

Understanding Customer Relationships: From Awareness to Loyalty

In this month you will learn:

- Who is a Customer?
- Types of Customers
- Rules about Customers
- Why is the customer always right?
- Customer Relationship
- Emotional Intelligence
- Ethics in Business

TRAINER



Ifee Kojo

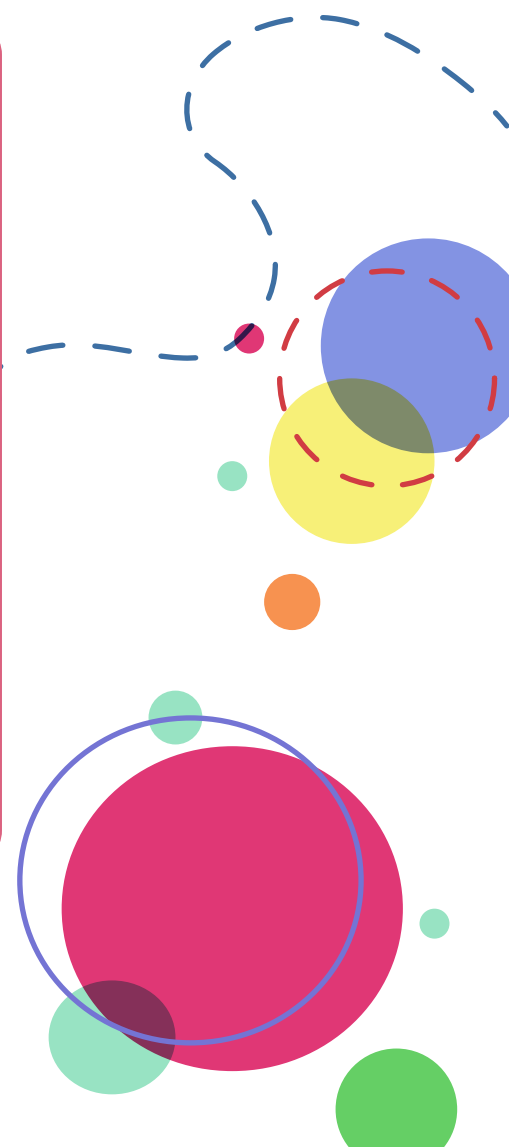
Ifee Kojo is a successful professional with a wealth of transferable skills gained in managing diverse businesses. She has worn many hats in her career – lecturing, project and business management, sales, coaching and mentoring, facilitator, motivational speaker, wife, and mum. She possesses a commitment to high-performance business results and a reputation for ensuring skilful gender inclusion. She is currently the Country Manager of Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HP) Nigeria.

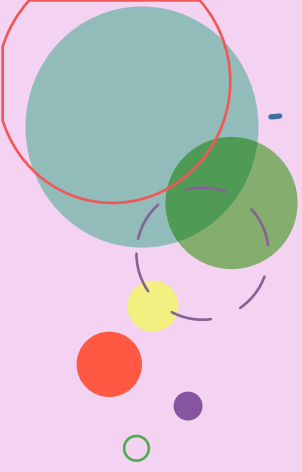


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The modern business world revolves around the customer, and it's crucial to understand who they are and how they can impact your success. A customer is anyone who purchases a product or service from a business. It can be an individual or a group of people, such as a company, who buy goods and services to meet their needs and wants.

There are different types of customers, including new customers, repeat customers, loyal customers, and potential customers. There are also internal customers and external customers. Understanding the different types of customers is crucial for businesses as it helps them tailor their marketing and sales strategies to meet their needs. For instance, repeat customers may require a more personalised approach, while potential customers may need to be convinced of the benefits of a product or service.





When it comes to customers, there are several rules that businesses need to abide by. These rules help ensure that customers are treated fairly and with respect. For instance, businesses must provide accurate information about their products and services, and must not engage in deceptive or misleading practices.

Additionally, businesses must also comply with relevant laws and regulations, such as data protection laws and consumer protection regulations.

