



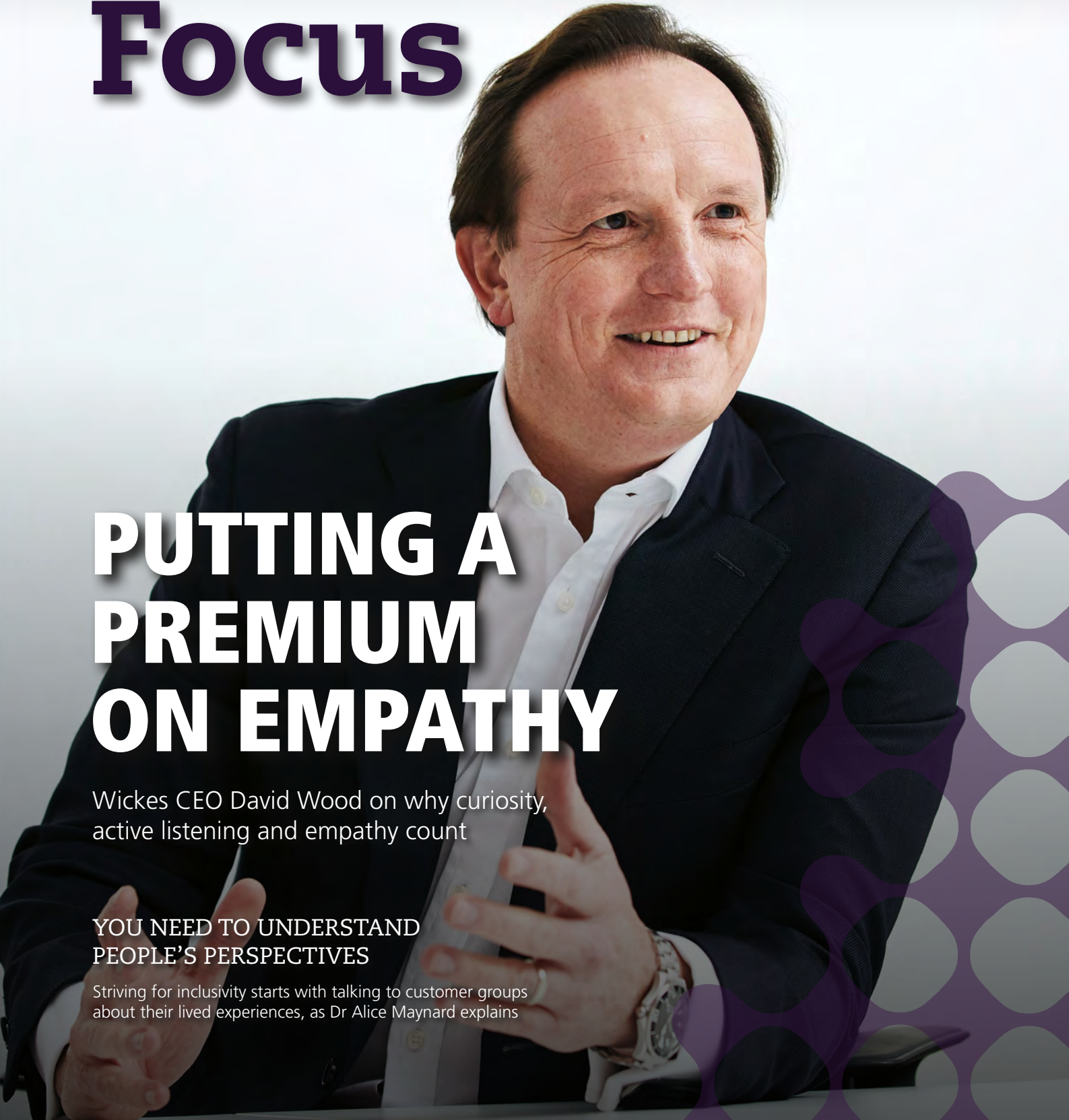
Customer Focus

PUTTING A PREMIUM ON EMPATHY

Wickes CEO David Wood on why curiosity, active listening and empathy count

YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES

Striving for inclusivity starts with talking to customer groups about their lived experiences, as Dr Alice Maynard explains





PROFESSIONALISING CUSTOMER SERVICE

by Jo Causon

Customer service has come a long way in the past 10 years. Not just in technology terms, but also in the skill sets that we see across the sector. It is evident too in the progression of those who have honed their skills in customer-facing roles into the very top jobs. Louise Beardmore, CEO of United Utilities; Simon Roberts, CEO of Sainsbury's; David Wood, CEO of Wickes (our cover story for this edition of *Customer Focus*), plus many others, all come from an operational or service background.

When we talk about customer service, we talk about the customer experience, the front line, supervisory, head of customer experience roles. But in truth every CEO and COO in the land, every marketing director and CFO, has to have customer service skills and capabilities. Without them, you're not going to be able to execute the business plan.

This is not just about board-level roles, of course. We see more and more people moving into senior roles with a customer service background. In a more complex world where emotional intelligence, empathy and connection are increasingly required, these qualities and career routes are going to be even more highly prized.

In a challenging recruitment market, strong customer engagement evident across an organisation's leadership is also a good selling point. To stay connected to an employer, individuals

will want to work for someone who understands the service proposition, cares about it and actively connects with customers. Good leaders who understand customers usually understand employees too.

Being brilliant at customer service, though, is not something you can just pick up. Curiosity and an interest in people are great starting points – but customer service professionals must also be trained and qualified.

Service-related skills – problem solving, emotional intelligence, commercial ability, empathy, the ability to think holistically – all these are high-level skills and all are part of the customer service world. They happen to be markers of strong leadership too.

I would argue we need more of all of this today. You can't hide behind a corporate façade in today's complex and transparent world. And so having people in senior roles who have these high-level service skills will be absolutely critical to performance.

At a time when organisations are struggling to retain their staff, going to work with a sense that you will be able to deliver to the customer creates happiness. And we know that happy individuals are productive ones.

In a world where we need to look for positives and for kindness, it is human beings who will deliver – highly skilled and tuned-in ones at that.

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HOME FRONT

To David Wood, CEO at Wickes, a customer-centric business is one that understands the privilege of service. He tells Liz Loxton how he sees it

On the face of it, home improvement might be considered a slightly workaday, necessary but dull corner of the retail sector.

In fact, since 2020 and 2021's lockdowns, UK householders have found a new affinity for home improvement, with those otherwise fallow and sometimes frightening periods prompting us to rethink our homes as they evolved into multipurpose spaces for work and leisure.

Wickes CEO David Wood is happy to service an evolving set of ideas around what a home encompasses. And this energetic and enthusiastic leader is committed to customer service as a differentiator against competitors. He's a regular visitor to Wickes stores, doing the rounds of the company's 233 stores.

The UK has a home improvement sector worth around £27 billion, of which Wickes takes a £1.5 billion share, and climbing. Its stores serve a mixture of trade, Do It Yourself as well as Do It for Me customers – a term applied to customers who use Wickes' kitchen and bathroom design and installation service. Revenue splits across those groups roughly equally, with two thirds of sales being via digital channels. The stores play a critical role on digital sales, though, with 98% of orders online being fulfilled through the shops themselves.

