

# ABOUT THE PACK

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INTRODUCTION	3
CONTENTS OF THE PACK	5
SYNOPSIS OF THE VIDEO	6



# IN THE CUSTOMER'S SHOES

NEW VERSION

**course guide**

**Written by**  
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## COPYRIGHT

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► **Fact and Fiction**

All the characters and events in **In The Customer's Shoes** (New Version) are entirely fictional. Any similarity to real people, products or organisations is coincidental.

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# CONTENTS

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ABOUT THE PACK	1
COURSE NOTES	7
RESOURCES	26



## INTRODUCTION

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All organisations these days, whether they are in the commercial or public sector, understand the importance of good customer service and most have customer service training programmes in place.

So why is it that, as customers, we are so often greeted with the obligatory “*Good morning, xxxxx speaking, how may I help you?*” and then feel we are on the receiving end of poor customer service?

Much of the explanation lies in the attitude of the service providers. Often they fail to put themselves ‘in the customer’s shoes’ and consequently fail to understand what the customer wants. Because all customers want to be treated the same way - as individuals, with individual concerns or problems.

**In The Customer’s Shoes** can help to improve customer service in any organisation. It encourages everyone in an organisation (not just the front line) to evaluate their own attitude to customer service; and it provides a straightforward and powerful approach to getting it right.

We have used the word ‘customer’ because that is the most common description of those on the receiving end of service and because we all know what it is like to be one. It may be that your organisation is more comfortable with other words - ‘patient’ or ‘client’ or ‘Council Tax payer’ or ‘passenger’ or ‘parent’ for example - but clearly the same principles apply.



## Aims

Those who have watched **In The Customer's Shoes** and worked their way through the programme contained in this Guide will:

- Understand the causes of poor customer service.
- Identify what good service looks like from the customer's point of view.
- Learn to apply a simple, powerful, five step approach to giving customers the exceptional service they want and deserve.

## Audience

The target audience should include:

- Anyone for whom customer contact is an essential part of the job, such as sales people, counter staff, receptionists, switchboard operators, technical experts who deal with customers and anyone who regularly has to answer customer queries.
- Anyone who has occasional dealings with customers. An organisation's reputation for good service can be damaged by just one person who does not have much customer contact and so does not consider customer service to be apart of their job.
- All new members of your organisation who are likely to come into contact with customers. Customer service is one area where you don't want people to learn from their mistakes.
- Poor performers. **In The Customer's Shoes** is designed to change attitudes. It is ideal for showing, if need be on an individual basis, to people who perform badly with customers.



## CONTENTS OF THE PACK

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### ▶ **Video**

A 14 minute drama which provides examples of good and bad customer service. The audience will be able to identify both the principal causes of poor service and what good service means from the customer's point of view.

This is followed by three short video clips (running 1'10", 1'10" and 1'05" respectively) which demonstrate a simple, powerful, five step approach to giving customers the exceptional service they want and deserve.

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### ▶ **Course Guide**

This is aimed at helping trainers, managers or team leaders to run a training programme on customer service.

It provides detailed notes for running a half day course and, in the Resources section, role plays and OHPs.

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### ▶ **Quick Guide**

A separate short guide outlines how to run a 30 to 60 minute session covering the key issues of customer service.



## SYNOPSIS OF THE VIDEO

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Sean is a promising young athlete who works in a sports shop. In the course of the video we see him both giving and receiving poor customer service. As a result of his experiences, he learns how to do it properly.

We first see him dealing with a customer in a very off-hand manner and then, when he is called to the phone to take an urgent call about his pregnant sister, forgetting about the customer all together.

He is taken to task by his manager, Graham, who tells him in no uncertain terms that the customer must come first. But Sean's most telling lessons about customer service are yet to come. His efforts to respond to his sister's call for help are frustrated at every turn.

Amanda, who works in Customer Services at an airline, won't help him contact his brother-in-law, Adam, who is on his way home by plane. The clerk in his bank won't advance him money for a taxi to the hospital. The bus company Inspector gives him the wrong information. Sandra, the receptionist at the hospital, doesn't listen to him. A hospital manager gives him inadequate directions to his sister's ward. Only a nurse, Jean, treats him as customers should be treated.

His experiences have given him a lot to think about and, when Sandra comes into his shop wanting to change some trainers she has bought, he is able to deal with her request in a copybook manner.

The main drama is followed by three short clips. In the first of these, the scene in which Sean provides Sandra with good service is shown again, but this time with captions spelling out the five step approach he is using. The other two clips are the scenes in which Sean is dealt with by Amanda at the airline and by the bank clerk, but now showing how these two people should have behaved towards him.

# **COURSE NOTES**

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<b>COURSE PROGRAMME</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>PREPARATION</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>SESSION 1:</b> <b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>SESSION 2:</b> <b>SHOW AND DISCUSS THE VIDEO</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>SESSION 3:</b> <b>CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES</b> <b>OF POOR SERVICE</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>SESSION 4:</b> <b>HOW TO PROVIDE</b> <b>GOOD SERVICE</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>SESSION 5:</b> <b>PRACTICING THE SKILLS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>SESSION 6:</b> <b>ACTION PLANNING</b>	<b>28</b>



## COURSE PROGRAMME

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This is a suggested outline for a half day programme on customer service.

Introduction	15 mins
Show and discuss In The Customer's Shoes	45 mins
Causes and consequences of poor service	30 mins
Break	15 mins
How to provide good service	45 mins
Practising the skills	45 mins
Action planning	15 mins
Total:	3½ hrs