Meeting customer needs

From a commercial and service perspective, you want to ensure the products and services that you offer meet customer needs.

As we know, it is far more cost effective to have repeat customers as opposed to having to win new customers all the time.

This may mean that you need to constantly develop, fine tune and introduce services and products that enable you to stay one step ahead of your competitors, in order to retain your customers. Meeting customer needs therefore requires analysis, planning and continuous improvement.

Some of the ways we can ensure our customers return are by:

- **Making the purchasing of your products and services really easy**, remembering customers nowadays use different methods to reach you, from internet searches on their mobile devices through to telephoning or coming in to see you. So take a look at these communication channels and experience the purchase of one or two of your products or services.
  - What does this tell you?
  - What worked really well?
  - What needs to happen differently to enhance the customer service experience?

- **Talking with our staff** to find out how often they are asked for something different to your actual products and services and establish the regularity of this. Are you picking up some key trends that need addressing with a slight change of approach or something completely new?

- **Reviewing social media sites** that customers use to look for your type of products or services e.g. Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, Trip Advisor. What are the comments and feedback on similar products and services telling you?

- **Demonstrating trust** by providing previous customer testimonials and reviews on your products and services, which is also a great way to get personal feedback from your customers.
• **Building an ongoing relationship with your customer** by asking for their feedback and inviting them to connect with you for future offerings and promotions through email, social media, mail shots etc. Ideally try to give them an option to select their preferred communication medium.

**Next:** Creating customer focused processes