



Volunteering S.A. Inc.

Customer Service



Government of South Australia
Office for Volunteers

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Objectives

Today we will learn how to

- Communicate effectively with customers
- Create a positive impression
- Develop and maintain customer service standards
- Plan good customer service

Who are Customers?

Definition of a customer

Internal/external customers

Customers are people who need your assistance.
They are not an interruption to your job, they are
the reason you have a job..

Explain that there are external and internal customers: People who phone,
People who walk-in, People who write

People from within your organisation, People from other organisations, Media,
Students

Communicating Effectively with Customers

Definition:

What describes GOOD service and BAD service?

Good customer service is taking that extra step to help without being asked! It's all about attitude and skills.

10 minutes- With the person next to you, talk about when you've had good service and when you've had bad service. Make a list of aspects of each.

Attitude Checklist

What attitudes assist in providing good service?

- Enjoy helping people
- Handle people well
- Care for your customers
- Give fair and equal treatment to all
- Be understanding of people with special needs

Mention we'll talk about special needs later.

Skills for Customer Service

- Know about your organisation
- Learn the technical parts of the job
- Communicate well
- Be consistent
- Be organised
- Know your place in the team and be a team player

Emphasize the importance of training, duty statements, orientation, policy and procedures manuals

What do Customers Want?

Brainstorm what it is that a customer wants when they enter your organisations

Discuss and share with the group

From the activity 'good/bad' service, identify the kinds of things customers want.

Greeting Customers

The purpose is to create and maintain a welcoming environment - how can we achieve this?

- Be attentive, acknowledge a person as soon as they appear, even if you're busy
- SMILE!
- Establish eye contact
- Tell them your name
- Ask how you can help
- Give the customer your full attention
- Be polite and courteous.....

Make notes on GOOD GREETING BEHAVIOUR

Establishing Rapport

What does good rapport feel like?

Practice greeting someone

- Make the customer feel comfortable
- Make the customer feel important and valued
- Use empathy

Role play

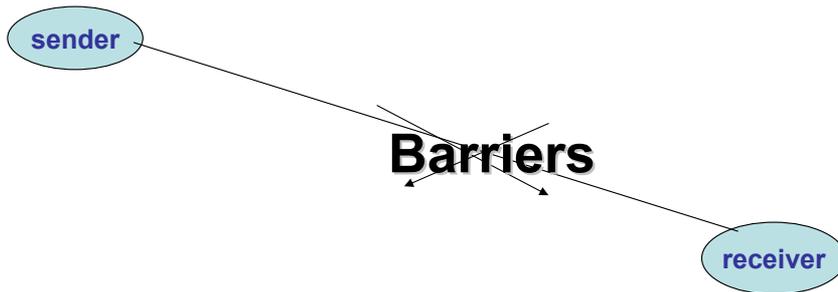
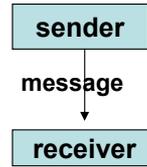
Find out how You can Help

- How can you find out what people want?
- If you can't help, what should you do?
- Offer alternatives if possible
- If they have to wait, how would you handle it?

Communication is a 2-way Process

Communication skills involve:

- Listening to others (Receiving)
- Asserting/ Expressing (Sending)



These 4 slides present theoretical ideas in graphic form. They have been used in other workshops (Effective Communication and Frail Aged) and can be glossed over quickly if people are familiar with the concepts and how they impact on practice in the workplace.

The Communication Equation

What you hear

- ◇ Tone of voice
- ◇ Vocal clarity
- ◇ Verbal expressiveness

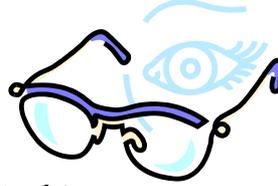
40% of the message



What you see or feel

- ◇ Facial expression
- ◇ Dress and grooming
- ◇ Posture/ Body Language
- ◇ Eye contact
- ◇ Touch
- ◇ Gesture

50% of the message

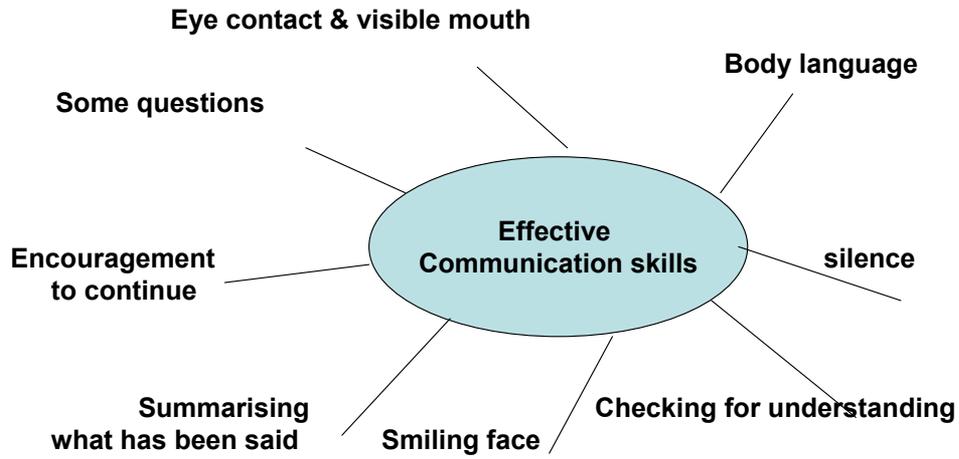


WORDS.....

