



# Trainer Guide

## Preparation & Activities

### Target Audience

Identify the target audience and their characteristics. If there is a primary and secondary audience, compare their similarities and differences.

- Foster parents
- Internal Staff
- External stakeholders
- Board members
- Service Providers
- Case Management staff
- Investigative staff
- Executive leadership

### Course Objectives

After completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Define customer service in child welfare
- Differentiate between internal and external customers in child welfare
- Increase knowledge of customer service standards and guiding principles
- Identify the steps of quality customer service
- Understand the importance of proper face to face, phone and electronic communication with customers
- Understand the importance of providing optimal service delivery and how that leads to the recruitment and retention of resource families
- Understand the relationship between excellent customer service at all levels and the delivery of quality care for our children



# Trainer Guide

## Preparation & Activities

### Class Size

Minimum: 20 attendees

Maximum: 45 attendees

### Equipment and Materials

- LCD projector compatible with a laptop computer and cables for proper connection
- Speakers (for videos)
- Electronic remote device to advance slides in PowerPoint presentation, if available
- Trainer Guide, Handouts, Copies of PowerPoint
- Flip chart with markers
- Sign-In sheet, evaluations, and certificates of attendance

### Room Requirements

The room should be large enough to accommodate tables and chairs for up to 45 participants. Instructors should arrange the room based on the number of participants. The ideal arrangement allows participants to interact with the instructors and each other; e.g., a U- or V-shape arrangement, clusters of work areas, etc. Avoid lecture hall type of arrangements.

### Trainer Tips to Remember:

- Ensure all participants are informed of the start and end time of training
- Remember to establish ground rules for the training (phones on vibrate, respecting others viewpoints etc.)
- Provided a brief verbal introduction of the trainer
- Encouraged participation in the training
- Reminded participants to sign the sign in sheet at beginning of training & complete the training evaluation

**Remember good customer service is starting the training on time and staying in the allotted timeframe for the training.**



## Trainer Guide: Activities

### Activity 1: The Role of Customer Service

Time: 15 Minutes

**Purpose:** This activity is designed to have participants brainstorm the definition of customer service and the types of customers we serve.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE MODEL

### Group Activity

THE ROLE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Define customer service
- Identify and list internal and external customers
- Pick one representative from group to present

Good service makes the difference!

Customer Service  
 Excellent  
 Good  
 Average  
 Poor

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#### Materials:

- Trainer Guide
- Flip chart
- Markers

#### Trainer Instructions:

- Divide the room into groups
- Ask groups to agree to one definition of what customer service is to them
- Instruct participants to think about who their internal & external customers are & list them
- After the allotted time, allow groups to present their answers
- Remind attendees what customer service in child welfare is defined as: Customer Service begins at the first point of contact and extends throughout all of our relationships. We are respectful, courteous, communicative and professional with each other, with our children, families, community partners and the public.

### ACTIVITY STOP



## Trainer Guide: Activities

### Activity 2: What is Customer Service?

Time: 20 Minutes

**Purpose:** For attendees to identify examples of good customer service versus poor customer service based on past experiences and how it made them feel.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE MODEL

### What is Customer Service?

- Describe a time you have received good customer service and how did it make you feel?
- Describe a time you have received poor customer service and how did it make you feel?
- Describe a time you experienced good customer service in child welfare
- Describe a time you experienced poor customer service in child welfare

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A graphic showing a 'Customer Service' scale with levels: Excellent, Good, Average, Poor.

### Materials needed:

- Trainer Guide

### Trainer Instructions:

- Ask for a volunteer to answer: What is good customer service?
- Prompt attendees to think of a time when they received excellent customer service and give an example.
- Have a few people share
- Ask attendees to next think of a time when they received poor customer service and give an example.
- Allow a few people to share their experiences and how it made them feel.
- Which experience (the negative or the positive) did you tell friends and family about and/or shared on social media and on-line reviews the most?
- In summary, state that positive and negative customer service experiences can really mold our impressions of people.

### ACTIVITY STOP



## Trainer Guide: Activities

### Activity 3: Using Solution-Based Language

Time: 15 minutes

**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is for attendees to reframe and practice using constructive words that are solution-based rather than blame-based

#### Materials Needed:

- Trainer Guide
- Activity 3 Handout:  
(Solution-Based Language Activity)

The thumbnail shows a slide titled "Activity Using Solution-Based Language". It includes the Florida's Child Welfare Customer Service Model logo and a graphic of a bar chart with categories: Knowledge, Good, Average, and Poor. The text on the slide reads: "Using constructive words that are solution-based rather than blame-based is another valuable customer service tool." It lists "Instead of saying...." with two columns of examples: "I need (want) you to...", "I'll try...", "Sorry...", "You are required to...", "You must..." and "You have to...", "We don't do that here...", "I can't do that...", "You need to...", "Don't you want to be a better parent?".