One of the most commonly quoted rules in the business world is that ***the customer is always right***. While this may not always be the case, it is a good principle to follow. This is because a satisfied customer is more likely to return and become a repeat customer, which can lead to increased sales and profits. In addition, a happy customer is also more likely to recommend a business to their friends and family, leading to increased exposure and growth.

Customer relationships are crucial for businesses, and building strong relationships with customers takes time and effort. It's important for businesses to listen to their customers, understand their needs and wants, and respond to their feedback. This can be done through various channels, such as customer surveys, feedback forms, and social media. By building strong relationships with customers, businesses can foster loyalty, increase sales, and ultimately achieve growth.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE and **ETHICS** are important considerations in customer relationships.

Emotional intelligence involves being able to understand and manage one's own emotions, as well as being able to understand and respond to the emotions of others. This is important in the business world as it helps companies understand the emotional needs and wants of their customers.

Ethics, on the other hand, involves conducting business in a responsible and moral manner. By adhering to ethical principles, businesses can build trust and credibility with their customers, which is essential for building strong relationships and achieving growth.



CASE STUDY

Nathalie runs a baking business. From her experience, she would often receive one-time orders, but return business was not regular. However, things started to change after she learned that taking the time to understand her customers' needs, wants and preferences could help her serve them better. This month's training also taught her the importance of emotional intelligence and customer care in growing her business.

One of the things Nathalie started doing was to call her customers to ask them about special occasions such as when their birthdays were and make note of these dates in her records. Before the day arrived, Nathalie would then call the customers to wish them a happy birthday and offer them a discount on their next purchase. This personal touch made a big impact on her customers and many of them started to return to her business for their special occasion cakes.

Having spent ample time researching opportunities in her locality, Nathalie tried to innovate her business offerings, for example, by visiting maternity clinics to interact with mothers-to-be. Following up on the contacts made, she was then able to bake celebration treats for their new baby events. Nathalie also implemented other customer care practices such as sending her customers thank you notes for their orders and asking for feedback on her products and services. Using her artistic flair, she would go the extra mile to assist with decorating arrangements at customers' events, suggest novel ideas, and took time to observe their preferences. By doing so, she was able to build a loyal customer base that was eager to recommend her business to others.

Overall, Nathalie's story shows that using emotional intelligence and making the effort to build and maintain good customer relationships can lead to greater success and a thriving business.

Tasks

1

Identifying who your customers are and what their needs are is the first step to building a strong relationship.

- Conduct a survey of your current customers to find out what they like and dislike about your products or services.
- Analyse the data collected to gain insights into their preferences and behaviours.

2

Understanding different types of customers and their buying behaviours is key to providing excellent customer service.

- Conduct market research to identify different customer segments and **category** them based on their behaviours and buying patterns.
- Develop strategies to cater to each segment and make them feel valued.

3

It's important to set clear guidelines and expectations when dealing with customers to ensure a positive customer experience.

- Create a customer service policy that outlines the rules and expectations for customer interactions.
- Train your employees on the policy and ensure that they adhere to it.

4

Providing excellent customer service and ensuring customer satisfaction is essential for business growth.

- Create a customer feedback system that allows customers to rate their experiences and provide feedback.
- Analyse the feedback to identify areas for improvement and implement changes to enhance the customer experience.

5

Building a relationship with customers is important to retain their loyalty and grow your business.

- Identify key touchpoints in the customer journey where you can interact with customers and make a positive impression.
- Develop strategies to build a relationship with customers and keep them engaged.

6

Understanding the emotions of your customers is key to providing excellent customer rapport and building a relationship with them.

- Train your employees on emotional intelligence and provide them with the tools they need to understand and respond to customers' behaviours.
- Encourage employees to engage with customers in a way that demonstrates empathy and understanding.

7

Maintaining high ethical standards is important to ensure customer trust and build a positive reputation for your business.

- Develop an ethics policy that outlines the principles and values that guide your business operations.
- Ensure that all employees understand and adhere to the policy to maintain customer trust and build a positive reputation.