components:



Services and Products:

The quality, quantity, speed, price and accuracy etc of the service or product being delivered.

Customer Care:

The way in which an organisation and its employees deliver the services or product i.e. professionally, friendly, caring, attentive, personalised etc.

Customer Expectations:

The expectations that the customer has about customer service and customer care. Customer Expectations can be exceeded, met or not met. Customer Expectations can also be ***managed***.

Your customers won't distinguish between the three components but breaking down customer experience into its separate constituent parts can help you answer questions such as:

- Which of the three components of customer experience do we most need to improve and develop?
- Do we deliver good service and products but these are let down by poor customer care?
- Does good customer care mask poor services and products?

The People

The table and diagram below show the roles different groups of employees within a very large organisation can play in creating and implementing a customer experience strategy. Small businesses will have much flatter structures.

The inverted pyramid reflects the fact that the role of the senior management is to set strategy and also to support staff to implement the strategy.

Group	Role
CEO	Supports and approves the Customer Experience Strategy
A Customer Experience Strategy Team	Senior members of the organisation create and drive the Customer Experience strategy
Departmental Managers	Implement the strategy in their areas of responsibility
Customer Champions	Promote a customer focussed culture and provide ideas/feedback to the Customer Experience Strategy Team
Team Leaders	Implement the strategy within their teams
Customer Facing Staff	Implement the strategy



The Strategy

The diagram below shows the 6 components we feel organisations need to consider when managing Customer Experience.

We have shown the 6 components grouped around a Business Plan. We recommend that any Customer Experience strategy should be included within a business plan or at least be clearly linked to a business plan.

Six Components of Customer Experience Strategy



Business Plan and Customer Experience Strategy

1. Your customer experience strategy should be part of and appear in your organisation's business plan.
2. Delivering an excellent customer experience should be linked to achieving key business plan objectives.
3. Managers and employees should be able to see clearly how your customer experience strategy is linked to your business plan and that is not just a stand-alone initiative.
4. Your customer experience strategy should relate to internal as well as external customers.

Engage Employees and Managers

1. Consider how you can engage employees and managers at the earliest possible opportunity in the creation and implementation of a customer experience strategy.
2. Involve employees in setting their own customer related targets.
3. Engage employees with the concept of receiving feedback about their performance in delivering a positive customer experience
4. Ask employees what customer feedback you should collect.
5. Consider using the engagement tools here: <http://www.engageforsuccess.org/>



Collect Customer Feedback

1. Actively seek feedback from your customers, encourage teams to seek feedback from internal customers too.
2. Use questionnaires, mystery shopping, consumer panels, focus groups, on-line surveys, project review meetings, telephone calls etc to actively seek feedback.
3. Communicate to managers and employees both positive and negative feedback received from customer.
4. Encourage managers to use customer feedback to help manage the performance of employees
5. Use customer feedback to help set customer targets and measures.
6. Use the customer journey to identify where it's most important to seek and receive feedback
7. Consider using the **Net Promoter Score** for collecting feedback and for benchmarking your performance against industry performance.
www.netpromoter.com/why-net-promoter/know/

Set Customer Experience Targets and Measures

1. You should set SMART targets and measures relating to customer experience/customer satisfaction.
2. If you don't have already have measures in place you should start by establishing base-line measurements around customer experience.
3. Where possible, involve managers and employees in setting their own customer experience targets.
4. Include customer experience targets and measures as part of your organisation's business plan.
5. You may want to use the Net Promoter Score as your benchmark target or other industry standard customer experience targets relating to your sector
6. Report progress towards achieving your targets using simple and clear communication channels.

Include Customer Experience in Performance Management




1. Use your current performance management processes e.g. appraisals and individual performance reviews etc to address employee performance issues relating to customer experience.
2. Set customer experience targets as part of individual appraisals/ performance reviews.
3. Use performance management processes to address poor performance relating to customers.

Consider Customer Focused Training

1. Consider arranging customer focused training to help communicate the importance of customers to the achievement of the organisation's business plan.
2. Use training to share customer feedback and the introduction of customer standards.
3. Use customer care training if needed to improve the customer- skills of front-line staff.
4. Give managers training in how to manage the customer experience.

