

JOB ROLE – STORE OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

Sector – Retail
(Qualification Pack Code: RAS/Q 0101)



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UNIT 4: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Session 1: Customer Needs and Service

Content

Title	Slide No.
Session Objectives	4
Introduction	5
Distinguish between Customer and Consumer	6
Identifying Customers' Needs and Behaviour	7-8
Customers' Needs based on Types of Products	9
Basic Expectations of Customer	10
Identify Customer Needs	11
Role of Customer Service	12
Elements of Customer Service	13
Advantages of Customer Service	14-15
Summary	16

Session Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Distinguish between customer and consumer
- Identifying customers' needs and behaviour
- Explain the role of customer service in retail
- Classify the elements of customer service
- Describe the advantages of customer service

Introduction

Customer Service acts as a pipe through which the customer fulfil their needs. Retail has emerged as an important sector and provider of employment opportunities too. Customers expect almost all retailers to provide certain services.

Distinguish between Customer and Consumer

Customer	Consumer
One who buy goods from retail store is called customer.	One who use the goods is called consumer.
For example, a housewife buys some household goods from a store. She is a customer for the retail outlet.	When all the family members including the housewife utilised the products for their personal use are consumers.

Identifying Customers' Needs & Behaviour

- The buying level of any customer depends on their needs.
- Objective type of customers needs e.g., physical needs like food, shelter, clothing, etc.
- Subjective types of customer needs e.g., emotional, moral, intellectual, and spiritual needs like good behaviour, self-esteem, fairness, etc.
- Customers' needs vary with place and age group.

Identifying Customers' Needs & Behaviour

- Customers' needs are the stepping stone to all modern marketing concepts.
- The manufacturer has to give due attention, importance and care in understanding and assessing or identifying the needs of consumers to gain competitive advantage.
- The marketer should use all their efforts and strategies to identify, emphasise, and satisfy customer needs

Customers' Needs Based on Type of Products

- **Tangible products:** These products are those which can be touched and felt.
- **Intangible products:** These products are those which cannot be touched or felt.

Basic Expectations of Customers

- Warm welcome
- Understanding
- Fairness
- Perception
- Options and alternatives

Identify Customer Needs

- Communicate effectively with the customers and satisfy their needs.
- Look for different ways to record customer feedback.
- Effective, use of feedback and other information.
- Take effective decision regarding marketing, buying, merchandising and selling.

Role of Customer Service

- Building a dynamic relationship with the customer.
- Making customer service a key element to build customer loyalty.
- Building competitive advantages.

Elements of Customer Services

Communications skills

Effective 'face-to-face' interactions with customers

Listening to customers

Handling customer's grievances smoothly

Adopting a new, different perspective

Monitoring and measuring effectiveness

Advantages of Customer Service

- Helps in serving customers better.
- Increases customer revenues.
- Helps in acquiring new customers.
- Aids in selling products more effectively.
- Helps sales staff to close deals.

Advantages of Customer Service

- Enhancing the value proposition.
- Enhances customer loyalty.
- Retains customers to increase profits.
- Delivery and support based on customer's segment.

Summary

In this session, you have learnt about the distinguish between customer and consumer, identifying customers' needs and behaviour, basic expectations of customer, role of customer service, elements of customer service and advantages of customer service.

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