So who is the man at the top? Wood spent 15 years of his career with branded goods giants Unilever and Mondelez, and moved into retail when he joined Tesco in 2007. He has run retail businesses in the UK, Europe and North America (as group president of Kmart between 2015 and 2017, for instance). He became CEO of Wickes in 2019 and is emphatically a grass-roots operator with a deep love for the shop floor.



The question for any leader is how to transfer their knowledge and outlook across their organisations. "For me, retail is like a stage where a colleague gets an opportunity to perform. And you do want them to be confident.

The first thing I want colleagues to be able to do is approach the customer. The

second thing is for them to be curious and find out from that customer what they are doing, what project they are working on. We don't have to have all the answers, but we do encourage colleagues to work with the customer to find them."

I think service within retail is a phenomenal space to be in

Wickes stores hold around 9,000 unique items on average, a set up that Wood terms "a lean, highly curated range". Out of those 9,000 products, around 150 are top sellers, bought mostly by local traders. "Our most strategically valuable customers, who do business most often and have a higher-than-average basket, are our local traders." The sales proposition for that group is a simple one. "Can you save me time? Can you save me money? They want great value, great availability and great services. Increasingly, what we see with our local traders is the night before they can go online, they can see product availability by store and, through our Trade Pro app, they can shop, transact and collect the next morning. That level of service for a trade is critical," he says.



For those of us who have perhaps a bit less knowledge about our DIY needs, Wickes has shop-floor customer service agents who reassuringly know more than we do and importantly aren't afraid of googling for answers and working alongside the customer to assess their project needs.

While Wood promotes approachability and generous listening skills in shop-floor colleagues, as CEO, his first order of business is to ensure he is listening to the shop floor. "When you are working in branded manufacturing, the customer you are thinking about is the end consumer of the product. 'How do I understand their needs? How can I be distinctive in the brand and the positioning?' There is an overwhelming requirement to have large empathy and generous listening skills," he says.

As you move into retail, there is a shift in perspective. "As a chief executive, my responsibility is almost one of pastoral care. I have to really care for and do the best for my colleagues. At the end of the day, it's my colleagues who look after the customer."

So, what is his vision for customer service within the business? Inclusivity is top of Wood's list. "Realistically, everything starts with the culture of our business and how we think and feel about Wickes. And where we start very clearly is: everybody is welcome at Wickes."

His aspiration is that customers and would-be colleagues alike will be able to look at the business and see people like themselves getting on and moving through the ranks. "If our colleague base reflects the nation at large, that will then reflect our customer base. So that relationship is very important. We have a very strong diversity and inclusion programme in our business. We have six



amazing employee networks, which help make us a more inclusive and open business."

His next ask is that willingness to work with the customer. "Really, my vision for customer service is that we always have the ability to say yes to the customers."

Retail, he believes, is a very supportive environment and great seeding ground for strong customer service skills and outlooks. "When we think about customer service as a career, it penetrates so many industries, whether it's health, education, hospitality or retail. There's a huge service angle there.

"The great thing about the retail industry is there's a wonderfully supportive structure for career development. We are very focused on the ability to get on in our business – 85% of our colleague base is promoted through the business in any one year. So, there is real opportunity to get on," he says.

"I think service within retail is a phenomenal space to be in. I think it's fun. I think it's dynamic. I think it offers you all sorts of opportunity and life skills. For most, the ability to get on and progress in the business comes with that."





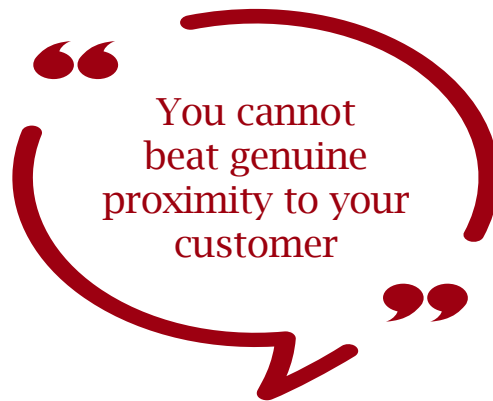
As to the wider business world, you could argue that more leaders should heed that lesson.

“I think it’s well-evidenced that a business that has true customer-centricity and customer service at its heart is one that performs better than others. We’ve been very purposefully putting customer service at the heart of our business by building a customer experience team, not a customer service team that clears things up when they go wrong. An experience team [is focused on the notion] that they don’t go wrong in the first place.”

Wickes offers employees the opportunity to tune into customer research via recordings of customer research groups and to tap into monthly ‘mood of the nation’ reports, where Wickes talks to its three main customer groups. Those findings are socialised all around the business, says Wood, and right the way up to the board.

“The reason that all of this is important is that – look, customers have a choice, don’t they? That’s the basic mandate and the customer can choose to go elsewhere in an increasingly competitive world and in an increasingly transparent world. So, I’d like to think that any leader of a business – anyone who has the privilege of leading a business – absolutely

has customer service and customer-centricity at the forefront of their thinking, that they start with their customer and work back into their business.”



It’s clear he puts a premium on empathy and getting close to the customer. “You cannot beat genuine proximity to your customer. Experience it yourself. Spend time with your customers, as I do frequently. Most critically, seek to understand by putting yourself in their shoes. This is all about empathy. The big skill we have to develop here as a truly customer-centred leader is to be a highly empathetic leader, to be someone who is generous in their listening and asks genuine questions.”

HOME IMPROVEMENT MATTERS ...

- The company emphasises furthering colleagues’ careers; 85% are promoted from within
- Stores stock around 9,000 different lines; 150 of those are core items
- Customers split roughly equally into three groups, with local trades the most profitable
- Wickes’ share of the UK home improvement market is £1.5bn and set to grow

A young woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a headset with a microphone, is shown in profile. She is wearing a thick, textured, reddish-brown cardigan. The background is blurred, showing other people in a call center environment. The text 'WHATEVER THE WEATHER...' is overlaid in large, bold, white letters.

WHATEVER THE WEATHER...

Jeremy Hyams, executive chairman at Claims Consortium Group, believes excelling at customer service means leading from the top and embedding it within the organisation's DNA. He tells Rachel Willcox why it matters

Delivering great customer service isn't always easy, but when the people you are dealing with are coping with the emotional turmoil of having to make an insurance claim and potentially facing the stress of claims being rejected, getting the tone right is fundamental to your success.



Claims Consortium Group provides claims handling across a wide range of insurance lines including property, contents, gadget, motor and travel, managing around 60,000 claims a year and rising. Meanwhile, its claims workflow technologies are used by insurers, brokers and other property service organisations across the UK. The third string to its bow – WeatherNet, a weather data business acquired in 2021 – is used by over 90% of the UK insurance industry to validate all types of weather-related claims. The group employs 327 people.

“Customer service is the foundation of everything we do,” the company claims boldly on its website homepage. “We are constantly innovating to improve the customer experience by making the claims process more efficient for everyone involved.”

For Jeremy Hyams, executive chairman of Claims Consortium Group, who founded the business in 1996 after being made redundant as an estate agent, this isn't about glib online pledges. To be meaningful, customer service must be ingrained in the DNA of your business, he says.

