

Certificate in Customer Service Level 3

Series 3 2003

How to use this booklet

Model Answers have been developed by LCCIEB to offer additional information and guidance to Centres, teachers and candidates as they prepare for LCCIEB examinations. The contents of this booklet are divided into 3 elements:

- (1) Questions – reproduced from the printed examination paper
- (2) Model Answers – summary of the main points that the Chief Examiner expected to see in the answers to each question in the examination paper, plus a fully worked example or sample answer (where applicable)
- (3) Helpful Hints – where appropriate, additional guidance relating to individual questions or to examination technique

Teachers and candidates should find this booklet an invaluable teaching tool and an aid to success.

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board provides Model Answers to help candidates gain a general understanding of the standard required. The Board accepts that candidates may offer other answers that could be equally valid.

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QUESTION 1 (Compulsory)

A customer makes several attempts to telephone a company, but each time the line is engaged. The customer tries again, and the call is at last answered after 5 minutes. The customer asks for the required extension, but is put on hold for a further minute with no explanation. When the extension is finally answered, the caller is told abruptly that the person who can help is out of the office, and is asked to call back later.

- (a) Identify **3** failures in the above scenario and give a possible organisational reason for each. (6 marks)
- (b) Identify **3** barriers to communication in the above scenario and state for **each** what the customer might presume about staff behaviour. (6 marks)
- (c) Write a **5**-point procedure on how to deal with calls for an absent colleague. (5 marks)
- (d) Compose **2** questions for a customer survey on the efficiency of telephone answering. (4 marks)
- (e) Describe **one** qualitative and **one** quantitative technique for monitoring telephone answering. (4 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

Model Answer to Question 1

(a) Shortcomings with possible reasons:

The line is frequently engaged

- possibly the company has an insufficient number of telephone lines

It takes a long time for the telephonist to answer the call

- possibly the switchboard is understaffed

The employee is unable to assist the customer

- possibly the company does not train staff to cover for each other

(b) Barriers to communication and presumptions about staff behaviour about each:

Line engaged

- telephone has been taken off the hook

Wait a minute to be put through

- telephonist has forgotten about the call

Abrupt and unhelpful response

- staff cannot be bothered to assist

(c) 5 point procedure on how to deal with calls for an absent colleague:

- apologise for the named person being unavailable
- explain that you are unable to assist
- take the customer's details and message
- say when the named person will call back
- leave a message for the colleague

(d) Questions for a customer survey of the efficiency of telephone answering:

- when you last tried to contact the company by telephone, how many times did you ring before your call was answered?
- approximately how many rings do you normally wait before being connected to the required extension?

(e) A qualitative observational technique for monitoring telephone answering:

- people listening, noting the manner of communication with callers

A quantitative observational technique for monitoring telephone answering:

- electronic recording devices fitted to the telephone system to monitor the speed of answering

QUESTION 2

- (a) (i) Give **4** categories of stress. (4 marks)
- (ii) For **each** category of stress, state **2** methods of relief in work situations. (8 marks)
- (b) Describe **3** ways in which colleagues could react when an individual takes personal risks, and give an example of each. (9 marks)
- (c) Give **4** ways in which members of staff benefit when they are part of a problem-solving team. (4 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

Model Answer to Question 2

- (a) (i) Categories of stress are:
- **Behavioural**
 - **Physical**
 - **Psychological**
 - **Emotional**
- (ii) **Behavioural**
- say 'no' to extra work
 - plan work more effectively
- Physical**
- if a sedentary job, walk around
 - if on your feet, put feet up at breaks
- Psychological**
- assertiveness training
 - breathing exercises
- Emotional**
- talk through problems with a colleague
 - do gentle exercises
- (b) Examples of personal risks and how colleagues might react:
- the individual visits a customer's home to deliver a service normally delivered on the employer's premises: could cause suspicion, mistrust, alienation
 - the individual does not conform to ways of working accepted by colleagues: could lead to the individual being ostracised
 - the individual tells customers of competitors who offer better value for money could be looked on unfavourably by superiors
- (c) Ways in which members of staff benefit when they are part of a problem-solving team:
- pressure is not placed on individuals to solve problems
 - a positive attitude can be generated, which can rub off on individuals
 - a team will have management support
 - everyone has a chance to contribute

An additional acceptable answer could be:

- team members support each other

QUESTION 3

A supermarket is receiving many complaints that goods are frequently not available on its shelves.

- (a) Give **4** groups of people who may be responsible for the out-of-stock situation, and for **each** state **one** way in which they could make possible improvements. (8 marks)
- (b) Give **4** principles that the supermarket manager might follow to persuade those responsible for the shortages to make improvements. (8 marks)
- (c) State **4** reasons why shop staff may be suffering stress in this scenario. (4 marks)
- (d) Give an example of a technical system that is designed to avoid out-of-stock situations. (5 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

Model Answer to Question 3

- (a) People who may be responsible for the out-of-stock situation, and how they could make possible improvements:

Stock control staff

- could make the stock re-ordering system more efficient

The manufacturers

- could make more goods

Delivery staff

- could re-route deliveries to arrive earlier

An additional acceptable answer could be:

Administration staff

- could handle orders more promptly

- (b) Principles that the supermarket manager might follow to persuade those responsible for the shortages to make improvements:

- make sure that all the facts are available before stating case
- understand their points of view and look at things from their perspective
- make sure he puts the case and points out the problem
- tell them firmly the consequences if they don't improve

- (c) Reasons why shop staff may be suffering stress in this scenario:

- being blamed for something that is not their fault
- regular complaints from customers who are always fed-up
- the large volume of complaints coming in
- unable to serve customers because of lack of goods

An additional acceptable answer could be:

- feeling desperate because they can't do anything to solve the problem

- (d) An example of a technical system designed to avoid stock-out situations:

With electronic point of sale, goods have a barcode affixed that is read at point of sale by a scanner linked to a computer, automatically reducing the stock-holding figure. When stock reaches a predetermined figure, the computer instructs the warehouse to deliver more goods.

