

Customer care

Good customer service will help you to **maintain** your business (keep the customers you already have) and **grow** it (attract new customers).

Here are some questions and answers to help you provide good customer service.

Q Why is customer care important?

A It's simple:

- Because if you don't have customers, you won't be in business for long!
- And if you keep your current customers happy they'll keep coming back – and they'll bring their friends
- And to develop your business you need new customers because more business usually means more profit

Q How do you get customer care right?

A Listen to your customers and staff and act on information you get from them to improve customer satisfaction. It's a good idea to have a policy (a written statement) that puts the customer at the centre of your activities. Remember that poor service drives customers away.

Q What's in a customer care policy?

A It should contain statements which describe:

- the level of service you're going to provide (quality)
- how customers can tell you how they feel about it (feedback)
- how you deal with customer feedback, good and bad (handle complaints)

And communication is vital. You must make sure that:

- your staff are aware of the policy (training)
- your customers are aware too (posters, suggestion or complaint form)

Q What's the secret of good customer care?

A There are no secrets. You set realistic standards and stick to them. You don't make promises you can't keep. And you keep your customers happy:

- if you're selling hot soup, you don't serve it cold
- you make it easy for your customers to contact you, and offer service with a smile
- you show your them you're listening: they'll pass the good news on
- and you always do that little bit extra to please them