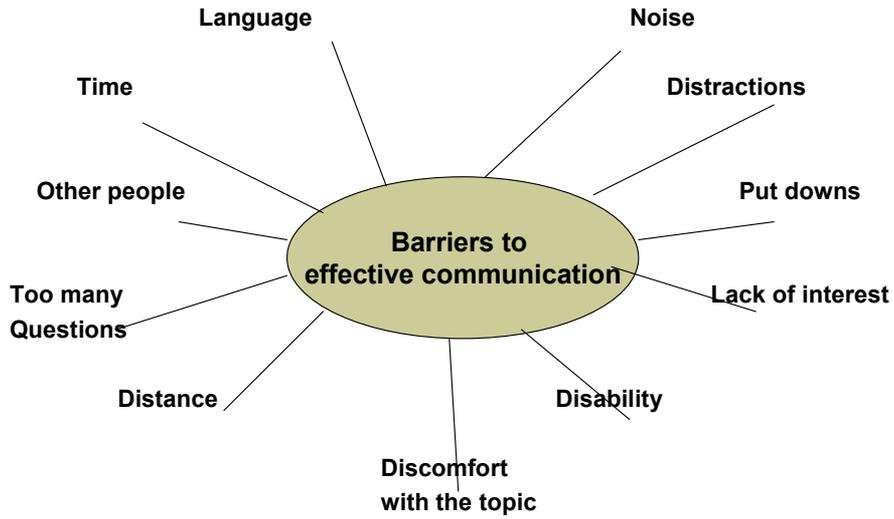
ONLY 10% of the message!



Effective Communication Skills



Barriers to Effective Communication



How to Listen to Customers

Active listening = Attending skills (being ready)

- Attend to immediate needs (if you need to finish something before giving your full attention)
- Being available
- Eye contact
- Attentive posture
- Concentration

Following Skills

This opens the door to further communication

- Invitations
- Questions
- Encouragement
- Empathetic Silence

Questioning Skills

- Open Questions
- Closed Questions
- Paraphrasing
- Check for Understanding



Activity to practise questioning based on “Simple questions” sheet and “Paraphrasing” sheet. Notes to be written in workbook by participants.

Reflective Skills

Keeps the door open for further communication

- Paraphrasing
- Reflecting Facts
- Reflecting Feelings
- Reflecting Silence
- Summarising
- Choosing your Words
- Useful Phrases

Using Your Voice

Do you

- Become loud when angry or upset
- Speak faster when nervous
- Speak slowly when tired or bored
- Have a cheerful voice
- My tone of voice is warm and understanding
- Find it easy to talk to people you don't know
- Control your tone in most situations
- Sound bossy, weak or unsure
- Have a clear and easy-to-hear voice
- Speak in a very formal or very trendy manner?

Think about how you might modify your voice in certain situations

Let people read through the list and think about how they use their voice in different situations.

Go around the room and make sure each person gets a chance to have a go. Ask a participant to say "Jonathon your tea is getting cold"; "Kim I need your help." "Maxine there are three items missing from this set". Each person must say it in a different way to the person before.

Body Language for a Positive Result

Brainstorm some examples of good body language

- Smile
- Introduce yourself (if appropriate) or wear a name badge
- Shake hands if appropriate
- Lean forward
- Be aware of cultural differences

Ask group for examples of cultural differences.

Telephone Skills

- Know how to use the phones
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Smile (you can hear it in your voice!)
- State your name and organisation
- Write down the caller's name and use it
- Don't say rude things while someone's on hold
- If they're explaining something use words to show you're listening (umm, yes ...)
- Have pad and pencil ready to take notes or messages (check spelling and message content)
- Don't eat or drink while on the phone

Written Communication

- Write clearly and concisely
- Refer to their letter, date and query
- Be friendly without being too informal (*Dear Aunt* writing style)
- Check your spelling and grammar
- Make sure you've answered their query or request or explained why you can't
- Be timely or apologise for any delay in replying

Dear Aunt letters – don't write in an officious way. Write as you would to an aunt.

Guaranteeing Return Business

- Leave a positive impression, smile
- Check customers have everything they need
- If you've said you'll follow-up, do so
- Tell them something that may be useful to them later (eg new service starting soon)
- Invite them back
- Say goodbye

What makes you go back to a place?

A Positive Organisational Image

First impressions count and will affect the interaction. People make judgements in the first 30 seconds.

Golden Rule – You only have one chance to make a first impression!

Organisational Assessment - Activity

- Take a look at your organisation through the eyes of a customer.
- What are the first things you notice?
- What has the organisation done to make you feel welcome?
- Does anything make you feel uncomfortable?
- How could you feel more at ease?

Form small groups and discuss different methods used to help people feel welcome.

