Level 3

BTEC Diploma

Travel and Tourism

Unit 4

Customer Service in Travel and Tourism

Code:

Aim and purpose

This unit enables learners to gain understanding of how excellent customer service contributes to the success of travel and tourism organisations. You will develop knowledge and skills to provide customer service and achieve sales in travel and tourism situations.

Unit introduction

Customer service is of vital importance to all organisations in the travel and tourism sector. Excellent customer service results in a high level of satisfaction and encourages customers to return and to recommend the organisation to others. Many organisations in the travel and tourism sector offer the same or similar products and services, and it is often the quality of the customer service which distinguishes one from another. Travel and tourism organisations realise that consistently high standards of customer service will ensure customer loyalty and improve business performance. This unit introduces you to the principles of customer service as they apply to travel and tourism.

The skills needed by an employee of a travel and tourism organisation are developed in this unit. Aspects such as personal presentation, teamwork and communication skills are all exceptionally important to the provision of excellent service. Travel and tourism organisations are in the business of providing information and selling products and services, and you will have the opportunity to develop and demonstrate these skills with customers in real or simulated situations across different industries within the sector. Meeting the specific needs of different customer types will be dealt with to ensure that you appreciate the importance of treating customers as individuals. The knowledge that you gain from this unit will help to prepare you for offering excellent customer service within any travel and tourism organisation.

Learning outcomes

**On completion of this unit you should:**

1 Understand the importance of providing excellent customer service in travel and tourism organisations

2 Know how travel and tourism organisations adapt customer service to meet the individual needs of customers

3 Know the customer service skills required to meet customer needs in travel and tourism contexts

4 Be able to apply customer service and selling skills in travel and tourism situations.

**Assignment 1 – Aiming for excellence**

**P1** explain the importance of providing excellent customer service in travel and tourism

Organisations

**P2** describe customer service provision in travel and tourism organisations to meet the individual needs of different types of customers

**M1** assess how customer service provision meets specific customer needs in travel and tourism organisations

**D1** make recommendations for how a travel and tourism organisation can improve its customer service provision to meet specific customer needs

Issue date:

Deadline:

**Assignment 2 – Delivering excellence**

**P3** describe the customer service skills required to meet customer needs in travel and tourism contexts

**P4** demonstrate customer service skills in travel and tourism situations

**M2** deal independently with customers in travel and tourism situations

**D2** demonstrate good product knowledge, customer service and selling skills to provide a consistently high standard of customer service in different

**P5** demonstrate selling skills in a situations travel and tourism situation

**M3** demonstrate effective selling skills in a travel and tourism situation.

Issue date:

Deadline:

**Assignment 1 – Aiming for Excellence**

**P1**

You are working as a trainee for a Travel and Tourism watch dog and have been asked to conduct an investigation into the importance of excellent customer service provision in two different Travel and Tourism organisations – Thorpe Park and Virgin Atlantic. The investigations should be as a result of visits to the two organisations.

You are to create a report containing the following sections:

Customer service:

* First impressions
* Company image e.g. logo, premises, organisational efficiency
* Speed and accuracy of service
* Consistency
* Products and services offered
* Meeting customer needs
* Offering information and advice
* Dealing with complaints
* Dealing with problems
* Meeting and exceeding customer expectations

Importance to the organisation:

* Keeping existing customers satisfied
* Increasing customers’ loyalty
* Ensuring repeat business
* Enhancing an organisation’s image
* Providing an edge over the competition
* Increasing sales and usage by attracting new customers
* The consequences of poor customer service for the customer, the staff and the organisation

Importance to the customer:

* Meeting individual customer needs
* Exceeding customers’ expectations
* Safe and secure environment for internal and external customers

Importance to the employee:

* A happier working environment
* Job satisfaction
* Job security
* Higher self-esteem
* Possibility of promotion

Student guidance

You must include an explanation of the importance of excellent customer service to the organisations, to the customer and to the employee. You should explain the importance of excellent customer service, covering all items listed above.

**P2**

Your manager is impressed with your report and would like you to carry out some further investigations on how customer service is adapted to meet the individual needs of different types of customers. Your findings should be put into a report.

You should include the following information:

How two organisations adapt products and services to meet the needs of different types of customer, forexample:

* Individuals e.g. leisure, business
* Groups

Individual needs:

* Products and services
* Stated
* Unstated
* Special needs e.g. medical conditions, mobility
* Customers with cultural and language needs
* Other needs e.g. relating to age, gender, socio-economic group, family circumstances

Student guidance

P2 progresses from P1 and you must describe customer service provision, and how it is adapted to meet the individual needs of different types of customers, including internal customers, individuals and groups.

