



WHOLESALE AND RETAIL: WHRT4

LESSON 6

UNIT STANDARD: 259938

NOTES AND ACTIVITIES

THE IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

How to handle customer queries in the wholesale and retail sector

NB: By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain effective listening skills
- Explain effective questioning techniques
- Understand and differentiate between open-ended and close-ended questions

Dealing with queries and difficult customers

When dealing with queries and difficult customers, the following five-step plan can be followed.

- Let the customer talk.
- Listen and find out what the customer think will solve the problem.
- Never argue.
- Say what is fair and right; let the customer know what you trust him /her enough to do what is fair.
- Offer to help. Tell the customer what you can do.

Effective listening skills mean the following:

Effective listening skills allow you to challenge and confront one another in a constructive manner.

Active listening skills

Active listening is a process whereby the listener listens and responds to what the speaker is saying.

A communication technique that requires the listener to understand, interpret and evaluate what you hear from the person speaking.



Active listening skills means:

Face the person and make eye contact.



- Face the person
- Be friendly



Listening

- Listen while customer talk
- Ask questions to understand better



Body Language

- Use positive body language to show attention
- Give feedback

Effective questioning techniques

- When you ask your potential customer questions, you are actually creating a relationship between you and them.
- Questions must be asked in a non-threatening, friendly way.

There are different types of questions.

- Closed questions will just ask for a “yes” or “no” response.
- Fact-based questions (beginning with “how” or “why”) e.g. How long did you use the computer.
- Opinion-based questions, e.g. Why do you think the product is ineffective?

Giving feedback to customers is very important.

Making hasty judgement should be avoided.

Show the customer that you care.

Telephone etiquette.

- Answer the telephone immediately.
- Speak clearly, greet and identify the organization as well as yourself.



- Do not speak too fast or too loud.
- Have a pen and paper at hand to take down a message.
- Listen carefully.
- Be helpful.
- Do not be in a hurry to finish the call.

ACTIVITY 1

You recently opened an ice-cream shop and would like to get feedback from your customers

- 1.1 List two open-ended questions you would ask your customers. (2)
- 1.2 List one closed-ended question you would ask for your suggestion box. (2)
- 1.3 Name one example of active listening skills. (1)
- 1.4 How would you use your active listening skills handle customer complains. (2)
- 1.5 Where would you take angry employees to resolve conflict and why. (2)
- 1.6 Two people who can help you handle customer queries. (2)

ACTIVITY 2

A customer phones you to tell you that she has a problem with the item that she bought from you.

- 2.1 State FIVE telephone etiquette standard you will use. (5)
- 2.2 Discuss THREE different types of questions.(3)

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