

Customer Service Procedures

Specimen Paper

The specimen examination questions contained in this publication are representative of the type of questions used to assess candidates taking the written examination paper for this qualification.

A marking scheme for each of these questions is towards the end of this document.

The examination paper consists of 10 short-answer questions. Candidates are given 1 hour 30 minutes to complete the paper. Candidates can score a maximum of 4 marks per question. The examination paper is marked out of a total of 40 marks and candidates will need to obtain 20 marks to pass.

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Answer *all* ten questions that follow this scenario

The Mill is an inn with rooms situated in a picturesque coastal town in Suffolk. The Mill has been run for several years by husband and wife team Don and Jan Gough. Over the years the couple have built up the food trade from a lunchtime sandwich offer to a thriving business specialising in freshly caught seafood and local Suffolk produce. The Mill enjoys a year round trade and is not susceptible to the usual variations in trade some seaside businesses do.

The accommodation is a fairly new venture by the Gough's, the success of the food trade has enabled them to invest in the eight previously unused bedrooms and to renovate them to the standards that they feel are required to compete in an already saturated local market.

This venture has led to the Gough's employing a full-time receptionist/administration manager, two part-time house keeping staff a part-time breakfast chef and two part-time waiting on staff.

The accommodation has been doing extremely well to date. The Gough's have enjoyed occupancy rates of a higher than expected 80% with the majority of their guests being well off retired couples. The accommodation offer has also helped to boost the food trade with extra covers being enjoyed during evening service and the launch of a buffet breakfast service.

The Gough's have made good use of the internet in marketing their accommodation offer and have had excellent reviews on a number of on-line review sites. Until now. The review has just been posted on one of the most popular review sites:

'A rather pleasant inn offering clean comfortable accommodation in a beautiful Suffolk town. I would like to report that we enjoyed our stay but it was ruined by the inept staff that work there. When we arrived we were greeted by a very rude and totally unhelpful receptionist. She slapped our keys on the counter and told us we were in room eight, she made no attempt to give us directions other than "up the stairs". We did enjoy a comfortable night and had an excellent meal in the restaurant - the seafood is marvellous! The next morning we went down for breakfast, rude receptionist was there again and this time she ignored us completely. Breakfast was good, a buffet with all the usual breakfast items and nice and hot. But my oh my WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE STAFF IN THIS PLACE??? The two waiting staff mooned around as if they were on another planet and service was slow slow slow..... we had finished our breakfast before they offered any tea or coffee and the state of the tables left a lot to be desired. Would we stay there again, only if they get rid of the staff. (The service at dinner was excellent however, but the staff were different, say no more)'

Don and Jan are horrified at the comments and call a staff meeting to look discuss this poor review.

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1. Don wants the team to think about their levels of customer service, with this in mind identify the qualities of good customer service.

[4 marks]

2. Having failed to deliver good customer service and having staff identified as “rude” and “mooning”, describe the desired qualities and behaviours of customer-facing personnel.

[4 marks]

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3. The case study has described the majority of overnight guests as “well off retired couples”, with this in mind identify the customer service needs for this group of customers.

[4 marks]

4. Don thinks the team needs to be re-trained in the Mills customer service procedures as a result of this review, explain the importance of setting service standards to the business .

[4 marks]

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5. In addition to this re-training Jan has decided to complete an MOT on the business. Explain what an MOT is and how it can help improve the customer service at the Mill.

[4 marks]

6. The Gough's are quite upset that the writer of the review did not complain to them personally but instead posted a review on-line. Staff have pointed out that the Mill does not collect any kind of feedback from customer. Describe two ways in which the Gough's and their team can collect customer feedback.

[4 marks]

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7. Explain the strengths and weaknesses of the two different monitoring methods for measuring customer service for identified in question six.

[4 marks]

8. The Gough's have decided to entirely overhaul their customer service policies and procedures to ensure that they do not get a review like this again. Describe the methods the Gough's could use to review and evaluate the changes they have made.

[4 marks]

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9. As part of their new regime the Gough's have decided to reward a member of staff each month for delivering excellent customer service. Explain the benefits of recognising and rewarding such service excellence within a team environment.

[4 marks]

10. Whilst it is important for the team to deliver excellent customer service, they need to ensure that they are working within the law. Describe two pieces of legislation that staff need to comply with.

[4 marks]

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Marking Scheme

The answers to Questions 1-10 should be covered by the appropriate Assessment Criteria as indicated below. Examiners are instructed to give credit to valid answers.

Question 1

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 2.4 which states:
Identify the qualities of good customer service.

Question 2

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 3.5 which states:
Describe the desired qualities and behaviours of customer-facing personnel.

Question 3

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 1.7 which states:
Identify customer service needs for different customer groups.

Question 4

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 3.1 which states:
Explain the scope and importance of setting standards.

Question 5

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 2.2 which states:
Explain how the concept of "Moments of Truth" can be used to manage and enhance service delivery.

Question 6

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 4.1 which states:
Identify monitoring methods and information sources for measuring customer service.

Question 7

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 4.2 which states:
Explain the strengths and weaknesses of different monitoring methods for measuring customer service.

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Question 8

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 5.1 which states:

Describe the methods of evaluating changes in the business to identify areas of service excellence.

Question 9

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 5.3 which states:

Explain the benefits of recognising service excellence within a team environment.

Question 10

This question assesses Assessment Criteria 1.4 which states:

Explain the legal requirements that affect the interaction of customers with staff.