
Overview

What is this unit about?

1. This standard is about managing and developing business relationships at a strategic level with major clients, or key accounts. This is sometimes referred to as relationship marketing/ selling, and involves developing a two-way partnership with those clients selected for their current and/or potential importance to your organisation.
2. It is recognised that such relationships often involve a team of experienced individuals with responsibility for retaining and developing a profitable business relationship with the client.

Who is this unit for?

3. This standard is recommended for experienced and often senior marketing and/or sales managers with responsibility for developing strategic relationships with selected key clients.

Performance criteria

Outcomes of effective performance

You must be able to:

- P1 Identify the client(s) which fulfil your organisation's criteria to be classed as a major, or key account and which therefore warrant the investment required to develop an effective strategic relationship with them
- P2 Develop an in-depth understanding of the major client's business and their corporate business and marketing strategy
- P3 Develop an understanding of the current and future strategic and operational business challenges faced by the major client
- P4 Identify and agree prioritised common business objectives between your organisation and the client, which are consistent with both organisations' financial objectives and business strategies
- P5 Assess with the client strategic options towards achieving the common business objectives which involve mutual working
- P6 Work in partnership with the major client to develop a plan and actions towards addressing the identified challenges and common objectives
- P7 Identify the key areas of business expertise required in your team to work with the major client
- P8 Identify appropriate individuals for the team, ensuring that they have the relevant expertise, commitment, attitudes and competences to add value and to build effective business relations with the major client
- P9 Ensure the effective coordination and input from relevant business functions in your organisation towards developing the strategic relationship with the major client
- P10 Ensure that the team acts as a focus for all transactions with the major client
- P11 Create value in influencing the client's business direction
- P12 Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of your activities in developing the strategic relationship with the major client, including the return upon the investment being made

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- P13 Address any concerns regarding the outcomes promptly and correctly in line with your organisation's aims and business objectives
- P14 Ensure effective succession planning towards maintaining an ongoing relationship with the major client, with contingencies should particular individuals no longer be able to work with the client
- P15 Balance the needs and expectations of key stakeholders and win their support

Knowledge and understanding

General knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 The importance of major clients, and the importance of agreeing criteria which justify a client receiving particular investment towards its retention and development
- K2 The importance of long and medium-term planning to the success of strategic relationships with major clients
- K3 The principles of strategic management and business planning
- K4 The topics to be addressed within a strategic business plan with a major client
- K5 The importance of corporate social responsibility and how to reflect this within the strategy for working with a major client
- K6 How to develop strategic objectives
- K7 How to identify potential risks in relation to the achievement of objectives
- K8 How to delegate responsibility and allocate resources to support joint working with a major client
- K9 How to identify and meet the information needs of colleagues both within your organisation and within the major client
- K10 What information it is appropriate to provide to colleagues, including those working for the major client, and the factors that need to be taken into consideration
- K11 The importance of taking account, and being seen to take account, the views of key internal and external colleagues, particularly in relation to their priorities and business objectives
- K12 How to recognise and take account of political issues when dealing with internal and external colleagues
- K13 How to manage the expectations of internal and external colleagues
- K14 How to monitor and review the effectiveness of the business relationship with the major client(s)
- K15 How to identify conflicts of interest with internal and external colleagues

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and the techniques that can be used to manage or remove them

- K16 How to develop measures and methods for monitoring and evaluating the relationship with the major client, including the return upon the investment being made

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K17 Legal, regulatory and ethical requirements in your organisation's sector and that of your major client
- K18 Market developments in your organisation's sector and that of your major client
- K19 Standards of behaviour and performance in your industry or sector, and that of your major client
- K20 The culture of your industry or sector, and that of your major client
- K21 Developments, issues and concerns of importance to stakeholders in your industry or sector and that of your major client

Context specific knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K22 The vision, values, objectives, plans, structure and culture of your organisation
- K23 The market in which your organisation operates, and that of your major client
- K24 Your organisation's actual and potential customer base
- K25 The needs and expectations of your organisation's actual and potential customers
- K26 Your organisation's actual and potential competitors and partners, and the key features of their strategies and plans
- K27 New and available market opportunities
- K28 Your organisation's ability to respond to market opportunities
- K29 Relevant internal and external colleagues, their work roles and responsibilities
- K30 Identified stakeholders, their background and interest in the activities and performance of your organisation
- K31 The identified information needs of internal and external colleagues and

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stakeholders

- K32 Mechanisms for consulting with internal and external colleagues on key decisions and activities
- K33 Your organisation's planning and decision-making processes, and that of the major client
- K34 Power, influence and politics within your organisation, and that of the major client

Additional Information

Behaviours

1. You present information clearly, concisely, accurately and in ways that promote understanding
2. You show respect for the views and actions of others
3. You seek to understand people's needs and motivations
4. You reflect regularly on your own and other's experiences, and use these to inform future action
5. You take personal responsibility for making things happen
6. You consider the impact of your own actions on others
7. You create a sense of common purpose
8. You work towards win-win solutions
9. You show sensitivity to internal and external politics that impact on your area of work
10. You keep promises and honour commitments
11. You work to develop an atmosphere of professionalism and mutual support

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