

## Task 12:

### Knowing your products and services

When meeting customer needs, some of the most important things to know are the features and benefits of the products and/or services you can offer. Once you know these, you will be able to match the customer's wants, needs and expectations to the most suitable offer.

When completing this task, you will need to:

- complete case studies to increase your understanding of how to meet customer expectations
- explain the importance of keeping your product or service knowledge up to date, and identify the sources of information you can use to do this
- identify the features and benefits of a number of products and services offered by your organisation
- identify the unique selling points or unique service offers of your organisation's products or services, and those offered by a competitor
- consider three key offers provided by your organisation, and describe the type of customer each offer is suited to and why.

#### Key terms

**Benefits** – reasons why customers might buy a product or service. The word usually refers to the way products and services meet the customer's needs. In other words, why the customer cares what the product or service does.

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**Features** – key characteristics of a product or service that delivers benefits to customers. Essentially, what a product or service does.

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**Products** – commercially distributed goods that are the result of a fabrication, manufacturing or production process. These goods are then sold to customers before being consumed or used.

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**Services** – intangibles such as accounting, banking, cleaning, consultancy, education, insurance, expertise, medical treatment or transport. No transfer of ownership takes place when services are sold, they cannot be stored or transported, and they come into existence at the moment they are bought and consumed.

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**Unique selling point** – the positive features of a product that sets it apart from other similar products. Unique selling points (USPs) are used to persuade customers that one product is better than others. For example, unique features, lower price, more reliable, etc.

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**Unique service offer** – the positive features of a service that sets it apart from other similar services. Unique service offers are used to persuade customers that one service is better than others.

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### Relation to the standards

In this task, you will consider the importance of updating your knowledge of your organisation's products and/or services.

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

#### Knowledge:

By completing this task you should be able to:

- explain the differences between features and benefits of products and/or services in your organisation
- describe how to maintain your knowledge of your organisation's products and/or services.

#### Skills:

By completing this task you should be working towards demonstrating that you can:

- offer appropriate product and/or service options to meet the identified needs of customers and the needs of the organisation
- communicate to customers in a clear and coherent manner how the products and/or services offered meet their needs.

#### Behaviours:

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

- demonstrate knowledge of the organisational products and/or services
- knowledge and application of the organisation's policies and procedures.

#### Distinction

As part of working towards **distinction** level, the Customer Service Practitioner standards require you to be able to:

- explain why it is important to update your knowledge on the organisation's products and/or services.



#### Suitable evidence

Suitable evidence to support the achievement of these outcomes could include:

- witness statements
- written and/or digital communications
- coaching/observation
- mystery shop report
- call recordings.



Multiple examples must be provided that reflect the scope of products and services provided in your working role. This must include technical advice to customers (timescales, fees, benefits or charges, etc) on how to access and use services.

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### Preparatory activities

1. In your own words, explain the differences between features and benefits, using examples from the products and/or services offered by your organisation.

2. In your own words, explain the differences between products and services. If your organisation sells both products **and** services you should provide specific examples to help you demonstrate the differences.



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3. Complete the following case studies.

#### Case study 1

You are working in the reference section of the public library. A customer who is new to using computers repeatedly approaches you to help her to set up an email account. She has no idea how to do it because she has never used a computer. As you are not busy, you provide her with help for a few minutes. A queue begins to form at your desk and you have to leave to attend to other customers. The woman then loudly complains about the lack of service at the library.

How would you identify this customer's expectations?

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How could you manage this customer's expectations?

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How would you check that this customer's expectations have been met as far as is possible in the situation?

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### Case study 2

You are working in an electronics store, helping customers to choose from a wide range of computers. You have an in-depth product knowledge, and enjoy advising customers about the features and benefits of different models, the costs of adding various software packages, and the ongoing charges involved.

You are trying to assist a customer who assures you that he does not want any assistance or advice, even though you know you could reduce his confusion.

How would you identify this customer's expectations?

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How could you manage this customer's expectations?

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How would you check that this customer's expectations have been met as far as is possible in the situation?

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### Case study 3

You are working on a project with an internal customer. You start getting the impression from their phone calls and emails that they feel you are not keeping them sufficiently informed about the project's progress, timescales and costs.

How would you identify this internal customer's expectations?

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How would you manage this internal customer's expectations?

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How would you check that this internal customer's expectations have been met?

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Give details of up to two different product and service training sessions you have attended. These could be formal sessions, or just informal training from a colleague.

Subject of training session 1:

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What did I learn from attending this session?

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Why was it important that I attended this session?

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How will I use this training when advising customers on the product/service?

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List any certificates awarded as part of completing/attending the training session (if applicable):

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## Task 12:

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Subject of training session 2:

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What did I learn from attending this session?

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Why was it important that I attended this session?

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How will I use this training when advising customers on the product/service?

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Certificates awarded as part of completing/attending the training session (list):

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Pick three of the main offers provided by your organisation. Fill out the following Key offer sections, explaining why each offer is different and therefore suited to particular customers. Describe the type of customer each offer is suited to.

#### Key offer 1

Brief description of the offer – what it is, what it does, what is unique, etc. Make sure you list details of timescales (eg how long the offer is for, how long it takes to implement), and fees and charges (including whether it's a one-off or ongoing cost).

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Describe the type of customer this offer would be most suited to – what are their needs, wants and expectations? How does this particular offer meet them best, as opposed to another offer?

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## Task 12:

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### Key offer 2

Brief description of the offer – what it is, what it does, what is unique, etc.  
Make sure you list details of timescales (eg how long the offer is for, how long it takes to implement), and fees and charges (including whether it's a one-off or ongoing cost).

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Describe the type of customer this offer would be most suited to – what are their needs, wants and expectations? How does this particular offer meet them best, as opposed to another offer?

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### Key offer 3

Brief description of the offer – what it is, what it does, what is unique, etc.  
Make sure you list details of timescales (eg how long the offer is for, how long it takes to implement), and fees and charges (including whether it's a one-off or ongoing cost).

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Describe the type of customer this offer would be most suited to – what are their needs, wants and expectations? How does this particular offer meet them best, as opposed to another offer?

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Research the main products or services of a leading competitor to your organisation. For each product, identify its unique selling points or unique service offers.

Product/service	Unique selling point(s)/unique service offer(s)

Consider whether any of the products or services offered by the competitor could be adapted and added to your organisation's range to improve sales and/or profits. Make a recommendation for a possible improvement or addition, explaining the benefits to your organisation's offer.

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#### 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

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Mentor/trainer/employer feedback

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Learner signature:

Date:

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Mentor/trainer/employer signature:

Date: