

Strengths and Limitations of each profile factor when it comes to relating to and building rapport with clients

Effective and successful customer care requires the provider to be attuned to the customer's needs as a prelude to meeting those needs. It is therefore important not only to consider the way different personalities behave towards customers but also the expectations that those different personalities have.

Dominance

Dominant people are generally direct, demanding and forceful with a strong results-orientation. They are motivated by power and control with a need to achieve.

Strengths

Such individuals will assume responsibility for maintaining customer satisfaction and will challenge precedents in pursuit of new and better ways of doing things. Because of their fear of failure they will tackle problems with great vigour. In direct discussions with customers, dominant people will not waste time in idle conversation but will get straight to the point.

Limitations

They tend not to be suited to routine work and so can be inattentive to detail, sometimes failing to register and address all the customer's requirements. They could also become blunt and sarcastic or even aggressive if pressed very hard by a dissatisfied or unreasonable customer. Such people are likely to discount customer feelings and may not make time for building relationships or providing full explanations.

Influence

People with influencing characteristics tend to be good communicators, persuasive, friendly and verbally assertive. Generally optimistic they strive for popularity, praise and recognition.

Strengths

Strong influencers make time to establish rapport with customers and build personal one-to-one relationships. Being good communicators they use their verbal skills to present a positive picture to customers and to reassure them when necessary, using empathy to convey understanding of customer's situation. They tend to look for ways to give customers what they want in order to maintain positive relationships.

Limitations

Because they fear rejection they may allow concern for the current customer to distort the organisation's provision for customers in general. Concern for relationships may lead them to spend time on social chit chat that is perceived as time wasting by a busy customer. Influencers also have a tendency to make rash promises which then lead to disappointment if not fulfilled.

Steadiness

High Steadiness people are thorough, organised and dependable with an easy going manner and helpful approach. They are motivated by security, sincerity and continuity.

Strengths

Individuals who are High S tend to be patient listeners who therefore allow as much time as it takes for customers to explain their situation in full. Generally such people are sympathetic to the customer's point of view and very willing to do whatever they can to help. Being methodical, they tend to follow service procedures through to a conclusion and leave no stone unturned.

Limitations

They tend to prefer to maintain the status quo and may therefore resist change which would be to the benefit of customers. High S people can have difficulty meeting tight deadlines because of their methodical manner and their mistrust of short cut methods. They find it hard to say 'no' and so tend to take on too much. Prioritising their workload can then become a problem because of their preference for finishing one job before starting another.

Compliance

Compliant individuals are logical, accurate and systematic with a cautious diplomatic approach to other people. They strive to avoid conflict and are motivated by reassurance, clear objectives and standard operating procedures.

Strengths

They are perfectionists who will strive to perform to high quality standards and therefore aim to fulfil all the customer's requirements. Being naturally systematic, compliant individuals operate systems to perfection in order to get the right product to the right place at the right time with the right paperwork. They communicate logically and factually with evidence to support their position. This generates trust on the part of customers who do not feel they are being fobbed off.

Limitations

Compliant individuals can be very inflexible in sticking rigidly to rules and systems which do not address the customer's needs.

Such individuals may resist accepting responsibility or may even pass the buck in pressure situations, leaving customers feeling they have not been handled effectively. High C people can get bogged down in detail and may ignore the emotional element of customer relations in favour of factual solutions.