#### Trainer Instructions:

- Review what solution-based language is (refer to PowerPoint slide)
- Ask attendees to work in small groups to come up with solution-based answers to the statements provided on the activity sheet
- Debrief answers with attendees

#### - Blame-Based/Negative Responses

1. Look Mrs. Knowitall, I need you to get it together.
2. As the foster mother you need to pick the child up from daycare today, this is what you signed up for & I don't have time.
3. I guess I can see what I can do if you insist.
4. Sorry! That is not going to happen today.
5. It's not my fault you got your kid removed in the first place.
6. You have to or I'm telling the judge!
7. That's not my job!
8. Don't you see how much of a failure you've been with your children?

#### - Solution-Based Responses (suggested responses)

1. It sounds as if you are really frustrated with the process Mrs. Knowitall, let me see how I can help.
2. Sorry that you're having a difficult time today with pick up from the daycare, I have several appointments however let me see if I can rearrange some or find a transporter or co-worker who can assist us with picking the child up.
3. It sounds like this is pretty concerning to you, let me see what I can do to help.
4. Unfortunately time won't permit for me to be able to get that completed today; however, I can follow up with you tomorrow afternoon.
5. Lets focus on how I can help you get your children back in your care.
6. I really want to be able to report to the judge the progress that you've made.
7. Let me see if I can get you in touch with the department that handles this matter.
8. This has been a hard process for everyone. Let's work together to get your children home.

## ACTIVITY STOP



## Activity 3

### Solution-Based Language Activity

Using constructive words that are solution-based, write new sentences that are customer focused.

Look Ms. Knowitall, I need you to get it together!	
As the foster mother you need to pick the child up from daycare today, this is what you signed up for and I don't have time.	
I guess I can see what I can do if you insist.	
Sorry that's not going to happen today!	
It's not my fault that you got your kid removed in the first place.	
You have to or I'm telling the judge!	
That's not my job!	
Don't you see how much of a failure you've been with your children?	



## Trainer Guide: Activities

### Activity 4: Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment

Time: 15 Minutes

This is an individual activity.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to allow participants to self evaluate their interpersonal skills and how they would respond to a situation.

#### Materials Needed:

- Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment handout
- Trainer guide
- Answer key for the Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment

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CUSTOMER SERVICE MODEL

**Activity:**  
Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment

This is an individual assignment

Review the questions on the Interpersonal Self-Assessment and select the answer that best describes how you would respond in the scenario.

Customer Service  
Excellent  
Good  
Average  
Poor

#### Trainer Instructions:

- State that “Interpersonal Skills” are the skills used by a person to interact with others properly. In the business domain, the term generally refers to an employee’s ability to get along with others while getting the job done.
- Instruct attendees to work on this activity independently as this is an assessment of their personal style when interacting with others.
- Refer to the answer key for the most appropriate answers with attendees.

## ACTIVITY STOP



## Activity 4: Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment

Answer the questions below honestly. Your communication style matters when it comes to the reputation you build at work, and how effective you can be in your customer service skills.

### **Basic Interpersonal Etiquette**

#### **1. When I first meet someone,**

- a. I wait for the other person to introduce themselves.
- b. I introduce myself with a smile and offer a handshake.
- c. I hug the person.

#### **2. When I first meet someone,**

- a. I make an effort to remember and use their name.
- b. I don't pay attention to names, as I tend to forget them.
- c. I only learn the names of important people.

#### **3. When speaking with others,**

- a. I try to equalize my participation in the conversation.
- b. I usually do most of the talking.
- c. I usually let the other person do most of the talking.

#### **4. In conversations,**

- a. I frequently use courtesy words and phrases – “thank you, please, sorry.”
- b. I occasionally use courtesy words and phrases.
- c. I never use courtesy words and phrases.

### **Core Communication Style**

#### **1. When starting a conversation, I usually**

- a. “Warm-up” new conversations with small talk.
- b. Avoid small talk and jump into more important matters.
- c. Avoid starting conversations.

