Customer Service Blueprint

This Blueprint contains the subject matter content for the Career Essentials - Assessment.

Note: To fully prepare for the Customer Service SkillsUSA Championships contest, refer to the current year’s SkillsUSA Championships Technical Standard, now included with your SkillsUSA Professional Membership. If you need help in accessing this benefit, contact the SkillsUSA Customer Care Team at 844-875-4557 or customercare@skillsusa.org.

Standards and Competencies
Competencies are weighted throughout the assessment. The percent shown is the weight of the competency. There are 50 questions per assessment.

Demonstrate Core Customer Service Skills
- Understand core customer service concepts
  - Define your customer (internal vs. external)
  - Demonstrate ability to balance customer interest and company interest
  - Demonstrate sensitivity to diverse audiences
  - Understand how customer service impacts the customer and the company
  - Demonstrate flexibility and teamwork skills
  - Demonstrate effective use of time
- Understand the steps of the customer service process
  - Make a formal introduction and open lines of communication
  - Identify the reason for the contact
  - Utilize active listening techniques
  - Ask probing questions to provide focus
  - Confirm mutual understanding
  - Identify a plan of action with realistic expectations
  - Execute plan of action to completion and follow up with customer
- Demonstrate qualities of a customer service professional
  - Dress appropriately for your profession & demonstrate personal hygiene
  - Demonstrate basic respect skills for customers and coworkers
  - Display self-confidence and persuasiveness
  - Display honesty & integrity
  - Display reliability and dependability

Demonstrate effective communication skills
- Display effective person-to-person communication skills
  - Demonstrate a positive attitude that conveys a sincere desire to assist
  - Read and utilize appropriate non-verbal skills
  - Demonstrate the ability to speak to your audience with appropriate terminology
  - Demonstrate appropriate handoff skills (phone / email / face to face) if needed
- Display effective written communication
  - Display effective grammar usage
  - Display effective spelling skills
  - Display effective composition skills
  - Display effective paper correspondence skills
  - Display effective electronic correspondence skills
    - Effective chat-based customer service communication skills
    - Effective email customer service communication skills
Demonstrate workplace etiquette & professionalism
- Demonstrate the ability to take ownership of a situation
- Demonstrate the ability to interpret and follow procedure
- Accurately document customer interactions
- Demonstrate proper telephone etiquette
- Demonstrate proper workplace etiquette
- Demonstrate ability to receive and act on constructive criticism
- Understand the need for continuous learning and mentorship
- Demonstrate balance when working in stressful situations
  - Diffuse anger in customer interactions

Demonstrate Problem Solving Skills
- Identify root causes of customer problems
  - Ability to sort facts from emotion
- Utilize available resources to complete customer needs
  - Knowing when to escalate an issue
- Anticipate customer needs and recommend additional service
- Generate effective solutions

Execute effective time management skills
- Demonstrate ability to prioritize issues
- Ability to handle multiple customers and issues without sacrificing quality
- Ability to learn and use multiple technologies to increase customer satisfaction

Utilize service to promote sales and customer retention
- Demonstrate product knowledge
  - Ability to match the customer with the service or product
- Identify additional selling opportunities & promote value
- Describe value within services rendered
- Understand the customer's tolerance for upselling
- Utilize customer incentives appropriately