



Code of Practice for Customer Service

A survey carried out by BSI British Standards has revealed that 88% of consumers think that customer services in the UK would benefit from a defined set of standards.

The survey showed that while British consumers reward great service they also punish providers of poor service. When customer service falls below expectations businesses risk damage to both their reputation and profits with 76% of consumers claiming they have moved to a competitor. However 91% of those who receive exceptional customer service are more likely to go back to the same business and 79% say they would recommend it to a friend.

BS 8477 - Code of Practice for Customer Service has been designed to provide good practice against which organisations can benchmark their customer service and differentiate themselves from competitors. Developed by a collaboration of consumers and industry representatives, the standard establishes principles of good customer service, obligations of senior management and customer service management.

It also recommends good practice in day-to-day operations including responsiveness, provision of information, customer interaction, counter/ telephone/ web-based service and documentation and record systems.

There are tangible gains to be made by enterprises adopting a code of conduct on customer service. Reducing customer defections has been found to boost profits by 25-85% and yet in 73% of cases identified, the organisation made no attempt to persuade dissatisfied customers to stay even though 35% of customers said that a simple apology would have prevented them from moving to the competition.

BS 8477 - Code of Practice for Customer Service provides information relevant to a wide range of organisations including banks, telecom providers, utility companies, retailers, travel and tourism providers, local government and government agencies.