

## Benefits to the individual

Good customer service does not just benefit hospitality organisations. It also offers benefits to their staff. Imagine that you are working for a hospitality business that delivers good customer service.

- You can be proud of where you work.
- You can get a buzz out of seeing that the customers are happy.
- It may be easier to reach targets and/or get a bonus.
- It will be a nicer work environment.
- You will receive fewer complaints from customers.

This should provide greater job satisfaction and increase your motivation to do a good job. You are likely to have a good feeling about your job.

In general, staff who are happy at work are less likely to turn up late or take unplanned leave. They will also be less likely to leave and look for another job, which reduces **staff turnover**. The service they provide customers will reflect the fact that they are proud of the organisation they work for.

In this situation, everyone is a winner: staff are happy at work, customers are happy with the level of service provided and the organisation benefits because customers are happy to spend their money and staff turnover is low.

### Key term

**Staff turnover** – the frequency with which members of staff leave an organisation.

### Did you know?

Most hospitality organisations like to keep staff turnover to a minimum. It is expensive to recruit and train new staff. Some employers invest substantial sums in the training and professional development of their staff, and they want to get some benefit by retaining employees for a long period.

## Factors in excellent customer service

The attitude and behaviour of staff has an enormous influence on customer service. No matter how nice the food tastes or how comfortable the hotel room is, the whole customer experience can be spoiled if staff are rude, disinterested or uncaring. Staff who are motivated project a good company image and work harder to achieve targets.

## Personal presentation

Customers will judge an organisation on the image that its staff present, so it is vital that staff put forward a professional image and follow any guidelines on personal presentation issued by the organisation.

### First impressions

You never get another chance to make a first impression. A customer's opinion of you and the organisation you work for will be formed within a few moments of meeting you. If the first impression is a poor one, it will be very difficult to turn this around and to impress the customer. On the other hand, if the first impression is good, customers are more likely to approach the rest of their time with you in a positive state of mind.



### Activity: The first impression

You are working in a restaurant. How can you create a good first impression to a group of customers arriving at the restaurant for a Christmas party?

## Personal hygiene and appearance

If staff present a positive image, customers will be confident about the whole organisation. To present a positive image, staff must pay attention to their:

- personal hygiene
- appearance.

Staff who are scruffy, untidy and (worst of all) dirty will convey a very poor image of themselves and the organisation they work for. This will not give the customer confidence. Staff who are smart and presentable are already halfway to satisfying customers. Their appearance looks professional. It suggests that they know their job and are ready to do business.

Good personal hygiene is obviously essential in the hospitality industry. You should:

- wash or shower daily
- keep your hair neat, tidy and clean
- keep your fingernails short
- avoid wearing too much make-up or jewellery
- avoid bad habits such as chewing or playing with your hair
- keep your uniform clean and in good repair
- keep all cuts and wounds covered with appropriate, clean and waterproof dressings.

## Communication

People don't just communicate using speech. When talking to people face to face, they use gestures, poses, movements and facial expressions to help them communicate what they want to say.

It is very important that you are aware of your own **body language** when dealing with customers. You should always make sure that your body language gives a positive and confident image.

Our body language is conveyed through:

- eye contact
- facial expressions
- body posture and movement
- hand gestures
- touching.



How does your appearance affect customers' impressions of you and your organisation?

### Key term

**Body language** – the gestures, poses, movements and facial expressions that a person uses to communicate. It is sometimes called non-verbal communication.