“Great service can very literally transform a customer's whole experience. Even in cases when a customer might have a complaint, if this is handled in an engaged and empathetic manner, it can turn the whole experience around for that customer, who may even end up leaving a five-star review at the end – we see this happen,” Hyams says.

Conversely, the same is true for bad service and the negative impact this can have. “That is exactly why a customer-first culture is so important for any business.

“When customer service is a living, breathing thing in your entity, every day you become very aware of it everywhere. There are loads of examples where people take a bad situation and make it so much worse,” Hyams says.

KEEPING CUSTOMERS CLOSE

Business growth presents challenges to ensuring that the customer service ethos you held so dear as a sole trader are being lived and breathed by everyone in your organisation. At the same time, there's no silver bullet to ingrain a culture of great customer service, Hyams admits.

“It's something that we have to work at all the time. It's not something that's just there. The starting point really is the board and leading from the top. In practical terms, I've made sure that I've surrounded myself with people with the same values. It's understanding that we want the best versions of ourselves in the business and how that translates to the service we deliver.”

Rather than seeing customer service as a siloed discipline that is the sole preserve of those at the customer frontline, good customer service needs to be entrenched throughout the business. “Whether it's HR, IT or the finance department, the same rules apply whether you're dealing with an organisation within our supply chain, whether it's an internal customer, an insurance company or one of their policyholders.”



The company provides insurance industry clients with management information based on daily analysis of calls using industry-standard metrics. It's a good gauge of customer service success, Hyams says. “We measure complaints and do root cause analysis.” The business also uses data from The Institute of Customer Service – gleaned through customer and employee surveys – to benchmark customer service performance against others in the industry as well as employee engagement.

“That data becomes very useful when we can start drilling down into different areas of the business. Because we’ve been doing that for so long, we’re able to see if we’re getting better or worse. Sometimes the patterns can tell us more than the data itself.”

Meeting customers’ ever-growing expectations has always been a challenge, but the ease with which customers can publicly express their disappointment is a double-edged sword. Get it wrong, and the impact on your business can be extremely negative. “Twenty years ago, if you offered poor service to someone, their family and mates might stop buying from that business. But you offer poor service now, and it can bring PLCs down.”

The flipside is that it can really help to drive the right behaviours within your business. That requires a customer-centric culture achieved by offering employees support and making them feel valued. “Essentially, it’s about making sure that people feel proud to work for you. They will offer great customer service because it’s in their DNA. That’s not something you can teach. Focusing on our people drives the right behaviours to offer better customer service.”

Investments in coaching, training and employee wellbeing – the company now has 65 mental health first aiders – are vital to keeping that culture alive, Hyams says. “These people aren’t touching claims, they’re not generating visible income, but they are helping to create and check your value through the business. They’re not directly generating fee income, but the removal of those people would be significant.”

The customer service landscape is evolving, and as the service expectations of customers increase, it’s an area that businesses neglect at their peril, Hyams warns. “Customers are a very different breed now to what they used to be. They’re empowered, they’re the people in charge.”

In a world where instant gratification is a given, insurance is no different. “Levels of service are phenomenal in some sectors, so even if they’re buying something that isn’t as transactional – a pair of shoes, they have an expectation – I’m making a claim today, why isn’t it settled tomorrow?”



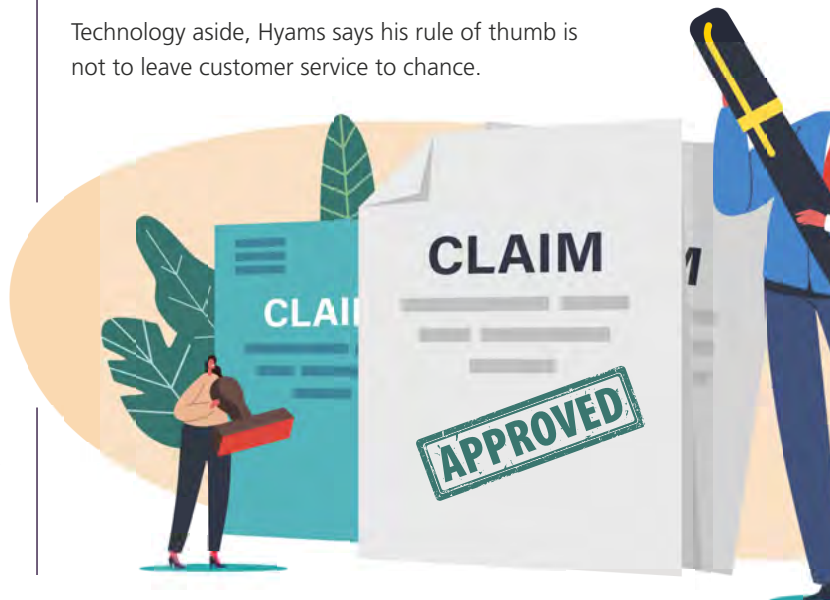
The increasingly tech-savvy nature of consumers prompted Claims

Consortium Group to develop an end-to-end claims platform, already in use by the AA, that offers self-service functionality to users. It’s definitely a growth area, but self service isn’t a panacea, he warns.

“For some people, that will be an amazing experience and it’s critical that you embrace it for those that want to use it.” But it doesn’t work for everyone and you can’t force it onto them, Hyams warns.

Similarly, the use of technology to automate back-office grunt work can have positive customer service ramifications, he says. “For me, technology is about eradicating those unnecessary tasks, making the customer journey a lot smoother and giving the customer more control. And it allows our customer handlers to deal with customers who really need help.”

Technology aside, Hyams says his rule of thumb is not to leave customer service to chance.



“Your business has a strategic plan for how to grow and that’s also got to incorporate an overarching plan for customer service broken down into monthly targets. It starts at the board, but then it should be filtered down into every different department, using team huddles and one-to-ones, so people understand what you’re trying to achieve, where the business is going and why, but in a way that’s relevant to them. When they understand your values, the people in the business are empowered to make the right decisions.”

“Technology is about eradicating unnecessary tasks, making the customer journey smoother”

Hyams is proud of his achievements to date but to achieve excellence in customer service, you can’t approach it as a one-off project, he warns. “Businesses need to get their head around the fact that this is a continued investment – from the exec team, all the way down. There are some companies that are an inspiration to me, and annoyingly some of them are my competitors but that makes me keener to do better.

“It’s about constantly challenging ourselves with the right mentoring and coaching right across the business, to ensure that we’re always the best versions of ourselves, and we’re constantly looking and trying to evolve.” Stop doing that at your peril, Hyams warns.



CLAIMS MANAGEMENT MATTERS ...

- Claims Consortium Group provides claims handling in the order of around 60,000 claims a year
- Its weather data business, WeatherNet, is used by over 90% of UK claims handlers
- Great customer service can be transformative. Well-handled complaints may turn into five-star reviews
- Tech-enabled self-service is growing, but is not appropriate for everyone

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SERVICE, WITH ENERGY TO SPARE

Autonomy and empathy are Tara Mullen's watchwords for customer service at Octopus Energy. She tells Peter Crush why they matter

Tara Mullen, director of operations at Octopus Energy, a role that includes heading up customer service, admits that if you'd have asked her 18-year-old self what she wanted as a career, customer service would not have been her first answer. "Like many people back then, I took my first job without too much thought about where it would lead," she recalls. "It just happened to be selling advertising in newspapers. But I very quickly realised that not only did I love connecting on a human level, but I had a real fascination with how I could support people better."



