



Doncaster CVS Quality Systems



Customer Service Excellence

Overview:

Customer Service Excellence has been developed to replace Charter Mark; the Quality System originally designed to provide Public Services with a practical tool for driving customer-focused change. However, in an age where customers' have more choice and control, such providers can come from the public, private and the third sector.

The foundation of this tool is the Customer Service Excellence standard which tests in great depth those areas that research has indicated are a priority for customers', with particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. There is also emphasis placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.

Benefits:

Customer Service Excellence is designed to operate on three distinct levels:

- **As a driver of continuous improvement.** By allowing organisations' to self assess their capability, using an online self assessment tool in relation to customer focused service delivery, identifying areas and methods for improvement
- **As a skills development tool.** By allowing individuals and teams within the organisation to explore and acquire new skills in the area of customer focus and customer engagement, thus building their capacity for delivering improved services
- **As an independent validation of achievement.** By allowing organisations' to seek formal accreditation to the Customer Service Excellence standard, demonstrate their competence, identify key areas for improvement and celebrate their success.

Key Criteria:

In order for an organisation to be recognised as achieving Customer Service Excellence they must be successfully assessed against the criteria of the standard by a licensed certification body. The five criteria of Customer Service Excellence include:



- **Customer Insight** - Effectively identifying their customers', consulting them in a meaningful way and efficiently measuring the outcomes of their service are a vital part of this approach. It's not just about being able to collect information; it's about having the ability to use that information
- **The Culture of the Organisation** - It is challenging for an organisation to build and foster a truly customer focused culture. To cultivate and embed this there must be a commitment to it throughout an organisation, from the strategic leader to the front-line staff
- **Information and Access** - Customers' value accurate and comprehensive information that is delivered or available through the most appropriate channel for them. Putting their customers' first can be an important step for an organisation towards providing effective communications
- **Delivery** - How they carry out their business, the outcomes for their customers', and how they manage any problems that arise can determine an organisations' success. Customers' views about the outcomes of services are just as important as achieving the main indicators organisations' use to measure performance. Listening to, and asking for, comments, feedback and complaints can be a great way to make small adjustments to the way an organisation runs
- **Timeliness and Quality of Service** - The promptness of initial contact and keeping to agreed timescales is crucial to achieving customer satisfaction. However speed can be achieved at the expense of quality, therefore the issue of timeliness has to be combined with quality of service to ensure the best possible result for customers'.

The detailed criteria, and the relevant elements, can be found in the Customer Service Excellence standard which is available to download from www.cse.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Time Frames:

Organisations' can self assess on-line. However if they wish to display the Customer Service Excellence Hallmark they can apply for Formal Assessment which is carried out by a licensed certification body, accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). Any one of these licensed bodies can assess an organisation and, if they are successful, certify that they have achieved Customer Service Excellence. Time frames depend on the size of the organisation being assessed. Further details are available from www.cse.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Costs:

No two organisations' are the same and no two assessments are the same - so, the costs involved vary. The exact cost depends very much on the individual circumstances of an organisation. Further information can be obtained from the certification bodies, www.centreforassessment.co.uk or www.cse-assessmentservices.com or www.emqc.co.uk or www.uk.sgs.com/cse

Support:

Support for implementing any quality system your group or organisation chooses is available by contacting Janet Gillott on Tel: 01302 343300 Ext 217

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