Handling Requests

The importance of handling requests effectively.
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MODULE 4 - Healthcare Warrior's CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS - Handling Requests. © 2011 Grant Muddle

Module #4: Handling Requests

The aim of this module

✓ To confidently handle all requests from start to finish in line with best practice standards.
✓ To keep the 4 Pillars of Service in mind when Handling Customer Service Requests.

Why Do We Need To Know How to Handle Requests?

Handling a request sounds simple enough. Doesn’t it? But it isn’t always easy.

Our guests make many requests from us every day. We need to ensure that we provide the same level of service standards each time.

Why? Because we must maintain request handling service standards that adhere to our Four Pillars of Service Philosophy - PPWR.

Our guests expect us to handle their requests in an appropriate manner for two main (obvious) reasons.

1. They are paying for us to handle their requests which is part of our service. It’s our JOB.
2. They are unable to do things themselves. We need to show we CARE.

By handling requests in a manner which adheres to PPWR we have the ability to generate great word of mouth - we want people to say - “The staff here are VERY helpful - requests are handled professionally and promptly every time. I only have to ask for things once”.

CHAT POINT

How many times have you asked for something from a customer service person at a shop or a restaurant and you have not received what you requested.

How did that make you feel?
As a paying customer what effect does it have on you?
What effect does it have on the other customer service staff there?
How could this damage their business?
Handling Requests Standards

1. **B**e in line with Offering Service standards
2. **L**isten to request without interruption
3. **A**cknowledge & clarify request by repeating back to Guest
4. **A**ction request – either straight away or state what action will be taken – within specified timeframe
5. **S**atisfaction of Guest is confirmed
6. **T**hank Guest

“With each request we handle, we want to give our guests a BLAAST of PPWR”

1. **B**e In Line With Offering Service Standards

You must offer service to a Guest or visitor within a 3 minute period.

- **L**ook person in the eye
- **F**ace your whole body towards the person
- **U**se the Guest’s name & if possible the visitor’s name
- **W**hen offering service, begin with “May I…?”

**REMEMBER…**

Airline passengers want more than a flight.
Hotel guests want more than a room.
Restaurant patrons want more than a meal.
Healthcare Guests want more than just somewhere to get well.
2. Listen to the request without interruption

You may be surprised at how difficult it is not to “butt in” or “talk over” someone who is requesting something of you.

Pre-empting a service request can sometimes mean we rush with our responses.

Listening is the first step to ensuring that we understand a guest’s needs. This does not just mean hearing with our ears, but listening with all of our senses.

Whilst listening to the guest’s requests, use encouraging actions to show that you are interested and are understanding their request.

CHAT POINT

What are some encouraging ways to show that you are listening to a person without speaking?

LEARNER ACTIVITY

What are some common mistakes made during the process of listening to guests?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
3. Acknowledge & clarify requests by repeating them back to the guest.

Once you have heard their initial request, it is necessary to acknowledge that you have understood what was requested.

**A response to the guest’s request needs to start on a positive note. Always repeat the request back to them.** It gives them the confidence that not only are we the right person to help them, but that we are eager to assist them.

Repeating the request back to the guest shows that we either understood or misunderstood their request and asks for their confirmation.

For example:

“Yes Shahana, I can help you with that, so you would only like 1 extra towel, is that correct?”

It is at this point in time that we want to find out if we have understood or misunderstood their request. It is far easier to fix things now by clarifying than by spending time & energy doing the wrong thing, whether it was our mistake or miscommunication by the guest.

**CHAT POINT**

Think of a time when you went to a shop or service provider and they didn’t listen to you properly and you received the wrong product or service.

How did this make you feel?
4. Action request - either straight away or state what action will be taken - within specific time frame.

Once we have listened to the guest and repeated back the request for clarification, it is now time to do something about it.

Always let the guest know when to expect the request to be completed. It may be as simple as getting an extra towel, or a cup of coffee, but other times, it may take a bit longer, or you may need to refer the request to someone else.

If you are unable to complete the task straight away or you need to refer the request on to another staff member, then we must always do the following:

• Let the guest know a time frame in which you can complete their request

OR

• Let the guest know that you will need to pass their request on to the appropriate staff member

CHAT POINT

Think of a time you went to a restaurant or café and you asked the server for some clean cutlery/another napkin/extra sauce etc and they said “yes, not a problem”, but did not deliver as promised and you either had to ask again or you got upset?

How did this make you feel?

