Overview

**Customer Focus**

The Customer Focus Café is a short blended learning experience oriented around the concepts and skills found in the Harvard ManageMentor Customer Focus topic. The learning experience consists of three components:

*60 to 90 minutes 60 minutes Ongoing*

Objectives

At the conclusion of the blended experience, managers will be able to:

**Learn about customers to better meet their needs.** Specifically, the experience will help managers:

* Get feedback from customers\*
* Observe customers
* Anticipate customer needs
* Identify your target customers
* Mine your target customers

**Use customer knowledge to identify ways to deliver additional value.** Specifically, the experience will help managers:

* Connect feedback to action
* Provide—don’t just extract—value\*
* Simplify customers’ choices
* Make service a competitive advantage

**Build a customer-focused team.\*** Specifically, the experience will help managers:

* Make customer focus everyone’s job
* Engage employees
* Encourage employees to innovate
* Collaborate to improve the customer journey

\*Objectives with an asterisk are included in Part 2, the Café session.

Part 1: Self-paced, Individual Preparation

Prior to the live Café session, participants are expected to complete the following assignments:

* Review the following online lessons from the Harvard ManageMentor Customer Focus topic:
  + What Is Customer Focus?
  + Learn About Your Customers
  + Deliver Additional Value
  + Build a Customer-Focused Team
* Complete the online comprehension test from the Harvard Customer Focus topic

Part 2: Live, Group-based Café Session

The Café session represents the core element of the learning experience. The purpose of this session is to provide an opportunity for managers to:

* Exchange ideas and questions with others
* Discuss the context of how concepts and skills apply in the workplace
* Practice and begin application of those concepts and skills
* Build momentum and support for applying the concepts and skills in the workplace

Working through the live Café session guide should take approximately 60 minutes. If the facilitator prefers a shorter session or wishes to spend more time on a specific concept or activity, he or she may want to cover only those concepts and activities that are most relevant to the group.

| SECTION | ACTIVITY | TIME |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Introduction** | Show icebreaker question while participants are arriving to the session (IN WHAT WAYS DOES OUR ORGANIZATION FOCUS ON OUR CUSTOMERS?)   * Introduce facilitators. * Review tips for using technology during the session. * Set context: Customers need to be front and center as we carry out our tasks and responsibilities. * Whoever our customers may be, they are the reason we exist. To stay competitive, we must understand and satisfy our customers’ needs—sometimes before those customers even know what they want. * Debrief icebreaker question. * Review session objectives. | 8 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Build a customer- focused team** | Debrief assessment activity (abridged from Lesson 4 Practice section): How well do you encourage customer focus in your team? Participants:   * + Discuss key practices they use in building a customer-focused team   + Explore challenges in developing customer focus on their teams * Facilitate practice activity: Hire for customer-focused attributes (scenario). Participants:   + Identify interview questions to evaluate if a job candidate has the right attributed to contribute to a customer-focused team * Review a summary of recommendations from the online topic for recognizing and rewarding your team for providing forms of value that customers want. | 16 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Learn about your Customers** | Facilitate practice activity: What “listening posts” should you use to get customer feedback (scenario)? Participants:   * + Discuss a range of listening posts that an organization can use to learn more about its customers’ needs and wants * Reflection activity: What listening posts would give you the best customer feedback? Participants:   + Identify their customer(s)   + Consider which listening posts would provide useful feedback from their respective customers * Review summary of additional ways to anticipate customers’ needs from the online topic. | 14 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Deliver additional value** | Facilitate practice activity: Map current value to customers. Participants:   * + Adopt the role of customers buying a product   + Provide data on the customer experience   + Identify opportunities for creating added value * Reflection activity: Add value to your customer’s experience. Participants:   + Identify the value their teams currently provide customers   + Consider ways their teams could provide additional value * Review a process for providing additional value for customers from the Harvard ManageMentor topic. | 19 minutes |
| **Applying what you’ve learned** | * Review session objectives and skill areas discussed. * Review directions for completing the On-the-Job section of the online Harvard ManageMentor topic, including the action plan. * Close the session. | 3 minutes |

Part 3: Self-paced, Individual Application

After the live Café session, participants are expected to complete the following assignments:

* Complete the online On-the-Job section in the Harvard ManageMentor Customer Focus topic. The section provides learners with an opportunity to choose a skill to focus on and create an action plan for applying and developing the skill.
* Execute their action plan over a specified timeframe (e.g., 60 or 90 days).
* After the specified timeframe (e.g., 60 or 90 days), access the online On-the-Job section in the Harvard ManageMentor Customer Focus topic to update the action plan and reflect on the experience.