

DSC SPEED READS

COMMUNICATIONS

Difficult Customers

Grainne Ridge



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DIRECTORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

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Introduction

Who is this book for?

This book will help those who want to feel more confident dealing with people who expect a service from them (such as funders, beneficiaries and volunteers). It is both a handbook for the inexperienced and a resource for more experienced people handlers who feel that they need a fresh perspective or a few more tools in their bag.

The logical, coaching structure and practical exercises lend themselves to team training sessions as well as to individual exploration.

What will it give you?

It will help you to build a positive approach to managing these relationships and show you how to set yourself apart. You can develop a strategic plan for your organisation. You can use this book to guide you in developing a complete customer service strategy for your organisation, or you may simply choose to adopt the top tips and tools in the areas where you have the greatest challenges.

Chapter 1

Who are the customers?

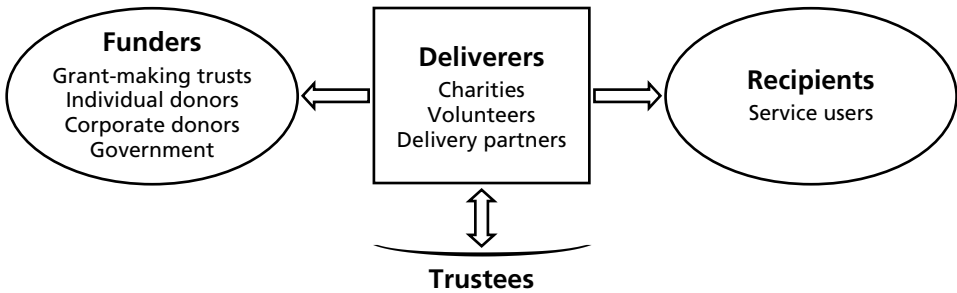
In this chapter you will look at what makes a 'customer' in your organisation, uncover the expectations that they have of you and your service, and create a distinct and positive customer experience plan.

Definition and scope within the voluntary sector

It is inherently difficult to find a word that accurately represents all recipients of services within the voluntary sector. For you it may be 'client', 'beneficiary', 'stakeholder' or 'funder'. We recognise that it would be unwieldy and confusing to use these interchangeably, so for the purposes of this book, we have settled on 'customer'. It is probably the most generic and understood word to refer to any of these recipients without attaching any commercial connotations.

When thinking about *your* customers, decide who you have the greatest level of contact with and who see you directly as a provider.

Now consider who your customers are.



Make a list like the one below to help you determine who your customers are.

Who are your funders?	Who benefits from your services?
For example: general public	For example: people living with cancer

What makes a valuable relationship?

Each customer will value their relationship with you in different ways. This could include valuing service, mutual benefit, satisfaction, enjoyment, value for money, new ideas, feedback, learning or problem solving. What is important then is that you consider what the customer really wants. Do they simply need you to provide information or a practical service? Do they want to feel involved and valued? Do they need to be guided step by step through a process that is new and daunting to them?

Why 'customer experience' is important in this sector

Every customer who deals with your organisation will be able to say what it is like to deal with you. This definition will reflect all of their experiences, including:

DSC Speed Reads

Aimed at people who are short on time and need to absorb information quickly, these indispensable guides are:

- **Accessible** – practical guidance on a wide range of subjects
- **Condensed** – distilling experience and expertise in just 32 pages
- **Clearly signposted** – Top Tips, Case Studies and Where Next ideas

Covering a wide range of topics and building into an invaluable library, Speed Reads are an essential addition to any bookshelf.

Difficult Customers

In any sector, the successful management of customers (whether these are clients, beneficiaries, stakeholders or funders) can make or break an organisation. This book is designed to give practical tools which are easy to understand and use. This includes how to adopt powerful mindsets, starting with the point that a 'difficult customer' is simply another person who needs a solution to a problem. It is essential reading for CEOs, managers and everyone who communicates with customers.

Grainne Ridge is a highly regarded trainer, coach, NLP facilitator and learning designer. She delivers workshops and programmes in the areas of sales and customer service skills, personal effectiveness and impact, and team dynamics.



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