Let the guest know a time frame in which you can complete their request

When you are not able to handle a request straight away, it is important to let the guest know in what period of time it will be completed, as guests still need to feel confident that their request is important and will be handled.

Allow yourself a reasonable and realistic amount of time to complete the task, then if you deliver more quickly, this will leave the guests with a positive feeling.
Let the guest know that you will need to pass their request on to another or appropriate staff member

At this point in time, if you are unsure of how to handle a request or another staff member would be more suitable in completing the request, then you need to inform the Guest of this.

To ensure that the Guest’s do not feel like you are “palming them off” because you do not care about them, there are 3 things that must be mentioned to the Guest:

1. Who you are passing the request on to
2. Why you are passing their request on
3. Timeframe

When passing requests on to another staff member you will need to inform the guest the timeframe in which:

- You can pass the information on to another staff member
- The other staff member will come to see them
- Their request will be completed

**CHAT POINT**

Which of the 4 Pillars of Service does “Action requests” comply with?
5. Satisfaction confirmed

Once we have completed the guest’s request, we need to confirm that we have fully provided the service they asked for in an acceptable manner.

It’s as simple as ensuring that what they asked for and expected is what they got.

“Mr Pradeep, how is your cup of coffee?”

CHAT POINT

Why is it important to confirm a guest’s satisfaction?

LEARNER ACTIVITY

What are some other ways to confirm that we have satisfied a guest’s request?
6. Thank Guest

One of the most powerful ways to leave a positive lasting impression is to thank people.

People want to feel important and appreciated and our Guest’s are no different. They want to know that we value them and that we will strive to keep them happy.

A simple gesture of thanks requires very little effort on our part and yet can reap tremendous benefits. The Guest’s will remember you as someone who cares about their feeling, as well as their needs.

Here are some situations in which you can thank the Guest:

When they offer feedback or suggestions – let the Guest know that you value their opinion and that you appreciate knowing how you can serve them better.

After making them wait – even if they are unhappy about having to wait, let them know that you appreciate their patience. Demonstrating empathy and appreciation can go a long way in diffusing an inguest Guest’s frustration.

REMEMBER...

“With each request we handle, we want to give our guests a BLAAST of PPWR”
Customers are:

1. The most important people in any organisation
2. Not dependant on us – we are dependant on them
3. Not interruptions to our work – they are the purpose of it
4. Doing us a favour when they call – we are not doing them a favour by serving them
5. Part of our organization
6. Not cold statistics – they are human beings with feelings like our own
7. Not someone to match wits with
8. People who have wants – it’s our job to fill those wants
9. Deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment we can give them
10. The lifeblood of this and every organization

PPWR. PPWR. PPWR.
TRAINER’S NOTES

Session Time - 60 minutes

Handling Requests

The importance of handling requests effectively.
Summary of the Healthcare Warrior’s Training Programme - 14 Modules.

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*TRAINER’S NOTES...

PARTS IN ORANGE DO NOT APPEAR IN THE PARTICIPANT’S HANDOUT AND ARE THERE AS PROMPTS FOR THE TRAINER.
Module #4: Handling Requests

The aim of this module

- To confidently handle all requests from start to finish in line with best practice standards.
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**CHAT POINT**

What are some encouraging ways to show that you are listening to a person without speaking?

**Genuine signs of interest - Nodding, smiling, “mmm”**

**LEARNER ACTIVITY**

What are some common mistakes made during the process of listening to guests?

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CHAT POINT

Why is it important to confirm a guest’s satisfaction?

If a guest is not happy then you have another opportunity to fix it. If you walked away they would not complain to you but to someone else!

LEARNER ACTIVITY

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REMEMBER...

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The Healthcare Warrior’s
10 Commandments
of Superior Customer Service

Customers are:

1. The most important people in any organisation
2. Not dependant on us – we are dependant on them
3. Not interruptions to our work – they are the purpose of it
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8. People who have wants – it’s our job to fill those wants
9. Deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment we can give them
10. The lifeblood of this and every organization

PPWR. PPWR. PPWR.
ROLE PLAY FUN!

Each person to pair up with someone else and role play a handling requests from start to finish.

Have you met the objectives of this module?

Ask participants to answer all the module’s objectives that were highlighted at the commencement of the session.

Have they achieved/are they able to understand all the objectives?

Can they:

✓ Confidently handle all requests from start to finish in line with best practice standards.
✓ Understand why handling requests correctly is important to our business
✓ Relate the 4 pillars of service to handling customer service requests.

Questions?

End Session.