Thirty-odd years later – during which time she has worked in customer service at Bank of America and Tesla ("Elon Musk is very grounded; he talks about real things and is very focused on what is and isn't working," she comments) – and Mullen says she's proud to work for "the kindest, most fast-paced company" she's ever been in.

It's some accolade, but understandable when you get under the skin of one of the UK's boldest energy providers. It's a company that has won legions of customers (3.2 million and counting), based on service innovations that include updating its energy prices every half hour, offering reduced rate tariffs overnight, and even offering negative prices in times of high power generation, but low demand. "Greg [CEO Greg Jackson] has created an amazingly disruptive company, but one where there is a people culture that fundamentally cares about customers," she says.

Last year Octopus Energy ranked 23rd on the *Financial Times'* list of Europe's Fastest Growing Companies, but growth hasn't come by sacrificing service. In July 2021 Octopus gained 12 places on the UK Customer Service Index, up to 17th, and is the only energy company in the Top 50. And there's a very good reason for this: the focus that Mullen says the company gives to really professionalising its customer service. "We're all about creating service leader mindsets," says Mullen, of the many years of experience she now wants from the 1,200 services staff that report to her. "I have a saying that I want our people to wrap themselves around the customer – almost as you would treat your family,"

she says. "To keep to our original intent of bringing fairer practices and better value to the people of Britain, we empower people to fix things and make decisions themselves."

In part this is down to the deliberately dynamic structure of the business –

Octopus doesn't have specific departments such as an HR department, for instance. "Work is decentralised, so we let people do the things that give them joy," says Mullen. In practice this means that "universal energy specialists", her preferred name for customer service agents, might spend two to three days a week with customers, but for the rest of the time they might be involved in other parts of the business.



Why do this? Mullen grew her career by taking on different experiences such as business support, marketing, process engineering and learning and development and wants the same broad experiences for her own people. This is the way she says service develops a much more professional footing. "We already attract people who are aligned with our values and who are very mission-focused," she says. "We then give them products they can believe in. But we also try to give our people development that lets them really get to know customers. Our people don't see themselves as being on a separate service team; they just do the wrap-around bit I've talked about. Sometimes I think the way other organisations organise themselves means they get disconnected with customers, and this means they can't implement change quickly enough."

This approach and mindset will – she says – be vital in helping customers get through a tough winter

ahead, as high energy prices continue to contribute to the cost-of-living crisis. “For everyone this winter, it will be an emotional and difficult time,” she says. “But we’ve already upgraded some of our brand ambassadors to energy helper roles; we’ve delivered affordability training roles; and we’ve introduced more advice services.”

“Our people don’t see themselves as being on a separate service team”

According to Mullen, such is the level of anxiety that the way people prefer to contact Octopus Energy has switched back to voice. And she is adamant about the need for clear communication. “If you want to talk about where professionalism in customer service counts, it’s here,” she argues. “We’ve been relentless about keeping customers informed about an area that can be notoriously complex, and which can lead to confusion and even distrust if not managed properly.” She adds: “We’ve emailed customers detailing exactly the relationship between wholesale energy prices and our prices, including how we make money, and the margins we make, and what customers can expect.”

Octopus has run three such information campaigns. More are planned, and they are vital, Mullen says, to keep customers connected with the business, but also in their role in quelling any distrust that might be rising about energy companies – such as whether they are seen to be unfairly profiteering. “We never shy away from telling people the truth.



Some will be angry about rising energy prices, but in the main people tell us they’ve been appreciative of our clear communication.”

What is interesting right now is that price-based switching – something that used to be rampant in the energy sector – is starting to decline, Mullen says, since prices have gone up across the board. “We’re now seeing what I call service-based switching. We’re getting a few thousand of these every week, and it’s something that will continue.” She says: “People are thinking: ‘I’m unhappy with my provider, but prices are similar, so I’ll go to the company that treats me better’.”

Mullen is not content to sit still, however. “Our vision,” she explains, “is to carry on being focused; to carry on being kind; but also to continue giving the right information at the right time, and make it more personalised. I really hope our people see service as being the most important part of their jobs.”

The fact Mullen clearly puts so much trust in her service teams means the company is well poised to deliver on this. “Our attitude at work is that we’re all smart, so let’s give people the latitude they need to deliver great customer experiences,” she says. “Our team leaders are all like mini-CEOs;

we don’t have approval processes. We believe that if you trust people, you don’t need boundaries

to get in their way. If you give people great tools, you’ll get great service.

Even our tech follows this principle. We have technology built around the customer experience we want to create, not around creating efficiency for ourselves. It’s for this

reason, for example, that we intentionally don’t have chat-bots. We instinctively feel

they get used as a sort of triage service – something the customer doesn’t actually want.” She adds: “We respond in the way people want us to. We don’t avoid engagement.”

In fact, other companies now pay Octopus to be able to offer its technology to their customers too.

Octopus Energy's customer management system – Kraken – is now licensed to the likes of Npower, E.ON and others in the sector. Most recently, EDF Energy struck a deal to move its five million customers onto Kraken last year.

Perhaps the real secret to this company's success is ultimately down to what Mullen calls her "fabulous" teams. "I would argue that how we're organised is so important," she concludes. "Put customers at the centre and you can't go too far wrong." She concludes: "People tend to have a service need when they're either worried, or excited about something. Often we underestimate the power of just speaking to people when it's needed, and how this alone can be a much quicker path to success. We all need to think of service as being built around the experiences we want to create. That's the real service win for me."



ENERGY MATTERS...

- For much of 2022, 91% of customers gave Octopus Energy five stars on review site, *Trustpilot*
- It was 23rd on the *Financial Times*' list of Europe's Fastest Growing Companies
- It is the only energy company ranked within the top 50 companies on UKSCI
- The company has 1,200 customer service agents and 3.2 million and growing customers



MIND THE GAP

Having a customer service provision that is as inclusive as possible means talking to customer groups, examining our own biases and taking action, as Dr Alice Maynard tells Liz Loxton

For some 30 years, Dr Alice Maynard has worked in the field of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) consultancy. That, along with her lived experience as a disabled woman, makes her hugely qualified to throw a spotlight on how businesses and service providers fare when it comes to serving minority or disadvantaged groups. Which – after all – is ultimately a measure of how they do when it comes to serving all their customers with consideration and respect.



As an ambition, providing brilliant and inclusive customer service should be a foregone conclusion – an obvious starting point. And yet clearly organisations stumble. In spite of the legislation that obliges companies to make reasonable adjustments for disabled customers and awareness training within organisations to shed light on the experiences of different groups within our society, the missteps still occur.

So how, in her view, do organisations set about providing brilliant and inclusive customer service and in what respects do they fall short?

