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Deal with customers in writing or electronically

What this unit is about

Some customer service delivery involves communicating with your customer in a way that creates a permanent record either in writing or electronically. This form of communication carries risks and implications that are less likely to apply to a conversation held with your customer face to face or on the telephone. This unit is all about how written or electronic communication can be made effective and can contribute to excellent customer service.

When you are dealing with customers in writing or electronically you must consistently:

1. Operate equipment used to communicate in writing or electronically efficiently and effectively
2. Ensure that the period of time between exchanges in writing or electronically represents excellent customer service
3. Use language that is clear and concise
4. Adapt your use of language to meet the individual needs of your customer
5. Ensure that the style and tone of your written or electronic communication followed your organisation's guidelines and matches the service offer
6. Anticipate your customer's expectations taking account of any previous exchanges you may have had
7. Assemble all the information you need to construct the communication
8. Plan the objective of your communication
9. Format your communication following your organisation's guidelines
10. Open the communication positively to establish a rapport with your customer
11. Ensure that your customer is aware of the purpose of the communication as early as possible
12. Summarise the key point of the communication and any actions that you or your customer will take as a result.
13. Read your customer's communication carefully to identify their precise reason for contacting you
14. Identify what they are seeking as the outcome of the contract
15. Identify all the options you have for responding to your customer and weigh up the benefits and drawbacks of each
16. Choose the option that is most likely to lead to customer satisfaction within the service offer
17. Summarise the outcome of the communication and any actions that you or your customer will take as a result

Knowledge and Understanding

To be competent at dealing with customers in writing or electronically you need to know and understand:

K1. The importance of using clear and concise language

K2. The additional significance and potential risks involved in committing a communication to a permanent record format

K3. The effects of style and tone on the reader of a written or electronic communication

K4. The importance of adapting your language to meet the needs of customers who may find the communication hard to understand.

K5. Your organisation's guidelines and procedures relating to written and electronic communication

K6. How to operate equipment used for producing and sending written electronic communication

K7. The importance of keeping your customer informed if there is likely to be any delay in responding to a communication

K8. The risks associated with the confidentiality of written or electronic communications