

Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

To complete this task you need to consider why your organisation has a certain dress code and the effects of codes of conduct on your organisation's customer service. You will also consider what is meant by professional language, as well as how to demonstrate a positive and welcoming attitude towards customers.

When completing this task, you will:

- describe and explain the importance of your organisation's dress code
- identify how different dress codes are appropriate for different businesses
- list and explain the effects of your organisation's code of conduct
- identify examples of professional and positive language
- complete case studies on how to respond positively to customers
- explain the importance of having a positive and welcoming attitude.

Key terms

Code of conduct – the principles, values, standards or rules of behaviour that guide the decisions, procedures and systems of an organisation. Codes of conduct respect the rights of all those affected by an organisation's operations including customers, employees and the general public.

Dress code – a set of rules specifying the correct manner of dress for work, or specifying what is prohibited. In some cases this may be a uniform, but in others it may just be more general guidelines on what is appropriate.

Positive language – language that is helpful, encouraging and focuses on actions which can be carried out to help the situation. Positive language may often include suggestions of possible solutions and how these can be achieved in a timely and effective manner.

Professional language – language that is appropriate for use in a business situation. This is language that is not too casual. For example, it doesn't use slang, jargon or, most importantly, any swear words.

Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Relation to the standards

In this task you will be thinking about how what you wear, what you do and what you say affects your ability to deliver good customer service.

As part of this task you will be working towards demonstrating the following skills, knowledge or behaviours:

Knowledge:

By completing this task you should be working towards a better understanding of how to act, behave and speak at work to remain professional at all times.

Skills:

By completing this task you should be working towards demonstrating you can be professional and use an appropriate 'tone of voice' that reflects the organisation's brand.

Behaviours:

By completing this task you should be working towards showing you can:

- present a professional image in line with the organisational dress code and code of conduct
- demonstrate a positive attitude and welcoming approach consistently when dealing with customers
- maintain professional and positive language consistently in customer interactions.

Suitable evidence

- Evidence must be shown of communication with internal and external customers. This could include copies/screen shots of email correspondence, letters etc.
- Evidence must be shown for how professionalism is applied with colleagues and external customers. This will include dealing with difficult customers and will be recorded in the form of colleague observations, personal reflective accounts etc.



Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Preparatory activities

1. Research what is meant by a dress code and explain why it is important.

2. When working in customer service, it is important you wear the right clothes for the job. The 'right clothes' for a job will depend on where you are working. In the table below, give examples of the type of organisation where the clothes shown would be appropriate.

 Andrey_Popov/Shutterstock.com	 Daniel M Ernst/Shutterstock.com
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Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

3. Research and explain what is meant by 'codes of conduct', the types of thing they normally cover and why they are important.

4. Come up with a list of the types of behaviour you think would help you model good behaviour and lead by example. For example, being punctual.



Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

5. Complete the following table, ticking to indicate whether the words used are examples of professional and positive language or not.

	Professional and positive	Unprofessional and negative
Dishonest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disorganised	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Distant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hostile	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impolite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indecisive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inflexible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Involved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pessimistic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Practical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resentful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rude	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sensitive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sympathetic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unresponsive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6a. Give three new examples of unprofessional and negative language:

i.

ii.

iii.

6b. Give three new examples of professional and positive language:

i.

ii.

iii.

Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Knowledge application

Outline your organisation's dress code and describe an outfit you might regularly wear to work that would fulfil its requirements. Remember that a dress code does not always mean a uniform.

Dress code:

Example of suitable outfit:

Explain how and why your organisation's dress code is important to its public image.



Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Research the codes of conduct that your organisation follows and list them here.

Explain the effect of these codes of conduct on your organisation's customer service.

Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Read the following Case Studies and describe how you would demonstrate a positive attitude and welcoming approach to each of the customers.

Case Study 1

You work in a retail store where one of the products is sold with a lifetime guarantee, displaying a sticker saying '100 per cent Satisfaction Guaranteed.' A customer attempts to return a product for a refund, saying he is dissatisfied with it. The product is showing a lot of wear, and you have no doubt the customer has received a lot of good use from it.

What would be your organisation's procedure for dealing with this situation?

Assuming you were able to deal with the situation without having to refer the complaint to someone else, how could you demonstrate a positive attitude and welcoming approach to this customer whilst following your organisation's procedures?

Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Case Study 2

You receive a telephone call from a customer complaining that a product which they purchased from your organisation didn't perform according to expectations. When you investigate further, you find that there have been a series of similar complaints where the instructions in this product's box have been for an earlier model, which operates differently. This problem was obviously caused by the manufacturer.

What would be your organisation's procedure for dealing with this situation?

What could you tell the customer over the telephone to demonstrate a positive attitude and welcoming approach?



Task 4: Presenting a professional image

Assuming you were able to deal with the situation without having to refer the complaint to someone else, what would you do to satisfy this customer whilst following your organisation's procedures?



Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Case Study 3

You work for an insurance company in the customer service department. You receive a customer email saying they are unhappy with the coverage provided by a policy that they have taken out online. The language and vague statements in the email lead you to suspect that the customer just wants a refund so that they can take advantage of a competitor's special offer on a similar policy.

What would be your organisation's procedure for dealing with this situation?

Assuming you were able to deal with the situation without having to refer the complaint, how would you word your reply whilst following your organisation's procedures and using correct email etiquette? How would you establish the facts while maintaining a positive and welcoming attitude?

Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Give an example from your own experience where you have used a **positive** and **welcoming attitude** towards a challenging customer. Explain how this benefited both the customer and the organisation.



Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Give an example from your own experience where you have used **professional** and **positive language** with a challenging customer. Explain how this benefited both the customer and the organisation.



Task 4:

Presenting a professional image

Learner reflection

Complete the learner reflection detailing what you have learnt from carrying out the task, how you will make use of your learning in your work and which skills you still need to develop.

Learner reflection

Mentor/trainer/employer feedback

Learner signature:

Date:

Mentor/trainer/employer signature:

Date: