PURSUING SERVICE EXCELLENCE
the value and impact of customer service strategies

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Over the past decade, hospital laboratories have experienced significant changes related to their scope of services and have expanded their role in the healthcare delivery system. Historically, hospital labs provided testing services only to the inpatient population. Today, they compete in the non-patient market, optimizing capacities, offering comprehensive services to their local communities, and growing their market share. This growth-oriented business model requires the laboratory to service a broad geographic territory, performing testing for physicians’ offices, nursing homes, home health, occupational medicine, and other niche markets. In doing so, hospital labs have developed comprehensive service offerings and technological capabilities. In the process, customer service has become one of the most significant and important differentiating competitive factors. The challenge faced by most hospital laboratories in regard to service issues is that their competitors have already set the service expectations. This leaves hospital laboratories needing to enter the marketplace fully prepared to match service levels or, in many cases, exceed current service expectations to compete successfully.

This course teaches the value and impact customer service strategies have on daily operations and how they directly relate to laboratory viability. It will educate participants about the evolution of the laboratory industry and show the value of a customer service mentality. Specifically, this course will provide skill development in the following areas:

1. Develop the skills necessary for managing successful customer interactions.
2. Implement active-listening skills to enhance customer satisfaction.
3. Utilize techniques for ensuring greater customer loyalty and retention.
4. Identify opportunities for improving service protocols and processes within the laboratory.
5. Recognize the value of a positive attitude and its contribution to a customer service culture.
6. Identify specific personality characteristics common to outstanding customer service providers that can be assessed during the hiring process.
7. Understand techniques available for “retooling” service skills and processes within the laboratory to create a customer-friendly organization.
8. Develop professional communication skills to enhance customers’ perceptions of the laboratory.
9. Determine the value of customer service and its impact on a laboratory’s ability to compete in the marketplace.
10. Incorporate strategies for dealing with angry and irate customers.
11. Develop alternative resolutions to create a service interaction where customers feel in control of their own service experience.
12. Determine the difference between dictating service interaction outcomes versus facilitating outcomes, which leads to a more satisfying customer experience.
13. Improve communication skills by understanding the implications of body language and tone of voice.
Test your customer service knowledge
Survey findings on customer service
A comprehensive look at customer service
Exercise: identifying your customers

Customer service fundamentals
- Customer service skills and definitions
- Developing positive customer relations
  - Discovering customers’ needs
  - Exercise: discovering customers’ needs and preparing alternative solutions
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- Customer service skills and definitions
  - Developing positive customer relations
  - Discovering customers’ needs
  - Exercise: discovering customers’ needs and preparing alternative solutions
  - Exercise: the complexities of communication
  - Principles of communication
  - Communication and active-listening skills
  - Responding to customers’ needs
  - Exercise: discovering and responding to customers’ needs
  - Anticipating customers’ needs
  - Exercise: discovering and anticipating customers’ needs
  - Working together to meet customers’ needs
  - Ensuring customer loyalty
  - Exercise: ensuring customer loyalty

How to handle the irate, angry, rude, cold, unhappy, and sometimes abrasive customers
Seventeen dimensions of customer service
Seven deadly sins for customer service providers
“Retooling” your customer service skills
Some final thoughts about customers

Course duration: four hours

This course is P.A.C.E.® eligible.