



CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDE TO BEST PRACTISE PROCESSES

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT DESCRIPTIONS TO LOG THE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Why is this important?

Easy to read, logical descriptions will be remembered by the person logging the feedback and prevent guess work or the use of 'other' which is of no use to anyone for root cause actions.

Accurate descriptions will make sense to the right area of the business to help put things right.

The identification of the description is not as easy as it sounds.

Each description must match the customer journey correctly, both for the customer and the staff. The 'staff' meaning those recording it and those understanding the reporting to understand exactly what it means.

It is best practise to involve other areas of the business to select the description for the feedback for the following reasons:

- Each department will identify with the end management reporting because they have selected the part of the customer journey that affects them personally and described it in their own way.
- The reporting is in their language that they use day to day – so the description of the contact is meaningful to them.

So - for example – the customer has called to say that the bill is wrong and they have been overcharged. If the description you have selected is just 'overcharge' then that covers a multitude of costs covering many parts of the customer journey. Which means that it might be applicable to any area/department and so it is then 'owned' by none to solve. End result - there is no point in logging or reporting.

On the other hand, if the description is clear to all, then the identification from what the customer is saying is easy to log and for the report reader to understand and then own.

So a better example is 'overcharge' followed by exactly 'what' from the invoice is the offending charge. Or 'poor service' is followed by exactly where in the customer journey that the customer perceived this to be the case. Or 'additional booking' is followed up by 'another seat' or 'another date' and the detail. And so on.

An easy way to identify what to have as descriptions is to chart out the customer journey first. Walk it yourself to give you a good idea of what a customer is likely to want to tell you. Not in your head – actually do the customer journey yourself.

You can draw this in a flow chart perhaps to help identify what the customer might want to tell you, and will help with training the staff to know what to ask for to make sure the identification is correct.

So for example, take a retail shop:

The marketing and the pre selling to identify you in the first place and then the physical contact with you -

- How does the customer find you? –eg: phone call, txt, email, via travel agent, in person, marketing brochure and the code, arrived by plane, train, car – etc. (finding you has been proved to be a cause of distress even before anyone has purchased from you) Are your signs clear, are you positioned in a prominent site on the high street or hidden in a back street.

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Then detail all the processes, the logistics and the customer information.

- What do you sell? How do the products arrive at the shop? What logistics are involved, eg: delivery, suppliers, how they get from the delivery to the shelves? List all your products and where they are in the shop, associated products and information about them – are they easy to find, good signs that the customer can read, relevant information about contents, recipes etc.
- How does the customer select what they want? List what support information you have. The dates of issue for accurate information?
- Can the customer find a member of staff to help?
- What are the times that the staff take lunches/breaks/fill up shelves? So the time of the incident they are telling you about is relevant to the staff organisation as well. So you will need to log the time of when this happened to the description list.
- What about the housekeeping in the shop? Cleanliness, wrong prices, no stock on shelves, boxes in the aisles?
- How and where does the customer pay? Can they find the payment tills, are there signs? Are they obvious? How many tills? Was there a queue with a wait which was unacceptable? How is the queue handled at busy times, a notice to queue here, a queue management system –eg rope, ticket, small purchase till? How long did the customer have to wait? How can the customer pay? Do you accept all forms of payment and which?
- Where can the customer give feedback in the shop? Are there forms? A customer service point? What to do if a complaint/feedback is not handled in the shop – is there a notice of what to do?
- Where is the exit? What would be the lasting impression of leaving the shop?
- Is there a follow up action? An invoice sent? Is it easy to read, how is it broken down? What about the chasing letter for payment or service reminder, is the language customer friendly? Is an item delivered afterwards, how does this happen, what information is given to the customer, what logistics are necessary to make sure it happens as the customer expects?

By walking the customer journey yourself, it is easier to describe this. By double checking your language selection with the members of staff who actually work in these areas will give you a good grouping of descriptions and the detail for each department to work from.

The descriptions must be kept up to date and relevant.

It is easy to change these and identify redundant ones which can be removed. Try to avoid generalisations like 'other' or 'miscellaneous'. Include as many drill down identifications as possible to really pinpoint exactly what the customer is saying to help the department to understand and then improve whatever is needed.

KEY MESSAGES:

- Walk the customer journey to identify all the steps.
- Remember to include perceptions and influences before they arrive and after then have gone past all the customer facing points.
- Keep the descriptions relevant and up to date – often revisit these.