

The Smell of the Customer

A Self-Assessment Questionnaire for Customer Facing Teams

This questionnaire is extracted from Tom Peters Company's Creating Value for the Customer methodology. Why not try it with your team?

Instructions

Look at the following list of statements about the role of the internal/external customer in your department or team. Against each statement, rate how you think you are doing in this respect. Is the statement: always true, sometimes true, rarely true, never true for you? Circle which is true for each statement.

1. All our reports, statistics and bulletins are full of stories about working with customers.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
2. There is high respect here for those who deal directly with customers.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
3. We make our front line employees feel like the heroes here. They are well equipped, well trained and feature regularly in bulletins.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
4. Signs of the customer are everywhere. Customers are encouraged to work with us on developing our service to them.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
5. We talk with respect about our customers. No-one ever leaves a problem with the customer.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never



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6. Customer concerns come high on our internal meeting agendas and time is spent on them.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
7. Customers visit us and we go to work with or see them regularly.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
8. We listen to our customers in lots of different ways. There are surveys, interviews, and phone calls.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
9. All departments in the business work together to serve the customer.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
10. We track our customer satisfaction systematically - monthly, weekly or even daily.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
11. Complaints from customers get a priority response.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
12. The promises we make to our customers are sacred to us. They are always honoured.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
13. The way we all spend our time reflects what is said about the importance of customer service.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
14. High quality and reliability are obsessions here. We take pride in our standards.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
15. Everyone in the company is engaged in the everyday search for small improvements to what we do.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never



16. Our customer's perceptions of us are the most important source of improvement ideas.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
17. The philosophy here spells out the critical importance of superior customer service.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
18. Managers spend time directly helping out in customer support activities.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
19. Managers clear red tape and bureaucratic paperwork out of the way of our front line people.	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never
20. Customers and front line employees have their say in specifying new systems and routines .	TRUE? Always/More often than not/Rarely/Never

Total up:

- * the number of "Always" scores you have: _____ x 3 = _____
- * the number of "More often" scores you have: _____ x 2 = _____
- * the number of "Rarely" scores you have: _____ x 1 = _____

Group Discussion

Encourage your team members to complete the survey and then discuss your scores together. See if you can work out the average overall score for your team. Looking at your lowest scoring statements, what can you and your colleagues do to improve your ratings? Who else do you need to involve in discussions of this kind? How can you get them as interested in customers as you are?

