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Abstract

Detail an example of managing a key customer relationship

Transversal SKills Year 2

Heading 2

# Introduction

This document will detail an example in my workplace in which I managed a key customer relationship. It will discuss what a key customer relationship is and its importance in an ICT environment, and my experience in managing a key customer relationship. The document will then conclude with how my experiences in the workplace have shaped my understanding of key customer relationships and the importance of managing them in my role as an ICT specialist.

Key customer relationships are an essential part of an IT oriented environment. They comprise mainly of end users of any programs that are developed in the ICT oriented environment. These end users generally are external to the ICT department and organisation, but often they are within the organisation itself, albeit in a different department. These end users, or project stakeholders, will be consulted throughout the project development process in order to be kept up to date on the project progress and to suggest changes if necessary. It is important to maintain these customer relationships, be it by keeping them up to date with progress or informing them of any changes. These are important in the example in which I managed a key customer relationship in the workplace.

# Scenario

## Background

A colleague and I were tasked by our manager to work on a project that concerned the needs of fellow ICT colleagues. We were required to develop an application for the Helpdesk staff in our department to help them with completing daily tasks. The application would automate any tasks that required the manual input of SQL commands, with users filling in the appropriate fields and clicking a button to run the SQL command. This would reduce the chance of any errors occurring that are present when an SQL command is entered manually. The application would also include any other functionality that the Helpdesk staff would find useful. The project development process would include meeting with a representative of the Helpdesk staff to discuss potential features. This Helpdesk staff representative would serve as our go between with the rest of the Helpdesk Staff throughout the rest of the development process. As a result, my colleague and I would have to be able to adequately manage this key customer relationship.

## Managing the Customer Relationship

First and foremost, it was important that my colleague and I met with the customer, in this case the Helpdesk staff, to discuss the project. To do so, we arranged a meeting with a representative of the Helpdesk staff. Before this meeting, my colleague and I discussed and prepared several appropriate questions to ask regarding desired application features. By preparing these questions, we were able to converse with the customer and project confidence in the application we intended to create. This would fill, in turn, the customer themselves with confidence in their finished product. It is an important part of managing a customer relationship to instil the customer with confidence in the work you will and have produced.

Further into the project development progress, it was important to keep the customer up to date with the project progress. This meant scheduling regular meetings with all project stakeholders to discuss and update them about the project. By doing this, it keeps the customer informed about the project and open to enquiring about and suggesting changes to different aspects of the project, which, even if they are not satisfied with some parts of it, they will be confident about the finished product as their input is being recognised and instituted. It is an important part of managing a customer relationship to allow customer input throughout the project development process and fill their confidence even more about the finished product.

Finally, when the project was completed and the application deployed for use by the Helpdesk Staff, it was essential that my colleague and I kept in touch with the customer, in order to be kept aware of any bugs or other issues and problems that may have arisen with the project. This meant responding in a timely manner to any emails or other messages from the customer and fixing any problems or issues promptly. By doing this, the customer is reassured about the quality of the project, and the enthusiasm of the development team even in post-deployment. It is an important part of managing a customer relationship to keep the confidence of the customer even after the project is complete as it could potentially mean more business if the customer decides to return with another project to complete

# Conclusion

Managing key customer relationships is an essential aspect of working in an ICT environment. It is not only concerning external customers, but also customers within the ICT department and organisation as a whole. When completing projects, it is essential that an initial meeting is held with the customer to discuss the project, the customer is kept up to date throughout the development process, and that the development team is still in touch with the customer even after the project is completed, in order to fix any bugs, issues or problems that may arise when the project is deployed. These are important to managing and maintaining a relationship with the customer, as confidence is instilled in the customer, when they meet a prepared development team in the initial meeting, when they are talking to the development team about changing something during a regular progress meeting, and when the development team is addressing any issues they have discovered with the finished product. A confident customer is more likely to be a repeat customer and to bring more customers, which is essential in an ICT oriented environment. As an ICT Specialist, it is important for me to be able to maintain and manage key customer relationships, as it is an essential part of my role that I must be successful at in order to be assigned to and complete high quality projects in a timely manner.