

JOB PROFILE: CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

WHAT DOES A CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER DO?

Customer service managers manage a team of customer service assistants or advisers who offer help to customers, and are often the first point of contact with an organisation. They would normally handle enquiries, complaints, and may provide services or sell goods.

As a customer service manager you may be expected to liaise with a sales team for customer feedback, deal with complaints communicate new products, and service improvement.

Other duties may involve:

- training customer service staff
- setting targets and motivating staff to meet them
- dealing with difficult or sensitive enquiries
- arranging work rotas and making sure that there are always enough staff to cover the services
- making sure everyone understands the organisation's standards and policies
- making sure everyone understands the legal implications of their work (for example, consumer legislation or data protection)
- keeping staff up to date with changes in policies and legislation
- helping to recruit customer services assistants
- conducting job appraisals and dealing with any staffing issues that arise.

WHAT'S A WORKING WEEK LIKE?

In a full-time job you would work between 35 and 40 hours a week, although part-time work and job sharing are often available. Shift work including evenings and weekends is common in the retail, leisure and contact centre industries.

You could work from an office or a customer services desk. The working environment can be very busy and pressurised. You may need to wear a uniform in some jobs, particularly if you deal with customers face-to-face. The working environment can be very busy.

WHAT SKILLS WOULD I NEED TO BECOME A CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER?

You will need:

- a genuine interest in helping customers
- excellent communication skills
- the ability to work as part of a team
- a polite, tactful and friendly attitude
- patience and calmness under pressure
- the ability to handle complaints and difficult situations
- computer and administrative skills
- basic mathematical skills.
- leadership and motivational skills
- be able to make decisions, sometimes under pressure
- be a good organiser.

HOW DO I BECOME A CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER?

One way to get into customer services management would be to start as a customer service assistant and work your way up to supervisor or team leader then to manager. You will usually be trained on the job by your employer. Larger organisations often have their own structured in-house management training programmes.

Your training may include in-house assessment for NVQ levels 3 and 4 in Customer Service, or Institute of Customer Service (ICS) Professional Awards in Communication,

Solutions and Innovations (if your employer is a member of ICS).

You could also choose to work towards general management qualifications from the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) or the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM)

ONGOING DEVELOPMENT

You could work for large or small companies in all kinds of employment sectors, including retail, banking and insurance, travel and leisure, telecommunications, manufacturing, local government and other public sector organisations. Jobs may be advertised in local newspapers, Jobcentre Plus, recruitment agencies and by employers on their own websites or in-store.

With experience, you could progress to senior / departmental management and depending on the type of employer you may be able to progress into other areas such as sales or account handling. Good customer service skills are in demand in all industries, so you could also use your skills to move into other careers.

SALARIES

(Figures are intended as a guideline only)

- Trainee managers usually earn between £16,000 and £20,000 a year.
- Experienced managers usually earn from £20,000 to £40,000 a year.
- Senior managers in large organisations may earn up to £60,000 a year.

Bonuses or commission may also be available in some sectors like retail, sales or banking.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Skillsmart Retail

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Institute of Customer Service (ICS)

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Chartered Management Institute (CMI)

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Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM)

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