

Unit 212 Exceed Customer Expectations

Customer Expectations



Simply put, if the level of **customer** service matches the level of **customer expectations** then you will have a **satisfied** customer. It is important to understand how expectations are formed so that you can anticipate what customers are looking for. If you want to compete effectively in the market, you need to **exceed** these expectations so that the customer will become loyal to your organisation.

Customers' expectations are formed by:

- **What they hear and see**
For example, recommendations from friends who have used the organisation, the menu on the window of a restaurant
- **What they read and what the organisation tells them**
For example, advertising, publications, websites
- **What happens during the customer experience**
For example, they have to wait a long time for a table in a restaurant
- **What has happened to them in other customer service experiences.**
For example, a previous visit to another branch or a meal at a similar restaurant

Adding Value



If you want to exceed customer expectations, you need to make the customer feel that they are getting something a bit 'extra' when they receive products or services.

This will help to create the relationship you need to keep your customers.

This may include:

- **Going the 'extra mile'**, which means doing something a little more than the basic service offer.
For example, decorating a table for a customer's birthday, offering them coffee while they are waiting at reception.
- **Offering free products or services**
For example, a guarantee on a product they have purchased, a free glass of wine with their meal.
- **Offering rewards**
For example, a loyalty card where they can collect points and claim free products, a monthly draw with prizes for the winner.

- **Asking for feedback and ideas** from your customer to make them feel you appreciate their input.

For example, talking to them after their experience, asking them to join a customer forum.

Expectations and Needs



It is important to understand the difference between **expectations** and **needs** when delivering customer service. In this way, you can create a service offer which meets their basic requirements but also offers more.

Expectations

These are the things the customer **thinks** they are going to receive when they use your organisation. Because these are pre-formed, they could be positive or negative.



Positive expectations

For example, the expectations are positive they have had a great experience before in your restaurant and expect this again.

This means that you have a standard to live up to in order to meet or exceed these expectations.

Negative expectations



For example, they have had a bad experience in a similar organisation or have read negative press about you in reviews or news stories.

This means that you have to change their perception of your organisation and turn it into a positive one.

Needs

These are the things that have made the customer choose to use your organisation because they want something.

These could be:

- A specific product or service e.g. a Thai meal, a book, an insurance policy.
- A feature of a product or service e.g. delivery of an item within 24 hours.
- A situation they are in e.g. medical treatment because they are sick, they are hungry.
- They need to solve a problem e.g. they need to replace a broken item.

A need can be something they must have or something they desire.

Promoting Added Value



To make the most of your 'added value offer' it is important that you tell the customer that they are receiving it. This will help them to appreciate what they are being offered and give the customer a good impression of your organisation.

You can promote added value by:

- Telling the customer face to face what you are offering.
- Including the offer in your promotional material.
- Providing comparisons of the basic offer and the added value offer.
- Providing comparisons between what you offer and what your competitors are offering.

Recording Agreements

When you are offering 'extras' above the normal service offer it may be necessary to record any agreement made with the customer. This ensures they are clear about what they are getting.



For example:

- Showing a discount or free item on the bill they receive.
- Including details of free or discounted items on an order form, invoice or contract.
- Including details in any correspondence such as emails or letters.