The description must be supported by sector specific examples, e.g. Virgin Atlantic customers include business travellers and wealthy leisure travellers in upper class and premium economy. Less wealthy leisure travellers are served by an economy cabin. Differentiation of the products and services for the different classes should be included, saying how these meet the needs of the different types of customers.

**M1**

Your manager would also like you to show, by adding to your report, that you are able to assess the customer service provided by Thorpe Park and Virgin Atlantic, showing how they meet the specific needs of different types of customers including:

* Families
* Solo business travellers
* Groups

Student guidance

You will need to ***assess*** the customer service provided by Virgin Atlantic and Thorpe Park, making a clear link to how it meets the specific needs of different types of customers. This will require some judgement on the effectiveness of the provision.

**D1**

The final part of your report should contain ways in which you think Virgin Atlantic could improve to meet specific customer needs.

Student guidance

You need to recommend ways in which Virgin Atlantic could better meet its specific customer needs. Examples of improvements could be in the form of changes to products, new procedures to improve speed and efficiency of service or to enhance company image.

**Assignment 2 – Delivering excellence**

As part of your training you have been asked to deliver training workshops to other organisations in the travel and tourism industry.

**P3**

Prior to workshops you always send out an information pack describing the skills required to meet the needs of customers in travel and tourism contexts, including the following information based on your experience at the restaurant:

Communication skills:

Face to face

Telephone e.g. call centre

Building rapport

Effective listening

Questioning

Developing a dialogue

Non-verbal communication e.g. body language, eye contact

Written communication

Presentation:

Of self e.g. hygiene, dress, personality, appearance

Of working environment

Teamwork:

Motivation

Team roles

Delegation of tasks

Lines of authority

Benefits of teamwork to colleagues, customers and the organisation

Business skills:

Completion of documentation e.g. tickets, forms

Use of IT e.g. email, computerised reservations system (CRS), internet

Business standards e.g. accuracy, legibility, business conventions

Complaint handling:

Listening

Questioning

Empathising

Understanding the problem

Taking control of the situation

Agreeing solutions

Follow up

**Selling skills**

Building rapport

Establishing customer needs and expectations

Product knowledge

Features and benefits

Overcoming objections

Closing the sale

Student guidance

You must give relevant examples from the ‘Brilliant’ restuarant to support your explanation.

**P4**

**Task 1**

As part of your information pack you should include an exemplar copy of a letter in response to a complaint.

You must inlcude the following information:

* Show that you have listened to the complaint
* Further questioning
* Empathising
* Understanding the problem
* Taking control of the situation
* Agreeing solutions
* Follow up

**Task 2**

You will now demonstrate excellent customer service skills in a two role play scenarios.

You will need to demonstrate the following skills:

Customer service:

Providing information and advice

Providing assistance

Scenario 1 - Face to face

You are working in a travel agents and have to deal with a customer who requires information.

You will also be issed with a complex requests relating to your scenario.

Scenario 2 – Over the telephone

You are working on the reception desk of a Hotel when you receive a call requesting information.

You also have to complete a booking form.

The assessment for the part of the unit requires dialogue to be developed between the learner and the customer and there is a need to use listening and questioning skills.

**M2**

Effective application of customer service skills in all situations will contribute to the achievement of M2.

**P5**

You are working at a travel agents when a customer comes in wanting to book a honeymoon. You will be required to take part in a diagloge containing the following information:

* Building rapport
* Establishing customer needs and expectations
* Product knowledge
* Features and benefits
* Overcoming objections
* Closing the sale

**M3**

Independent and effective application of selling skills in P4 will contribute to the achievement of M3. You must demonstrate effective selling skills and show good product knowledge to highlight relevant features and benefits, and bring the sale to an effective close, overcoming objections.

**D2**

You will have provided a consistently high standard of customer service in different situations. When making a sale you will have demonstrated strong selling skills and excellent product knowledge to bring about a successful sale of suitable products and services to meet customer needs and expectations.

When dealing with a complaint, you will have shown the ability to take control of the situation and used complaint handling skills to effect a satisfactory outcome.

You will have demonstrated knowledge of products or procedures when dealing with an enquiry, providing information etc. You will have communicated appropriately and demonstrated the full range of customer service skills across the evidence as a whole.