One person from each group to present back.

Allow around 10 minutes for group discussion and 5 minutes to report back

Presentation and Manner

Does your Organisation have a policy on presentation?

- Uniforms, badges, etc
- Personal hygiene
- Clothing – appropriate to the situation
- Hair – cleanliness and style
- Accessories – jewellery, earrings, watches, tattoos,
- Expression – facial expressions
- Tone of voice
- Body language
- Surroundings (Can they see a messy desk? Dead flowers in the vase? Eating your lunch?...)

A Positive First Impression

- Be confident
- Knowledge - know your organisation and the services you provide
- Confidentiality
- Follow up (don't just say you'll do something, do it)
- Strengthen the customer's commitment to your organisation

What to Avoid

- Saying 'I don't know' without offering an option
- Saying you don't know where a colleague is or saying they're at lunch/ toilet/ gone for coffee etc
- Leaving people on hold for a long time
- Ignoring people if you're busy
- Treating people unequally

How else can you say "I don't know?" "I'll find out for you", "I'll need to check on that and get back to you", "I'll have to look that up, when is a good time for me to call you back?"

Service Standards

How can you contribute to the development and maintenance of service standards in your volunteering organisation?

- Read and understand your organisation's policies and procedures on customer service
- Be prompt and efficient
- Ensure services are delivered in accordance with legislative or statutory requirements
- Maintain accurate records
- Ensure any special needs of customers are taken into account

Factors Affecting the Quality of Service

- Reliability
- Confidence
- Responsiveness
- Efficiency
- Consistency
- Organisation
- Acceptance of and adherence to policies and procedures

Customers with Special Needs

- People for whom English is not their first language
- People with disabilities
- People from other areas who may not be familiar with the way things are done here
- People with limited mobility
- Unaccompanied children

Discuss techniques for dealing with these situations ... visually impaired, hearing impaired, wheelchairs, translators etc. Don't make assumptions.

Planning Good Customer Service

- Recording procedures (when are your busy times)
- Reporting procedures (meeting organisational/ funding/ legislative requirements)
- Observe and report customer needs
- Be proactive in improving service
- Market your organisation
- Have processes and procedures for dealing with difficult situations BEFORE they happen and make sure staff are trained.

Dealing with Difficult Behaviour

- Label the behaviour, not the customer
- Listen
- Don't get defensive
- Don't take it personally
- Find out what the customer wants
- Discuss alternatives
- Take responsibility for what you CAN do
- Agree on action

The Talkative Customer

- Ask closed questions
- Limit the time available for them to interrupt (don't have long pauses)
- Provide minimal response
- Smile and be pleasant, but don't encourage them
- Wind up – thank them for coming, walk them to the door but don't be rude or dismissive

The Angry Customer

- Listen carefully without interrupting so you understand the problem
- Empathise in a broad way
- Stay calm and remain polite
- Don't escalate the problem
- Don't take it personally, be defensive or blame others
- Propose an action plan and follow it
- Seek support if you are scared, if you can't agree on a solution or if the customer asks to see "whoever's in charge"

The 'know it all' Customer

- Acknowledge what they say
- Compliment them on their research
- Be generous with praise
- Don't put them in their place no matter how tempting
- Don't try to be smart – you can't win!
- Ask them questions and use them to improve your knowledge

The Indecisive Customer

- Find out what they really want
- Ask them for the options
- Reflect back to them what they've said
- Assume control gently and point out the best course of action from what they've told you they need
- Be logical
- Confirm a plan of action with them
- Maybe even put it in writing

The Suspicious Customer

- Establish your credibility
- Ensure you know your product or service
- They will try and catch you out so don't guess or tell them something you're not sure of
- Be careful what you say
- Be polite
- Don't take it personally, they don't trust anyone!

Role Play

In pairs, one person takes on the role of a customer and one is the volunteer

- Use your own scenario if you have one
- Swap after 5 minutes

If people don't have a scenario they have experienced assign them one. Make up something that is relevant to their volunteer work.

Example 1. You have bought a toaster and it's broken after only one week and you're very angry about products not being made to last anymore. You want the salesperson to do something immediately. She is offering you a replacement and you want a refund.

Example 2. An older person has come in to see a colleague who is out. He is upset because his family hasn't visited for weeks and wants to tell you all about it. You have other people waiting and the phone is ringing.

Example 3. You have been visiting an older person in his home and his daughter has turned up and accused you of stealing the silver teaspoons.

Workshop Objectives

Our Objectives were to learn how to

- ✓ Communicate effectively with customers
- ✓ Create a positive impression
- ✓ Develop and maintain customer service standards
- ✓ Plan good customer service

Evaluation

**Please complete an evaluation form and leave
it with the trainer before you leave
😊 THANK YOU 😊**



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TIME: 5 minutes (TOTAL ELAPSED TIME 2HR 50 MINS)

ACTIVITY: Evaluation Sheet

HANDOUT: N/A

Contacts for the future include organisations that have engaged well with young people. Networking can begin. Look to orgs like the Red Cross, or local councils. On a more formal level enrol in more training