



UNIX Trainers & Consultants

Head Office: Wema Twins Annex, Plot No. 181,
Boko-Bagamoyo Road, P.O. Box 33826, Dar es salaam.
Mob: +255-715-361-880/+255-754-361-880
Email: info@unixtrainers.com; training@unixtrainers.com
Website: www.unixtrainers.com

Achieving Customer Service Excellence

Course Overview:

Achieving customer service excellence is not accomplished by accident, nor is it attained without effort and teamwork. It requires well-trained customer service professionals who have a passion for providing quality service. This course emphasizes the professional communication skills and actions that create the foundation for continuous improvement.

In today's customer-oriented business environment, "people skills" are critical for career advancement and organizational effectiveness. The program emphasizes the importance of providing customer service excellence in a competitive environment, proven strategies for service recovery, and negotiation techniques for professionally dealing with difficult customers.

Course Objectives:

At the end of this course, the participants will be able to:

- Establish the importance of setting and reviewing customer service standards
- Develop an understanding of internal and external customer expectations
- Communicate more effectively by utilizing active listening and questioning skills
- Demonstrate how to deal with difficult customers effectively
- Set SMART objectives and goals to increase daily productivity
- Utilize stress management techniques to reduce tension
- Identify key components that promote customer retention and loyalty
- Describe the practices of a world-class customer service provider and model their performance on those practices
- Utilize interpersonal skills as vital tools in the provision of customer service
- Develop a customer-focused mindset for continuous improvement
- Improved conflict resolution skills

Course Coverage:

Topic 1: Setting the Standards for Customer Service Excellence:

- The benefits of providing excellent customer service
- Breakout session: How to use customer service to promote customer loyalty

- Case study: The best and worst customer service providers
- The WOW Factor: Going the extra mile...and then some!
- The importance of managing internal and external customer expectations
- First impressions: What do your customers see and hear?
- Understanding and working with the four customer styles

Topic 2: Communicating the Customer Service Message:

- How well does your organization communicate the importance of customer service?
- Understanding your customer's nonverbal communication
- Tips for building trust and rapport quickly...face-to-face or on the telephone
- What is your preferred learning style?
- Developing your active listening skills to enhance communications
- Use questioning techniques to identify a customer's expectations and service requirements
- Telephone tips to promote a professional image
- The (do)'s and (don't)'s of written communication

Topic 3: Service Recovery: Handling Complaints and Difficult Customers:

- The importance of customer complaints and why they should be encouraged
- Six Steps to service recovery
- Case Study: Best Practices of Scandinavian Airlines and The Disney Corporation
- Strategies to help calm upset customers
- Managing emotions during stressful situations
- Empower employees to get the job done
- Breakout session: Step-by-step process for handling a customer complaint

Topic 4: Principles of Persuasion:

- Requesting feedback from customers and colleagues
- The art of giving and receiving feedback
- Case study: Best practices - Xerox's Five Pillars of Customer-focused Strategy
- Negotiating mutually beneficial outcomes
- Words and tones to avoid
- The RATER Model: Five Dimensions of customer service excellence
- Best practices for call handling, documentation and quality assurance
- Measuring and monitoring customer satisfaction

Topic 5: Getting the Right Customer Service Attitude:

- The importance of attitude and teamwork
- Focusing on continuous improvement
- Stress management tips to increase productivity
- Practical exercise: What are your biggest "timewasters" that block productivity?
- The customer service mission and vision
- Setting personal and professional goals

Targeted Groups:

- Customer Service Managers and Supervisors
- Customer Service Representatives

- Managers who want customer service training reinforce their skills and train their staff.

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