QUESTION 4

- (a) (i) List **3** benefits of continuous improvement. (3 marks)
- (ii) Give an example of how an organisation has achieved continuous improvement. (4 marks)
- (b) (i) Explain why the objective of customer satisfaction is important to service organisations. (3 marks)
- (ii) List **3** expectations that customers commonly have when buying goods and services. (3 marks)
- (c) (i) Identify **3** customer needs and, for **each**, a conflicting need of organisations. (6 marks)
- (ii) State what organisations can do to satisfy both sets of needs. (6 marks)
- (Total 25 marks)**

Model Answer to Question 4

- (a) (i) **Benefits of continuous improvement**
- the organisation can stay ahead of competition
 - the organisation can improve relationships with customers
 - market share can be increased
- (ii) The Disney Corporation started with the simple Walt Disney cartoons and progressed to full-length feature films. The company has moved also into retailing, selling merchandise allied to the Disney films. Theme parks were established in the USA, first in California, followed by several more sophisticated parks in Florida, and more recently Eurodisney has been established. New innovations are regularly introduced in the theme parks.
- (b) (i) **Why the objective of customer satisfaction is important to service organisations**
- customers have expectations and needs
 - by meeting their expectations the business will flourish
 - there must be a sustained effort to retain customers
- (ii) **Expectations that customers commonly have when buying goods and services**
- reliability in product/service
 - value for money
 - respectful and courteous treatment
- (c) (i) Customer needs and conflicting needs of organisations; what organisations can do to satisfy both sets of needs:

Customer needs

- Low prices
- High quality
- Wide choice

Needs of organisations

- Reasonable profits
- Reduced costs
- Minimal stock levels

(ii) **Satisfaction of both through**

- Reduction in service levels
- Manufacture in low labour cost countries
- Have 'specials' to order

QUESTION 5

A couple on an overseas touring holiday lose all their money and other means of payment. They go to a local bank to seek help with acquiring funds.

- (a) Why does the bank clerk need a thorough knowledge of banking services in this case?
(3 marks)
- (b) Give **3** types of communication behaviour that the clerk may use in an interview with the couple, and explain how each would leave a positive impression.
(6 marks)
- (c) Explain **3** ways in which the clerk could demonstrate a personal commitment to assisting the couple when interviewing them.
(6 marks)
- (d) Explain **2** reasons why banking policy may not allow the couple's problem to be solved.
(6 marks)
- (e) Give **4** consequences for the couple if the bank is unable to help.
(4 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

Model Answer to Question 5

(a) Why the bank clerk needs a thorough knowledge of banking services in this case:

- it is not an everyday problem
- he/she needs to find some way of assisting
- he/she must be careful to offer only what can be delivered

An additional acceptable answer could be:

- he/she needs to know how to check that it is a genuine request

(b) Communication behaviour that the clerk could use in an interview with the couple, and how each type of behaviour would leave a positive impression:

Behaviour

- friendly voice
- active listening
- express sympathy

How it would leave a positive impression

- calm the customers
- show an attempt at trying to comprehend the problem
- show caring attitude

(c) Ways in which the clerk could demonstrate a personal commitment to assist the couple when interviewing them:

- by showing that he/she is positively searching for a solution
- by explaining fully all avenues open
- by explaining fully the reasons why he/she may be unable to assist

An additional acceptable answer could be:

- by explaining other possible options, if unable to assist

(d) Why banking policy may not allow the couple's problem to be solved:

- without cheque books or payment cards, the bank will not be able to give them funds immediately – if at all
- as they are abroad, it is unlikely that the bank is the one that they do business with at home, so the bank would not be able to access their funds

(e) Consequences for the couple if the bank is unable to help:

- inability to pay hotel bill
- inability to travel around
- inability to buy meals
- going without entertainment

An additional acceptable answer could be:

- need to return home early

QUESTION 6

An organisation is receiving a large number of complaints, and the management believes that changes need to be made in order to improve the service to customers.

- (a) Describe how customer problems could be assessed for risk and put into categories according to priority. (10 marks)
- (b) List 3 research methods that the organisation could use to involve its customers when developing services. (3 marks)
- (c) (i) Give 3 reasons why staff in the organisation might resist changing the services. (6 marks)
- (ii) Explain how the management might attempt to overcome this resistance. (6 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

Model Answer to Question 6

- (a) How customer problems could be assessed for risk and put into order of priority:
- sort problems into types
 - make an assessment of the consequences of each type of problem
 - assign a score to each problem type according to seriousness
 - give descriptors to risk categories
 - put categories of problems in a prioritisation list according to risk
- (b) Research methods that the organisation could use to involve its customers when developing services:
- test groups
 - surveys
 - customer panels
- (c) (i) Reasons why staff in the organisation might resist changing the services:
- staff are production- rather than customer-focused
 - the organisation is easily meeting its current objectives
 - the staff would have to make an effort to learn new methods

An additional acceptable answer could be:

- staff refuse to move with the times

- (ii) How the management might attempt to overcome this resistance:
- hold a staff conference to educate employees on problems encountered by customers
 - meet groups of staff to listen to their fears and allay them
 - allow staff to come up with their own ideas for solving customers' problems



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