7. Consider Customer Standards

1. Set and communicate to customers the standards of customer experience you wish them to have (sometimes called a customer charter).
2. Set and communicate to employees the standards of customer experience they should deliver.
3. Consider using external, national customer standards such as those shown in the table below.
4. Managers can use national customer standards to help manage the performance of employees

National Standards	
<p>The three standards can all be downloaded from the web and used for free as a tool to help you benchmark and improve customer experience within your organisation.</p> <p>In addition, you can choose to seek accreditation for the Customer First and Customer Service Excellence Standards.</p>	
	<p>Customer First Standard</p> <p>www.customerfirst.org</p>
	<p>Customer Service Excellence Standard</p> <p>www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com/</p>
	<p>National Occupational Standards for Customer Services</p> <p>www.skillscfa.org/standards-qualifications/customer-service.html</p> <p>The link below opens a 2 Mb file 296 page PDF containing a vast range of individual performance standards for employers to choose to use</p> <p>http://www.skillscfa.org/images/pdfs/National%20Occupational%20Standards/Customer%20Service/2010/Customer%20Service.pdf</p>

Other ideas

Customer Journey Mapping

Customer journey mapping means identifying and analysing customers' interaction with and experience of your organisation – from the customer's perspective. Mapping and understanding your customers' journeys can help you identify how to improve customer experience.

- There is no one, single way of carrying out customer journey mapping.
- Customer journey mapping ranges from a simple, quick qualitative processes written on a piece of paper to a highly detailed, quantitative piece of analysis in the form of a system diagram or a large report.
- Either approach can help organisations improve customer experience.

Moments of Truth.

Moments of truth are those interactions that are especially important to customers and create a relatively high emotional response in customers. Research by the consultancy firm McKinsey found that there was a correlation between '**emotionally charged**' moments of truth and the purchasing decisions of customers.

Improve Customer Ease/ Reduce Customer Effort

How easy are you to buy from or to do business with? Do you seek feedback from your customers about how much effort they had to make to use your services? Are you keeping up with the competition in terms of customer effort? Are you maximising the use of technology to improve customer ease or reduce customer effort? Do you have complicated processes that make it difficult to select the right products, place orders, complete installation, and obtain service? Have you mapped your customers' journeys to analyse customer effort?

Introducing Red Vanilla

Red Vanilla is a Sheffield based Learning and Development consultancy established in 2003. Red Vanilla is led by Jon Colman (pictured right).



We have three specialisms

Leadership and management development

We're an ILM Approved Centre and offer ILM Qualifications.

Improving customer experience

We provide approved consultancy support for the Customer First national standard.

Helping people get better at working together

We are one of only four UK consultants licensed to use a psychometric tool based on geometric shapes.

Red Vanilla training and development programmes are fun and enjoyable, quick paced and invariably inspire people to put into practice what they've learnt.

Contact Us

Red Vanilla, 85 Rustlings Road, Sheffield, S11 7AB

Tel	0114 268 4085
Mobile	07977 127 050
Fax	0870 705 1152

jon.colman@redvanilla.co.uk

Registered Office: 85 Rustlings Road, Sheffield, S11 7AB,
Company 4682066 VAT Number 845253523

Some of Our Customer Experience Work

Please visit www.redvanilla.co.uk/universities.html to read about our student experience work.

2012- 2016

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals 
NHS Foundation Trust

We're delivering Patient Experience workshops to clinical and non-clinical directorates across this 15,000 employee NHS Trust to further enhance the Trust's performance across a range of patient experience measures.



2008 – 2009: Our Here to Help programme saw 600 Council employees attend a three-workshop Customer Experience programme over 12 months. This programme led to measurable improvements in customer satisfaction results.

2008 – 2010:

Barnsley Hospital 
NHS Foundation Trust

Your Choice...Their Choice
YOUR CHOICE...THEIR CHOICE

The title "Your Choice....Their Choice" reflected the Government's NHS Choices agenda. This comprehensive training programme included a facilitated workshop for staff and an open learning workbook, both centred around a specially commissioned 15 minute training video based on a real example of customer care within the hospital.



Finalist – Customer Service Training Professional of the Year 2011

Jon Colman was a finalist in the Customer Service Training (CST) Professional of the Year (General Category) at the CST Awards 2011.