

Zest Test Your Customer Service

Ensure your business stays focused on Customer Needs

“Service with a smile” - but this old saying oversimplifies the importance of meeting the needs of customers.

Customers are the best judge of what their requirements are, and what level of service and quality is acceptable. They judge their satisfaction not only by the product itself but also by the totality of the whole experience that comes with it.

A study by *Fortune* magazine and the Forum Corporation revealed that a satisfied customer tells an average of 5 other people about their positive experience whereas a dissatisfied customer tells an average of 11 other people about their bad experience. Furthermore the same study found that on average it costs five times more to gain a new customer than to retain an existing satisfied customer.

If you don't care about customer service, you can't possibly care about your business!

Zest Tests are OTS Management's series of proprietary business diagnostics, or audits, of business processes, specially designed for the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME's).

The Zest Test of your Customer Service is an eight-step approach to ensure that your business stays focused on customer needs to promote real gains to your business.

The Zest Test of your Customer Service is anchored on the three Stages of Service Excellence developed by OTS Management.

Stage 1: The Entrepreneurial Stage

Customer satisfaction in this stage is characterised



by “clearing the in-tray” and reacting to fires. The customer focus is on each transaction and even there, on product performance and price factors alone.

Stage 2: The Maturity Stage

Businesses move from Stage 1 to Stage 2 when management starts to put in financial and other basic management controls. Customer focus switches to the requirements of the target market segments as a group. Basic service levels are achieved such as minimum delivery times.

Stage 3: The Excellent Stage

Stage 3 businesses have moved to looking outwards for what the customer wants, instead of working to internally set goals. They have an awareness of total customer satisfaction as the foundation of a competitive strategy.

Unfortunately not many SME's reach Stage 3!

There are four reasons why SME's fail to use what they learn about customer needs into their overall strategy:-

- They don't understand the customer's *real* needs.
- They don't understand their own performance.
- They lack commitment to customer satisfac-



tion.

- They have not overcome internal myths about customer satisfaction such as “price matters” or “we’re already at 99%” or “our customer service department handles that”.

The Eight Steps of the Zest Test on Customer Service

Step 1: Understand Customer Requirements

The first step is to ask your customers what they want.

In consultation with you we design a survey and interview a selection of your customers to see what are their real needs.

Step 2: Analyse Current Competencies

The next step is to determine your current competencies and capabilities in meeting customer needs.

Here we use analytical tools to measure the current effectiveness and present the results graphically.

Step 3: Assess Competitors’ Capabilities

This is carried out, not so much to benchmark, but rather to identify and structural advantages or disadvantages competitors might have.

Step 4: Identify Gaps

This maps the customer satisfaction process and matches what customers have identified as their requirements with current capabilities - showing the gaps of performance.

Step 5: Identify Options

To establish competitive advantage through customer satisfaction, options are identified to increase satisfaction through specific improvement opportunities. This is done in a brainstorming workshop that prioritises customer requirements.

Step 6: Analyse trade-offs

Identified options are analysed in terms of costs, benefits and risks

Step 7: Select Service Dimensions

When key options have been chosen, we help you to prepare Action Plans, prioritising initiatives, targeting results and allocating resources.

Step 8: Set Monitoring and Review cycles

Once service offerings are in place you need to establish measurements, formal monitoring and review cycles to ensure that customer service is being continually improved.



Teik Oh, Director of OTS Management, designed this Zest Test from his international experience consulting to companies in the UK, USA, Japan and Singapore. This methodology was developed by Teik while he was with an international consulting firm based in Chicago.

About OTS Management

OTS Management is a quality and value driven boutique consulting and accounting company that provides organisational development services to commercial, growth-oriented Small and Medium Enterprises who require business services, advice and coaching.

We give our clients comfort in their decision-making by providing them with our experience and independent advice that saves them time and helps them grow. Unlike other accounting services companies, our clients have significant contact with our senior people.

We meet our own high expectations in order to exceed the expectations of clients.

Our services include:

- *Change Management consulting*
- *The Zest Factor - find the zest in your organisation*
- *Strategic & Business Planning*
- *SMART Marketing workshops*
- *Team Development workshops*
- *Performance Management Systems*
- *Zest Tests - Business Diagnostics on your organisation*