



Win and keep customers

Without customers you have no business. You will need to put as much effort into winning and keeping your customers as you do in providing products or services. Working closely with your customers, understanding their motivations and why they chose your business will help you to keep their custom and innovate to attract new customers. Some estimate that it costs ten times as much to attract a new customer as it does to keep an existing one. Setting your business up with your customers at its heart will help to keep you ahead of competitors and earn you invaluable customer loyalty.

This involves:

1. understanding who your customers are;
2. researching their needs
3. developing good relationships with your customers
4. encouraging their feedback on your products or services
5. continuously trying to improve the service your business provides
6. reminding customers why they continue to buy from you

What you need to do

- understand who your customers are and the needs of different groups or types of customer
- identify your customers' current needs and future requirements
- consider if your products or services will appeal to new or potential customers with specific needs
- work out why customers choose to work with your business or buy your products or services
- know your competition and be able to explain to customers the advantages of your offer
- clearly define what products or services your business delivers and make sure that you present it to customers in a way they can relate to
- tell your customers how you are aiming to meet their needs and about new developments
- check that your marketing strategy is based on an accurate understanding of your customer's needs and preferences
- check that your business infrastructure is set up in a way that helps you maximise customer satisfaction
- identify your most valuable customers and channel efforts to meet their needs



- build good relationships with customers by providing good customer service
- encourage customer loyalty
- strive to continuously improve the service to your customers and exceed their expectations
- reinforce the feeling in your customers that they made the right decision by choosing your products or services
- encourage feedback from your customers and act on it

What you need to know and understand

The market

- what information about your customers that will help you tailor products or services to meet the needs of the market (for example, typical age, gender, interests and spending habits)
- how to group your customers according to their needs and value to your business
- key information about your competitors (for example, how your product or service differs to theirs, their strengths and weaknesses, how much they charge for similar products or services)

Marketing

- the vision of your business, the products or services it provides and how best to communicate this information clearly and passionately to potential customers

Business infrastructure

- what impact your business infrastructure has on the quality of customer service (for example, efficient IT and communication systems, billing processes or customer relationship management processes)

Customer's experience

- how to build good and trusting relationships with customers (for example respond to queries in a timely manner, be flexible and make the extra effort to meet their requirements)
- how you can improve the experience your customers have when dealing with your business (for example, by being available to them, tailoring products or services to meet their specific needs and offering discounts for customer loyalty)



- how to regularly remind customers of the benefits of dealing with your business

Customer feedback

- what feedback to get from customers (for example, why they choose to do business with your organisation, how you can improve service and what new products or services you could offer)
- the most effective ways to get feedback from customers
- how to tell customers how you have used their feedback

