

CUSTOMER SERVICE DEFINED

I often see **Customer Service definitions** that look something like this:

**"Customer Service is a function of how well
an organisation meets the needs of its customers."**

Well, this definition is OK, I guess, if you substitute **MEETS** with **EXCEEDS**, because just meeting the needs of your customers doesn't **hack** it anymore these days.

You'll **have** to do better than that!

Also, there is no quality statement in this definition. It essentially allows the quality of service to vary from customer to customer.

Let's take this into account for our...

Customer Service definition, take 2!

"Customer Service is a function of how well an organisation is able to constantly and consistently exceed the needs of the customer."

I like this customer service definition a whole lot better. Let me see if I can sum it up for you why this is:

- "is able to" - it's an ability, a skill
- "constantly and consistently" - they're doing it **all the time** and have proven this ability
- "exceeds the needs" - more customer **delight** than customer **satisfaction**
- "the customer" - makes the customer an individual, rather than a group, with his special set of needs and wants

But can you see how these customer service definitions puts the **organisation** first, and the **customer** second? This seems logical, of course, since it's the organisation doing all the work in the customer service, not the customer.

Or is it?

Is the Customer Service Department doing all the work?

My answer to this is **NO**. Never think that for a moment, or you are cutting your customers short.

Remember that your customer:

- took the time to search and find you!
- has shown an interest in your product, information or website
- spent time reading and investigating the information on your website
- may have tried everything in his/her power to answer questions herself
- attempted to contact you, either picked up the phone or typed a message
- may have paid you \$\$\$ already!

Wow! If you look at this, this customer must really be motivated! The alternative was to just hit the **BACK** button, and say "Bye, bye". But this customer actually took the time to give you an opportunity to **shine**. Don't turn your back on this customer now, or she'll turn her back on you! It is time to take a more "customer central" approach to this.

A Customer Service definition:

**"A customer defines good Customer Service as
how she perceives that an organization has delighted her,
by exceeding to meet her needs".**

So what happened to "**ability**" and "**constantly and consistently**", which was in the previous customer service definition? Well, the customer does not care all that much if you give others good service, as long as you'll give him/her good service all the time (but how you treat others is naturally a good predictor for customers as to how you'll treat them). So you have to have the ability to constantly and consistently **OVER** deliver to make sure that the individual customer is delighted. And as you can see, in the end there is no truth, only perception. In other words, **DELIGHT** or **DIE!**

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