



Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan: Interacting with Customer Types – Lesson 2 of 2

Sector: Retail

Occupation: Retail Sales Associate

(NOC 6452)

Theme: Customer Service

Occupational Task: To interact with the three customer types in a Retail setting.

Essential Skills (ES) developed during the learning activities:

Oral Communication

- Give a formal greeting. (ES 2)
- Present and discuss simple options and advise on choices. (ES 2)
- Reassure and comfort. (ES 2)
- Exchange information. (ES 2)

Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) competencies developed during the learning activities:

Speaking

- Open, maintain and close a short routine formal conversation. (CLB 6/7)
- Encourage conversation by adding supportive comments. (CLB 6)
- Speak using appropriate eye contact, body language, voice volume, rate, fluency and intelligibility. (CLB 6)
- Indicate partial comprehension; ask clarifying questions. (CLB 6)
- Participate in small group discussion on non-personal familiar topics and issues. (CLB 6/7)

Listening

- Identify stated and unspecified details, facts and opinions about situation and relationship of participants containing expression of and response to gratitude and appreciation, complaint, hope, disappointment, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, approval and disapproval. (CLB 7)
- Identify situation, relationship, mood/attitude of participants. (CLB 7)
- Demonstrate comprehension of details and speaker's purpose in suggestions, advice, encouragements and requests. (CLB 6)



Language and culture focus for the learning activities:

Grammar

- Modals – May I help you? Can I be of assistance?
- Expressions of reassurance, polite directness, courtesy, requests for clarification.

Culture

- Piped-in music may make conversation difficult.
- Multiple requests for assistance by customers at the same time may make it difficult for sales associate.

Suggested teacher resources and classroom materials needed:

- Photos cut from magazines/internet of potential customers with different attitudes.
- WorkStart Employability Systems and Technologies: Exceeding Your Customer's Expectations, and Managing for Success: Customer Service/ computer programs; available at info@workstart.net or by phone to Grant Burson (877) 652-8424; <http://www.ttidisc.com/>
- Quality Customer Service by William B. Martin. Reid Publishing Ltd. ISBN 0-931961-95-5 1989 pages 35 – 37
- Customer Service by Harriet Diamond. Steck-Vaughn Co. ISBN 0-8172-6521-X 1997 pages 12 – 18
- Steps to Employment Sales Occupations, Citizenship and Immigration Canada 1999 – 2001 pages 110 – 111
- Expressways English for Communication by Steven J. Molinsky, Bill Bliss Prentice-Hall Regents ISBN 0-13-298365-6 1987, Section 7 on Department Store and Clothing pages 61 – 70

Estimated time for the learning activities: 2.15 hours

- **Lesson 1 should be completed prior to Lesson 2.**

Learner Profile:

- Learners have knowledge of three customer types and are able to identify some of their characteristics.
- Learners are probably not experienced in this area. They may also be individuals from banking or other service fields that require customer service and need the exposure to Canadian culture. They should be functioning at a minimum Benchmark level of 6 to do well.

Learning Objectives:

- Learner will be able to use appropriate greetings when meeting customers.
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- Learner will be able to identify customer type (Security needs, Social needs, Results needs) by listening to provided information and by seeking clarification.
 - Learner will use appropriate conversation strategies to meet the needs of a particular customer type.
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Learning activities:

- Previously taught – 3 customer types.
- Instructor briefly reviews the three customer types by eliciting the vocabulary for the three customer types and asking learners to describe the characteristics of each. (15 minutes)
- Instructor plays some audio dialogues of hypothetical conversations between sales associates and customers. These can be created by the instructor based on ideas from the Workstart program or from ideas presented in the resource list. The learners listen and dissect what the appropriate or inappropriate parts of the dialogue are. Learners brainstorm appropriate styles of interactions for each customer type. (60 minutes)
- Learners then work in pairs to develop conversations between sales associates and customers from written sample conversations provided by the instructor. Each pair is given a different type of customer. (30 minutes)
- Each pair role-plays the dialogue in front of the class. The class will identify the customer type and discuss how effective the dialogue was for that type. Please caution learners that customers may express more than one kind of need in any transaction. (30 minutes)
- Sample conversation: instructor offers the following customer dialogue: “I really like it, but I’m not sure about the manufacturer. I really don’t know much about the company.” Learners identify customer type as security needs. Learners role-play a suitable interaction for this type.
- Sample conversation: instructor offers the following customer dialogue: “This microwave oven looks great, but I think it will take up too much counter space.” Learners identify customer type as results needs. Learners role-play a suitable interaction for this type.
- F.Y.I. for instructors: Customers with “security needs” require sales associates who are sincere, polite and punctual. Conversation is focussed on the task, small talk is minimal and no personal questions are asked. For customers with “social needs”, the sales associate needs to be friendly, casual and show interest in the customer. The sales associate must show genuine interest in the customer and ask questions that allow the customer to talk. Customers with “results needs” prefer the sales associate to be direct, get straight to the point and stick to business. Interactions must be businesslike with conversation focussed on results or efficiency.

Additional and/or extension learning activities:

- Instructor brings a collection of sample customer dialogues. In pairs, students select a dialogue. Students create sales conversations incorporating all the skills necessary to handle the situation. Learners role-play their dialogues in front of the class using appropriate body language, eye contact and gestures. Class identifies the customer type and evaluates the appropriateness of the role-play.
 - Instructor facilitates by providing feedback to ensure that any missed points are covered.
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Evaluation:

Informal – Instructor evaluates learners’ role-plays from the extension activity to determine effectiveness of style used to interact with specific customer type. Feedback on appropriateness is given orally and the class is encouraged to discuss the results.

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