Her answer is a straightforward one. The more inclusive organisations, in her view, will engage in a discovery process and actively listen to customers about their needs, in order to cater for them appropriately.

Organisations that score well on this include Transport for London, which has an independent disability advisory group as well as focus groups that help the company explore access and security issues for different groups, she points out. “That’s about trying to find out from customer groups what the issues are for them and where they could make a difference to their journey experiences. [There are] people who need more secure station environments, for instance, because of the perception and – quite frequently – the reality of harassment in public spaces. You need to identify for a cohort of customers the kind of issues they may have and enable them to explain to you how you can make a difference.”

Transport for London has recently changed its language around customer experience. Where it once would have talked about pain points for

customers, they now talk about gain points. “It’s a much more positive way of looking at it. It’s more about how they can make a difference so that they make a gain for those customers,” she says.

For many organisations, engaging with every single customer is a practical impossibility, so customer groups are a useful means of gathering data and insight. But organisations that provide one-to-one services, such as energy companies or financial services, interact daily and personally with customers. They need to understand individuals’ circumstances where relevant, to provide reasonable adjustments in cases of disability, and record those needs, circumstances or adjustments in an appropriate way.

“Data is really important, otherwise we’re living on assumptions and that’s not helpful”

A particular frustration is when organisations fail to record (within the constraints of data protection rules) the needs or circumstances of a customer – or to pass on pertinent details even within one call. Many of us will be familiar with the tedium of repeating our issue or challenge to one customer service representative after another. “That business of assuming that the customer is there to give the information each time is really not a great stance,” Dr Maynard says.

CONSIDERING EVERYONE

Other gaps in service occur when organisations think a particular group of customers is somehow less important than others – or simply fail to consider those groups in day-to-day operations. Dr Maynard recounts a recent example, where she was unable to work during a train journey because the disabled seat in a newly refurbished carriage lacked a table.



“I couldn’t productively use the time,” she says. “And when I had an exchange with the company, I heard that they just hadn’t got round to putting tables in. It is times like that when I think companies sometimes just don’t think from the perspective of the customer or stand in the customer’s shoes and ask: ‘What is it going to be like if this is the way we treat people?’ And, yes, that is a big gap.”

What organisations could do more of is thinking creatively, she says, a quality that should be at the heart of their customer communications. Often, she argues, companies come across in ways that suggest they haven’t considered their service provision or customer groups in the round. That they haven’t, in fact, considered everyone.

“Do you know how your services land for people who are neurodiverse in some way? Do you know how your services land if you are gay? Are there cases where you advertise in ways that make people feel unwanted or excluded? That’s the kind of thinking they could do more of. What they could do less of is responding badly when things go wrong, responding thoughtlessly, or not responding at all. It’s really important to be transparent and open with customers,” she says.

STRESS TESTING

Day-to-day customer service provision undergoes quite rigorous quality assurance testing, Dr Maynard says. That’s a process that could be applied more widely so that customer experiences for different



groups are considered more thoroughly. In her early career, Maynard was a quality assurance engineer. “The art of quality assurance testing,” she points out, “is to think of the least likely scenario, the one that is the rarest, and then try that out and see if the system breaks. That isn’t always done when people are quality assurance testing their systems.”

“
You’ve got to
reach out if
you want to be
inclusive
”

If companies are still falling short on provision across all of their customer groups, then the situation requires an injection of leadership. So, what does good leadership around diversity and inclusion look like?

“It looks, first and foremost, like knowing yourself,” Dr Maynard says. “Being aware of yourself, your impact on other people and the risks that you face. Every single one of us, even the most inclusive of us, is not completely inclusive, because we have been raised in a society or culture [and have] absorbed the norms of that society or culture. Sometimes that shuts us off from understanding where other people

are coming from. When you know about how you react, you can start to do something about it – that’s the primary thing about good diversity leadership.”

Leaders also have an imperative to understand their organisations, and customers, as well as acquire meaningful data. “Data is really important in this area because otherwise we’re living on assumptions – and that’s not helpful. You need to understand people’s perspectives and that’s why you need to understand yourself. Know yourself, make sure you’ve got evidence, talk to people – and take action.”

The point is, she believes, to understand that society and organisations are works in progress. “People are all different and, you know, all of us are a bit patchy in all sorts of ways. I think this is something we will constantly need to be striving for. I’ve been working in this field for 30 years now. I don’t get it right all the time. I’m still learning. I’m still changing and I don’t ever want to stop learning or changing. And that means talking to people.”

In her work as an ED&I consultant, people often approach her because they are worried about getting things wrong. But getting things wrong is, to some extent, inevitable. What distinguishes good leadership and good diversity practice is a willingness to keep acting, testing and evolving.

“You do need the confidence to get it wrong and the determination to get it right,” she says. “What happens when people are worried about something, slightly nervous about doing something or even positively afraid, is they will retreat. And retreating is the last thing you want to do. You’ve got to reach out if you want to be inclusive.”



INCLUSIVITY MATTERS ...

- Transport for London set a great example on inclusivity by changing its thinking from pain points to gain points
- Good leadership requires self-awareness and a willingness to take action
- Thinking about how your customer communication lands with different groups is fundamental
- Customer-listening can be embedded in the form of service improvements



SERVICE JOURNEYS

There is no one route to the top in customer service. Empathy, ingenuity and enthusiasm are pre-requisites, however. By Liz Loxton



'I FEEL LIKE I CAN DO ANYTHING'

Kate O'Loughlin, transformation manager in channels, transformation and planning (channels and transformation team) at British Gas, came to customer service through an unusual route.

O'Loughlin moved to Cardiff from Ireland, after graduating with a degree in social work with the intention of working with young offenders. While registering with the Care Council of Wales, she began looking for permanent work to support a mortgage application. She joined British Gas in 2015 as a customer service adviser for a Smart Meters team – and never left.

O'Loughlin has customer service in her blood; growing up, her family owned a hotel and a pub in her local town. "In a family business, the customer is definitely the most important stakeholder, so working in customer service came very naturally."

From her very first days at British Gas, she found a particular aptitude for handling complaints and resolving conflicts. With that and a propensity to say 'yes' to whatever opportunity came up, she has moved swiftly from one role to another.

Just prior to the first lockdown, for instance, she was promoted to 'floor commander' – a role created to help manage telephony performance. O'Loughlin soon found, however, that she preferred managing and working with people to grappling with statistics. "I didn't last long in that role. I'd rather work with people than data."

Next came another promotion to the role of customer outcomes coach. As lockdowns went on, and essential workers and customers came under more pressure, the number of challenging conversations increased. O'Loughlin brought her trademark compassion and patience to the role as coach. "A lot of my work was listening to calls and coaching individuals on how they could demonstrate more empathy. It was a tough time, because our customers – like everyone else – were going through really tough and emotional times,



so they were often really upset or unhappy," she says.

It gave her an understanding of her own contribution. "I didn't know until then how much about customer handling and conflict resolution I could share with colleagues," she says.

Next came a stint as organisational effectiveness manager, a position she loved. "My boss and I shaped the role. He said, 'if you see something that's wrong, just fix it. If you think something's better for the customer, just do it'. Being this empowered to do the right thing by the customer has taught me so much."

