

## Overview

This standard is part of the customer service competence area related to Customer Service Delivery. It covers delivering customer service to challenging customers. It includes customer service behaviours and processes that have most impact on the customer experience during Customer Service Delivery. Remember that customers include everyone to whom you provide products and services. They may be external to your organisation or they may be internal customers.

Many organisations have a significant proportion of customers who are challenging to deal with. Your customer's attitude may be challenging because they believe that a threat or problem exists before they have contacted your organisation. During your interaction with them, they may become worried or angry when they discover that their expectations are not going to be met by your organisation. They may be concerned or nervous about the outcome of dealing with your organisation. In either case, they are challenging to deal with and need your understanding. You deal directly with these customers and try to reach a resolution that satisfies everybody or at least reduces the risk of dissatisfaction. You follow the rules set by your organisation about what you can and cannot do for customers.

This standard is for customer service professionals who deliver customer service to challenging customers.

## Performance criteria

### *You must be able to:*

1. recognise types of challenging customer behaviours
2. identify aspects of your organisation's services or products that may provoke challenging behaviours
3. identify signals that indicate customers may be challenging to deal with
4. consider the situation from your customer points of view
5. identify reasons why your customers may be behaving in a challenging way
6. recognise the limits of challenging customer behaviour that your organisation will tolerate
7. identify triggers that could provoke challenging responses from customers
8. listen to what customers tell you
9. use questions to identify customer feelings and experiences
10. analyse what might satisfy customers with challenging behaviours
11. describe your perspective and the options available to customers
12. express empathy without necessarily admitting your organisation's fault
13. give explanations of your organisation's position
14. agree actions to balance customer satisfaction with your organisation's needs
15. request help from colleagues when the actions are outside your authority
16. record the actions taken to complete customer transactions
17. advise your manager and colleagues when customers are likely to re-open the matter
18. protect the safety and security of yourself, other customers and colleagues when dealing with challenging customer behaviours
19. recognise the limits of your role when delivering customer service
20. refer customers to colleagues in authority when required
21. follow the legal, organisational, codes of practice and policies relevant to your role and the activities being carried out

## Knowledge and understanding

### *You need to know and understand:*

1. the types of customer behaviours that you find challenging to deal with
2. the reasons why some aspects of your organisation's products and services may provoke challenging behaviour from customers
3. the different reasons that customers may behave in a way that is challenging to deal with
4. how to actively listen to customers and clarify that you understand them
5. the types of questions that you can use to identify customers feelings and experiences
6. how to develop and show empathy for customers feelings
7. the colleagues who can help you deal with challenging customers
8. the differences between assertive, aggressive and passive behaviours
9. the importance of not simply quoting your organisation's rules and procedures to counter customers challenging behaviours
10. your organisation's limits of what will be tolerated from challenging customers before the transaction or relationship is closed
11. the importance of giving your manager or colleagues notice of any potential further approaches from challenging customers
12. the situations when it is necessary to protect the safety and security of other customers, colleagues and yourself from challenging customers
13. the limits of your authority when delivering customer service
14. when and how you should refer to colleagues in authority about the rules for delivering customer service
15. the actions you can take to protect the security of customers and their property
16. how you protect customer information securely using your organisation's systems and procedures
17. how to complete and record customer transactions to close your interaction with them
18. your health and safety responsibilities as they relate to your customer service work
19. your role and responsibilities to deliver customer service whilst treating customers equally
20. the importance of respecting customer and organisation confidentiality
21. the legal, organisational, codes of practice and policies relevant to your role

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and the activities being carried out

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| <b>Relevant Occupations</b> | Customer Service Occupations |
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