#### **2. When I discuss a topic,**

- a. I tend to talk about and focus on positive (good) aspects.
- b. I tend to talk about and focus on the negative (bad) aspects.
- c. I tend to complain.





**3. While listening,**

- a. I tend to be distracted by things going on around me.
- b. I listen for meaning and ask questions.
- c. I listen intently and I don't ask questions, as it would be impolite.

**4. While conversing**

- a. I tend to interrupt before the other person is done speaking to show my excitement for the subject.
- b. I wait until the other person is done speaking before I speak.
- c. I try to talk as little as possible.

**5. When I disagree with a person,**

- a. I listen first, ask questions for clarification, then disagree non-judgmentally.
- b. I quickly point out that they're wrong, and why.
- c. I say little or nothing.

**6. When I have a negative opinion or comment,**

- a. I just say it.
- b. I lead in with a positive comment first.
- c. I say nothing.

**7. To end a conversation,**

- a. I often just leave.
- b. I begin to look impatient, hoping that the person will get the hint.
- c. I wrap up with a closing statement.

**Non-verbal Communication Etiquette**

**1. In conversations,**

- a. I tend to be serious and don't smile often.
- b. I smile all the time.
- c. I smile at appropriate times.



**2. While conversing,**

- a. I make eye contact.
- b. I sometimes make eye contact.
- c. I never make eye contact.

**3. While conversing,**

- a. I hold my head still at all times.
- b. I nod my head at appropriate times.
- c. I nod my head constantly.

**4. While conversing,**

- a. I stand one-foot away from the person.
- b. I stand two- to three-feet away from the person.
- c. I stand five- to six-feet away from the person.

**5. When I am listening to the other person,**

- a. I often cross my arms over my chest.
- b. I often lean back and turn my body away from the speaker.
- c. I often lean slightly forward and face my body toward the speaker.

**6. When I'm in a group,**

- a. I tend to frown a lot.
- b. I tend to smile and use humor at appropriate times.
- c. I tend to be serious.



## Activity 4: Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment Answer Key

### Basic Interpersonal Etiquette

1. B
2. A
3. A
4. B

### Core Communication Style

1. A
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. A
6. B
7. C

### Non-verbal Communication Etiquette

1. C
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. C
6. B



## Trainer Guide: Activities

### Activity 5: Customer Service Pledge

Time: 3-5 minutes

**Purpose:** The Customer Service Pledge will serve as a catalyst of the skills discussed in the training and give attendees an opportunity to verbally commit to represent the organization and themselves by providing excellent customer service to both internal and external stakeholders.

#### Materials Needed:

- Display PowerPoint Slide: Customer Service Pledge

A screenshot of a PowerPoint slide titled "Customer Service Pledge". The slide has a blue header with the text "Florida's Child Welfare CUSTOMER SERVICE MODEL". The main content is a list of commitments: "Today and everyday, I commit myself to providing quality customer service by: Understanding customers come first, Delivering a smiling, helpful, positive, professional outlook and attitude, Treating everyone with respect, fairness, and dignity, Listening to our customers with a caring demeanor, Returning phone calls within one business day, Providing knowledgeable answers, and resolving issues promptly and accurately, Keeping customers informed about their concerns, Continually exceeding customer expectations, Understanding customer satisfaction is a direct reflection of our effectiveness as an organization." There is a small graphic on the right side of the slide showing a bar chart with three bars labeled "Excellent", "Good", and "Average".

Florida's Child Welfare  
CUSTOMER SERVICE MODEL

### Customer Service Pledge

Today and everyday, I commit myself to providing quality customer service by:

- Understanding customers come first
- Delivering a smiling, helpful, positive, professional outlook and attitude
- Treating everyone with respect, fairness, and dignity
- Listening to our customers with a caring demeanor
- Returning phone calls within one business day
- Providing knowledgeable answers, and resolving issues promptly and accurately
- Keeping customers informed about their concerns
- Continually exceeding customer expectations
- Understanding customer satisfaction is a direct reflection of our effectiveness as an organization.

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#### Trainer Instructions:

- Thank participants for attending the training
- Emphasize that the practice of providing excellent customer service to both internal and external stakeholders is a commitment that everyone in the system of care needs to pledge
- Ask participants to join you in reciting the pledge displayed on the PowerPoint slide
- Thank attendees for committing to providing excellent customer service

**ACTIVITY END**



Please refer to the trainer toolkit for additional information and resources.

