

Level 3 Customer Service Specialist



To work in customer service is to be at the heart of every organisation - the person who resolves problems, builds loyalty, and turns difficult situations into positive outcomes. Customer Service Specialists are expert professionals who handle the most complex, technical, and sensitive customer interactions across all sectors and organisation types.

As a Customer Service Specialist, you are an advocate for the customer and a trusted referral point for your team. You deal with escalated queries and complaints, analyse customer data to drive improvements, and share your knowledge across the organisation. You work across a wide range of environments - including contact centres, retail, webchat, service industries, and any customer-facing setting - using digital and organisational systems to deliver consistently excellent service.

This apprenticeship develops the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to operate at a specialist level - going beyond day-to-day customer interaction to understand business strategy, customer insight, service improvement, and your own professional development. It is a programme for people who are serious about building a career in customer service.

How we deliver this Apprenticeship

Your apprenticeship is delivered on a one-to-one basis in your workplace by your own dedicated tutor.

Your tutor will meet with you every month virtually to deliver teaching and learning sessions, help you develop new knowledge and skills, and guide you through the programme.

Each month you will also attend a workshop. Workshops give you the opportunity to explore your topic in more depth, take part in discussions, and apply your learning to real customer service situations.

Your tutor will support you to build a portfolio of evidence throughout the programme, showing that you have met the standards required for the Apprenticeship.

Duration

- 11 months

Qualifications included

- Level 3 Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship Standard

Functional Skills

- Level 2 Functional Skills in English and maths (if required)

Progression

- Level 3 Team Leader/Supervisor Apprenticeship
- Level 3 HR Support Apprenticeship
- Level 4 Sales Executive Apprenticeship
- Level 4 Retail Manager Apprenticeship

The knowledge and understanding you will develop

Business

- Understand what continuous improvement means in a service environment and how your recommendations for change impact your organisation
- Understand the impact your service provision has on the wider organisation and the value it adds
- Understand your organisation's current business strategy in relation to customers and make recommendations for its future
- Understand the principles and benefits of being able to think about the future when taking action or making service related decisions
- Understand a range of leadership styles and apply them successfully in a customer service environment

Customer insight

- Know your internal and external customers and how their behaviour may require different approaches from you
- Understand how to analyse, use and present a range of information to provide customer insight
- Understand what drives loyalty, retention and satisfaction and how they impact on your organisation
- Understand different customer types and the role of emotions in bringing about a successful outcome
- Understand how customer expectations can differ between cultures, ages and social profiles

Customer service culture and environment

- Keep current your knowledge and understanding of regulatory considerations, drivers and impacts in relation to how you deliver for customers
- Understand your business environment and culture and the position of customer service within it
- Understand your organisation's structure and what role each department needs to play in delivering customer service and what the consequences are should things go wrong
- Understand how to find and use industry best practice to enhance your own knowledge

The customer journey

- Understand and critically evaluate the possible journeys of your customers, including challenges and the end-to-end experience
- Understand the reasons why customer issues and complex situations sometimes need referral or escalation for specialist attention
- Understand commercial factors and authority limits for delivering the required customer experience
- Understand the underpinning business processes that support you in bringing about the best outcome for customers and your organisation



The skills you will learn to apply in your work

Business focused service delivery

- Demonstrate a continuous improvement and future-focused approach to customer service delivery including decision making and providing recommendations or advice. Resolve complex issues by being able to choose from and successfully apply a wide range of approaches
- Find solutions that meet your organisation's needs as well as the customer requirements

Providing a positive customer experience

- Through advanced questioning, listening and summarising, negotiate mutually beneficial outcomes
- Manage challenging and complicated situations within your level of authority and make recommendations to enable and deliver change to service or strategy
- Use clear explanations, provide options and solutions to influence and help customers make choices and agree next steps
- Explore and interpret the customer experience to inform and influence achieving a positive result for customer satisfaction
- Demonstrate a cost-conscious mindset when meeting customer and business needs
- Identify where highs and lows of the customer journey produce a range of emotions in the customer
- Use written and verbal communication to simplify and provide complex information in a way that supports a positive customer outcome in the relevant format

Working with customers and customer insights

- Proactively gather customer feedback through a variety of methods. Critically analyse and evaluate the meaning, implication and facts and act upon it
- Analyse your customer types to identify or anticipate their potential needs and expectations when providing your service

Customer service performance

- Maintain a positive relationship even when you are unable to deliver the customer's expected outcome
- When managing referrals or escalations, take into account historical interactions and challenges to determine next steps

Service improvement

- Analyse the end-to-end service experience, seeking input from others where required, supporting the development of solutions
- Make recommendations based on your findings to enable improvement
- Make recommendations and implement where possible changes in line with new and relevant legislation, regulations and industry best practice

End Point Assessment

- Once you, your manager and your tutor feel you are ready you will be put forward for End Point Assessment. This will be with an external End Point Assessment Organisation. The End Point Assessment will include a practical observation, work based project and a professional discussion
- Your dedicated tutor will fully prepare you throughout the programme to ensure you have the confidence and necessary skills to meet the requirements of End Point Assessment

Personal attributes and behaviours expected of all Customer Service Specialists

01.

Develop Self

- Proactively keep your service, industry and best practice knowledge and skills up to date
- Consider personal goals related to service and take action towards achieving them

02.

Ownership and Responsibility

- Personally commit to and take ownership for actions to resolve customer issues to the satisfaction of the customer and your organisation
- Exercise proactivity and creativity when identifying solutions to customer and organisational issues
- Make realistic promises and deliver on them

03.

Team Working

- Work effectively and collaboratively with colleagues at all levels to achieve results
- Recognise colleagues as internal customers
- Share knowledge and experience with others to support colleague development

04.

Equality

- Adopt a positive and enthusiastic attitude, being open-minded and able to tailor your service to each customer
- Be adaptable and flexible to your customer's needs whilst continuing to work within the agreed customer service environment

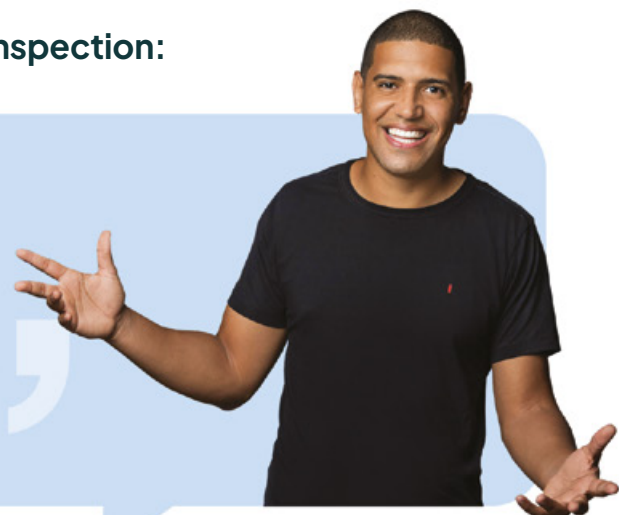
05.

Presentation

- Demonstrate brand advocacy, values and belief when dealing with customer requests to build trust, credibility and satisfaction
- Ensure your personal presentation, in all forms of communication, reflects positively on your organisation's brand

What Ofsted said about our programmes at our last inspection:

Learners and Apprentices develop their skills to meet exacting sector standards. In many cases, the level of skills gained exceeds the requirements of their qualifications; this is particularly the case with health and social care programmes.



Developing customer service excellence

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