So what's next for her? She admits to frequently looking out for new roles. The great resignation has brought continuous rounds of opportunity. "Customer service is such a wide discipline, and call centres use many talents and skills. I've taught English in Cambodia. I've worked in South Africa. I've had great life experiences – but it wasn't until now that I realised I am good at working with people and doing what's right for the customer comes naturally to me."

O'Loughlin believes that the pandemic with all its frustrations has brought a greater depth of understanding between customers and customer service professionals. An appreciation of the sector is definitely growing, she says. People who once might have been angry relate more to the human being at the other end of the call. "They are intrigued to learn you are working from home and they respect that."

What does she aspire to next? With seven years in a call centre environment and a real belief in the deep skill set that exists within customer service, she feels the world is genuinely her oyster. "I feel I could do anything. My manager empowers me every day and tells me I can do anything I put my mind to. I feel like I could get a job in another company and understand the people and their customers quickly. Perhaps when I'm in my 50s I could be a NED," she laughs. "There are so many jobs in a contact centre – and everything's an opportunity to learn."

'I FEEL LIKE I HAVE FOUND THE PLACE I WAS MEANT TO BE IN'

Lucie Child, strategy manager in customer care at The Very Group, found her calling in customer service comparatively recently, after an early career in market research.



After an archaeology degree, she worked at Research International, then joined Sainsbury's (where she worked on the naming of the Tu clothing brand). After that, she spent 11 years at English Heritage in a role that gave plenty of scope to put research-based customer insights into use, as well as providing some show-stopping behind-the-scenes experiences at heritage sites such as Stonehenge.

After that came her move to The Very Group, as customer insight manager. She is now strategy lead in customer care.

"I knew a lot of people who joined The Very Group and whose path had taken them to something new," she says. Child's something new turned out to be a deep dive into more primary research, this time into understanding the retailer's target customer and sharing that intel around the business. "I got to take those insights out across the business and help others understand what our customer needs are, what role we could play in their lives," she goes on.

Her current role as strategy manager came up when she was still very engaged in promoting the customer perspective around the business. But she was very attracted by the idea of a position working in customer care. "Everyone in the team is so positive and 'can do'. Nothing is a problem. I actually feel like I have found the place I was meant to be in."

Child has recently completed The Institute of Customer Service management qualification and speaks highly of the wider perspective it provides on leadership, and change and stakeholder management as well as the time and space it gave her to consider the group's business strategy with a real sense of engagement with customers. In day

to day work, those insights inform her actions. "It really encouraged me to think about the broad picture, what the customer of the future will be like and a language to talk about that."

Having come into customer service from market research, she is an advocate both for customer service as a rewarding career and for the diversity that 'outside' perspectives can bring.

"A lot of people I know working in customer service came in at an entry level role and worked their way up. I look around me and I see amazing people that have worked really hard and built a fantastic career for themselves. What I see less of is people that have had other roles in other sectors previously, who are considering a role in customer care, and I'd love to change that. They'd benefit from working in an amazing high energy, challenging, rewarding industry and the team would benefit from their skills and experiences from other roles – really strengthening and diversifying the team."

Above all, Child's role gives her a sense of making a difference in the business and in customers' lives.

"I would really advocate for a career in customer service if you thrive on supporting people and making things better for them – be they colleagues or customers. I personally love looking for creative ways to solve problems, am excited about the opportunities that advancing tech will bring and fascinated by the continued evolution of customer service."



'IT'S SO IMPORTANT THAT THE CUSTOMER TRUSTS YOU'

Talking to Michelle West-Wiggins, head of customer experience at Cirencester Friendly, it is clear that her early career roles cemented in her mind the importance of team building, communication and personal development – both her own and for others.

After an early career in retail and then a position at Coventry Building Society, West-Wiggins joined Barclaycall in its second week of operation. Barclays' move into telephone banking provided plenty of opportunity to volunteer for brand-new roles with a focus on discovery – what did customers need and want and how could the call centre operation embed those lessons and continuously improve. "It was all new ground. Telephone banking was still very new, and it was a case of test and learn," she says.

As well as providing that grounding, Barclaycall also gave West-Wiggins a chance to learn about people – how to support her own development goals and those of others to unlock their potential.

"It gave me my first taste of team management and really gave me the appetite for developing people and supporting their aspirations. And that's been a thread throughout my career," she says.

Relocating to the south west to take up an operational role with Barclays, she saw a different side of the business as well as the impact operational changes could have on customers. It was, she says, a clear lesson in the need for customer service and operations to keep in close communication. "That stayed with me, but I did miss that direct engagement and instant feedback."

Barclays continued to provide new roles, lessons and challenges that included breaking down literal barriers between an operations and service team (the teams partitioned themselves off from each other physically and communicated only through email despite being located in the same space), studying for an MBA and learning Spanish in order to communicate better with a customer business. "It's important to put yourself in your customers'



shoes and understand what they want. You need to understand what they're asking for and why. It's so important that the customer trusts you to deliver what they need."

Seven years ago, she joined Cirencester Friendly as head of customer care. She has since become head of customer experience, with a much wider remit, a role she enjoys for its variety and autonomy.

It has proved to be a position where she can further her own development and that of others through coaching and mentoring.

"Helping others find their own potential through their own strengths – that to me is really satisfying. What you want is to have people who feel they can deliver and develop, whether it's through professional qualifications or opportunities, to spending time with different teams."

The Institute of Customer Service has been invaluable in terms of professional training and support. "To put that formal stamp on the service role – I think that's very important. It's something we can share internally and externally."

Ultimately, developing a strong customer service culture, defining the skill set involved and supporting professional development pays dividends in the form of a higher quality delivery. "It's about nurturing and guiding the right individuals to be ambassadors for the business. Good service sets our business apart from others. Technology aids delivery, but highly skilled, empathetic service professionals make the difference between a customer being 'OK' with a product or service and being really satisfied and happy with the business," West-Wiggins says.

Making sure you continue to build on service is really important. "A role in service shouldn't be seen as an entry level role, it is actually a critical role in the business. An individual who can make you come away from an encounter happy – that's a person we should nurture and reward, because if you haven't got good service in a business, all the rest of it can be so quickly undone."

UK CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AWARDS 2023

The prestigious UK Customer Satisfaction Awards will be taking place in the Grand Ballroom at the London Hilton on Park Lane on the evening of Tuesday 7 March 2023.

It is a night to get dressed up, let your hair down and celebrate the best in customer experience excellence.

Awards categories range from Best Customer Satisfaction Strategy to Best Use of Customer Insight. We will also crown the Best Customer

Service Professional and recognise the organisation which has evidenced the Best Customer Experience.

We look forward to seeing many of you to celebrate all the organisations and individuals shortlisted for the UK Customer Satisfaction Awards 2023 and to raise a glass to the winners. We hope to see you there!

Book now at www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/events/ukcsa

This year's individual AWARDS FINALISTS include:

- **Customer Service Changemaker**
South Western Railway – Training and Engagement Manager, Allison Harbor
Disclosure & Barring Service – Head of Customer Services, Brian McGuinness
Fellowes – Operations Manager UK&I, Gemma Levitt
Diligenta – Lead Solution Architect, Karthik Nagarajan
Lidl GB Customer Service – Head of Audit & Customer Service, Tobias Homolka
- **Webhelp Strategic Leadership**
Raven Housing Trust – Head of CX, Joanne Silner
KCOM – Head of Customer Service, Jessica Port
NHS Professionals – Chief of Staff, Lisa Lewis
Bobst UK & Ireland – MD & Regional Service Director UK&I, Scandinavia & Benelux, Neil Jones
Novuna Vehicle Solutions (Part of Mitsubishi) – Head of CX, Sue Cashmore-Thorley
- **Customer Service Professional**
Jones Lang LaSalle, Guest Services Manager for HSBC – Annie King
NHS Professionals, Quality & Audit Co-Ordinator – Gina Wilby
Landmark Information Group, Head of Customer Experience – Helen Luty
Jacobs, Associate Director Customer Service/ Head of Customer SMP Alliance – Paul Vause
Co-Ownership, Customer Services Manager – Victoria Dunn

ORGANISATIONAL CATEGORIES:

TLF Research Best Customer Satisfaction Strategy

Ipsos Best Use of Customer Insight

Pension Insurance Corporation Best Customer Satisfaction Innovation

Paragon Customer Communications Best Application of Technology

Trusted Quality Provider

Customer Feedback Strategy

Best Return on Customer Service Investment

Best Customer Service Partnership

Cabot Financial Employee Engagement

ABa Quality Monitoring Customer Focus – Large Enterprise

Customer Focus – SME

Customer Commitment B2B

Customer Commitment B2C

Sustainable Customer Service

Kantar Best Customer Experience

Finalists include companies such as Aldi, IBM, Next, Virgin Media O2 and more. The full list of finalists is available on our website.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023

Our Annual Conference 2023 will be taking place at the Hilton on Park Lane, London on Tuesday 7 March 2023.

The theme this year is "Operating in the New Service Nation: Sustainability, Skills & Success". We hope you join us to hear from some of the best speakers in the industry, representing the likes of Amazon,

Sainsbury's and United Utilities.

As the nation adjusts to the seismic shifts we have seen in the past few years, we will address a range of pressing issues – from the capabilities and skills required for long-term success to the strategic importance of a diverse workforce and the professionalisation of the service sector.

Our speakers include:



Dr Alice Maynard CBE
Director of
Future Inclusion



Simon Roberts
Chief Executive Officer,
Sainsbury's



Jean-Marc Dupont
Regional Director:
Customer Service Europe,
Amazon



Louise Beardmore
CEO Designate,
United Utilities



Oke Eleazu
Chief Executive Officer,
ManyPets



David Wood
Chief Executive Officer
Wickes Group Plc



Heather Bovill
Deputy Director for Surveys and Economic
Indicators, Office for National Statistics

Join the debate, network and knowledge share with your peers at our flagship event.

Book now at www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/annual-conference

Official Exhibitors 2023:



THE PROFESSION OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

With around 80% of employees dealing with external customers as part of their job role, customer service is critical to the UK's employment and economic performance – but it has not always been seen as a valued profession or career. New Breakthrough Research from The Institute of Customer Service will examine the Profession of Customer Service and how to develop greater recognition for it.

Customer service roles have sometimes been seen as entry-level jobs, a stepping stone to future opportunities, or a job “anyone can do”. But in recent years, the profession of customer service has expanded to include a range of job roles and skills that are core to business performance.

As more transactional experiences are handled through automated or digital channels, customers' experiences with employees are increasingly concerned with complex or sensitive issues, requiring enhanced levels of communication and problem-solving skills.

Employees with expertise in specialist technical roles require relationship management skills to

work effectively with customers and colleagues. New hybrid roles have emerged that combine customer experience, relationship management, insight, commercial awareness, employee engagement and technical skills. Team leaders and managers have a particularly crucial role in coaching and developing the behaviours and competences that enable consistently high levels of service.

The key purpose of the research is to assess the extent to which customer service is seen as a profession with defined skills, standards and a career development pathway. It will look at how professional development is supported and evaluated, and what actions are necessary to build recognition of service as a valued career and profession with a significant voice and position in the board room.

The research will be published in spring 2023 and will be available as a membership benefit to Institute members, and for purchase by non-members. The research is sponsored by NewDay, Virgin Media O2, Wales & West Utilities and Zurich Insurance Group.





IS RISHI THE PM TO FINALLY SEE THE VALUE OF SERVICE SKILLS INVESTMENT?

Since assuming office last year, Rishi Sunak noted that he would double down on a “continuity Johnson” approach to leadership. He quickly swept the economically scarring Growth Plan 2022 (or mini-budget) off the table and brought back priorities from the Johnson era of government, pledging to fulfil promises made in the Conservatives’ 2019 election manifesto in a bid to unite the party.

However, within that manifesto is a pledge for a “high wage, high skill” economy with a “programme of investment in education”. Sunak looks likely to prioritise delivery of this. It was reported when Sunak was appointed as prime minister that he was working on plans to invest in skills to reinvigorate flagging productivity across the UK. A Downing Street source also commented that investment in education and skills was an “absolute priority” for Sunak too. And Sunak’s priority of skills investment goes back further than his current role as prime minister. In his 2022 Mais Lecture as chancellor, he namechecked Paul Romer – an economist and professor at Stanford at the time he studied there – who viewed public investment in education as vital to prosperity. Sunak’s Autumn Statement over a year ago as chancellor also promised to invest in our economic infrastructure, in innovation and in skills.

Now we all know there’s economic pain to endure this coming year and that there are skills and candidate shortages across the economy. We also know that 61% of the UK workforce is in some form of customer-facing role, and that customer

service isn’t immune to these skills and candidate shortages either. Retention and recruitment are key for organisations. Getting service right the first time can spring £9.24bn a month back into organisations’ collective budgets, as they will be able to avoid time spent dealing with complaints (July 2022 UKCSI).

We know this government needs to find a way to drive a more productive and more prosperous UK. It needs to work out – quickly – how it’s going to tackle these shortages to aid economic recovery. Why not start with investment in ‘soft’ skills and those relevant to service? From a utilitarian viewpoint, it makes the most sense, given the amount of individuals working in customer-facing roles and that eye-watering £9.24bn a month being lost to businesses by being ploughed into complaint handling instead of growing their organisations.

But there’s another point here too when it comes to service roles. The rollout of artificial intelligence, of automation and the impact of the pandemic, have starkly shifted the role of those staff who are customer facing. These roles are becoming more professional, with an entirely different skill set required than just being able to turn up and operate a till for a shift.

It’s clear that Sunak needs to double down on service skills investment across the country to improve productivity and make the UK a truly first-class Service Nation. Let’s see what he does from here.

...by Oliver Hazell, account director, Cavendish Advocacy



SERVICE WITH RESPECT

In spring 2020, as the nation entered its first lockdown, our All-Party Parliamentary Group on Customer Service heard shocking testimonies of the abuse being endured by customer-facing workers.

Following a call for further evidence and our own polling – which showed the breadth, scale and pan-sector nature of this issue – we launched our Service with Respect campaign in the summer of 2020.

Back then, we had no idea of what it would become, the support it would garner and the meaningful change that it would inspire.

A year ago, 75 CEOs, executives and Parliamentarians signed our open letter – published in *The Times* – reminding government on the urgent need to legislate in order to protect workers from customer abuse. Shortly after, an amendment to the Sentencing Bill was approved, ensuring tougher sentences for perpetrators.

Today, public awareness of the issue is much higher, and the media regularly approaches us to provide expert commentary and data on where things are heading.

Recent examples can be found on our [website](#), and include a feature on *BBC Breakfast*.



We worked with a cross-party group of Parliamentarians to support the government in changing the law through the Sentencing Act. However, we can all do more to communicate the new law change and deter perpetrators from abusing the people who are so critical to the smooth operation of our economy and our society.

For the past two years, we have been running a tracker survey, which has established that the issue has not got any better in the intervening period.

Our latest polling data, released last month, showed that:

- **45%** of respondents have experienced customer hostility in the past six months, up from 34.8% in February 2022.
- **40%** of those who reported facing hostility are either thinking or have thought about leaving their role because of it.
- **47%** of customer-facing workers said they were aware of the change in the law we campaigned for, but the awareness among customers is likely to be much lower.

Clearly, the cost-of-living and energy crises are a factor here – putting further strain on society and on those workers in frontline roles who are essential to our wellbeing and our economic recovery.

You can help us by joining the growing number of organisations displaying posters and window stickers highlighting the new legislation and asking people to be considerate of the people serving them. We are happy to provide these free of charge on request – just email us at campaigns@icsmail.co.uk, and we will arrange for them to be delivered to you.

Also, if you know of any other organisations you think would be happy to support our campaign, please introduce us and we will add them to our list of supporters.



TRUST INDEX

In November 2022 we launched our Trust Index™, an in-depth and independent evaluation of the true drivers and value of trust. Trust is high on the news agenda, and yet it is a difficult factor to measure, with every profession – from psychology to marketing – having its own take on how to track customer trust. Research we have undertaken for many years has shown that where organisations deliver exceptionally high levels of customer service, they have enhanced levels of trust and reputation. However, in our more detailed recent research, we can see just how interwoven these areas are.

Our research, which benchmarks *The Seven Drivers of Trust*, proves the link between service and trust: providing better service boosts customer trust, supports retention and drives recommendations. In a recent poll, eight in 10 buyers are more likely to trust an organisation that delivers effective service, and 81% say it is a key factor in choosing to remain as a customer. Achieving higher levels of service is therefore a much wider concern than simply the number of functional measures.

Organisations able to achieve high levels of customer trust are also able to unlock referrals and new opportunities, with 95% of customers actively recommending brands they trust. Conversely, 78% of customers are likely to seek an alternative in the event of their trust being broken.

Our Trust Index reveals that it comes down to customer reassurance, which immediately follows quality and reliability of services as a driver of trust.

Effective, human, personalised service reassures customers that an organisation is on their side. Conversely, customers may view those getting it wrong as not having their best interests at heart, as they experience broken promises and suffer repeated errors.

Fundamentally, the evidence shows the genuine impact and interlinked nature of a service-led culture and how it impacts across a number of key business drivers – productivity, return, reputation and trust.

As our Trust Index research reveals – and our new Trust Workshop emphasises – those businesses smart enough to focus on customer intimacy are better prepared for the challenging economic conditions ahead.

To help address this, we have developed an independent methodology and interactive workshop to help you understand, measure and, over time, build trust with customers.

As a member of The Institute, you can measure your own levels of trust and see how you perform against *The Seven Drivers of Trust* while comparing and benchmarking with other UK organisations, using the new Trust Index. Please get in touch to find out more.

Our Trust and Customer Experience workshop helps you explore the components of trust in small groups with people working in different sectors who are responsible for developing strategies or responsible for key customer measures and developing customer relationships.



Independent Trust Score



Identify areas for improvement



Benchmark and learn



Implement changes and improve levels of trust and reputation



Verbatim analysis to help prioritise actions



Understand the impact of trust

Speak to your Client Development Director to get started or visit the website: www.instituteofcustomer-service.com/standards-accreditation/professional-standards/trust-index/ for more information

UK CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX JANUARY 2023

The results of our latest UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI) will be revealed on Tuesday 24 January 2023 during a member-exclusive launch webinar.

The UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI) is a national benchmark of customer satisfaction based on how customers rate organisations across 26 measures, which cover transactional and functional efficiency, as well as broader relationship aspects such as emotional connection and ethics. By using a consistent set of measures across 13 sectors, the UKCSI provides a unique benchmark of customer satisfaction performance both within and across sectors.

The webinar and the UKCSI report published by The Institute will highlight the latest customer satisfaction results and trends, with particular focus on how the rising cost of living is influencing

customer attitudes and behaviours. The Institute's research and engagement with organisations and leaders suggests that customer service and business performance outcomes are more the product of organisational culture than of specific activities or investments. The UKCSI will identify essential elements in building a customer service culture.

As well as the UKCSI State of the Nation report, The Institute publishes 13 sector reports which include customer satisfaction results by organisation and a range of sector benchmarks and insights.

Register for our member-only launch webinar at: www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/e/ukcsi-jan-23/

CUSTOMER SERVICE TRENDS REPORT 2023

Organisations are facing mounting pressures against a backdrop of rising inflation, staffing and skills shortages and supply chain issues. As we enter the new year amid another wave of uncertainty, now is a timely moment to reflect on the past year and re-evaluate the many challenges for businesses, customers, regulators and government in 2023.

With customer expectations on the rise, how can businesses keep up with such changes? Will customer attitudes, needs and behaviours become more polarised? How will customer service leaders make the case to maintain or increase investment in service? In sectors providing essential services, what are the minimum levels of service organisations need to deliver? How will leaders focus on both short and long-term priorities, especially in workforce planning?

These questions are complex and inter-related, and they have become more urgent. They will require acute sensitivity and an understanding of changes in customer behaviour and context, a commitment to ethical standards and governance, clarity of purpose, customer experience strategy and delivery. How we respond to these complex, long-term challenges will have significant and profound consequences for our organisation, its customers, shareholders and stakeholders and wider society.

The Institute's Customer Service Trends report 2023 highlights the key issues that will shape the customer service environment in the new year and how organisations will need to adapt.

The full report is now available to download from the research hub free of charge: ip.instituteofcustomerservice.com/trends-2023

Dates for the diary

12 JAN 2023: Head to Head with Paul Philpott (Kia UK)

30 JAN 2023: Head to Head with Nick Atkin (Yorkshire Housing)

19 JAN 2023: Trust and Customer Experience Workshop

9 FEB 2023: Head to Head with Mario Mazzocchi (Wesleyan)

24 JAN 2023: UKCSI Launch

7 MAR 2023: Annual Conference and UK Customer Satisfaction Awards

For details of our events programme, please visit:
www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/events

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2023 Annual Conference

7 March 2023

Hilton on Park Lane, London

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- Hear from leading organisations such as Amazon, Sainsbury's and United Utilities about thriving in the new service nation
- Receive valuable insights from inspirational leaders
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