

Creating Quality That Solves the Customer's Problem

LO7 — proposing methods that create quality around the target customer's real needs

LEARNING OUTCOME 7

Quality is what the customer gets out

- ◆ Managers think quality = premium materials, expensive technology.
- ◆ In the customer environment, quality = how well you solve the customer's problem.
- ◆ Drucker: “Quality is not what you put in — it is what the customer gets out.”

Gets
out >
puts
in

THE GROCERY EXAMPLE

“I don’t have time to shop”

- ◆ Traditional: open more supermarkets. Better: online grocery delivery.
- ◆ Excellent: deliver groceries within 20 minutes.
- ◆ The company didn’t improve the store — it solved the customer’s problem.

20
min

solving the problem, not the store

OLD VS MODERN THINKING

From product quality to problem-solving quality

- ◆ Old: good manufacturing, low defects, product features, internal standards.
- ◆ Modern: great customer experience, easy journey, customer outcomes, expectations.
- ◆ Customer-centred quality = consistently solve functional, emotional & future needs.

Product
→
Problem

the shift in quality

FIVE QUESTIONS

Every great company asks five things

- ◆ 1 · What problem does the customer have? 2 · Why does it exist?
- ◆ 3 · How can we solve it better than competitors?
- ◆ 4 · How does the customer define quality? 5 · How do we keep improving?

5 questions

the quality framework

DEFINE BEFORE YOU SOLVE

Name the problem, then find why it exists

- ◆ Uber: “I can’t find a taxi.” Airbnb: “Hotels are costly and impersonal.”
- ◆ Careem: “I need rides, food, groceries and payments in one app.”
- ◆ Root causes: shopping wastes time (Amazon), airport stress (Emirates), busy lives (Talabat).

Problem first

then the root cause

COMPETE BY SOLVING DIFFERENTLY

Remove the problem — don't just improve it

- ◆ Dyson didn't improve the bag — it eliminated the bag entirely.
- ◆ Netflix didn't improve DVD rental — it removed DVDs altogether.
- ◆ Careem didn't improve taxis — it built one platform for daily life.

Remove, don't improve

how leaders win

DEFINITION & IMPROVEMENT

The customer decides — and keeps deciding

- ◆ Manager thinks luxury furniture; customer wants fast check-in, clean room, easy Wi-Fi.
- ◆ Quality is defined by the customer, not the company.
- ◆ Improve continuously via surveys, reviews, CRM, AI analytics and interviews.

Customer defines

quality, not the company

KNOW · DESIGN · PERSONALIZE

Start from the problem, design around it, make it personal

- ◆ 1 · Know the customer deeply — Amazon sells convenience, Noon sells speed & trust.
- ◆ 2 · Design around needs — Apple, Tesla, Emirates remove pain, not just add features.
- ◆ 3 · Personalize — Netflix, Spotify, Amazon; Emirates Skywards tailors every offer.

3 of 7

know, design, personalize

FRICION · PEOPLE · LISTENING · EMOTION

Remove effort, empower staff, listen, build feeling

- ◆ 4 · Remove friction — Apple Pay one-touch; DubaiNow replaces office visits.
- ◆ 5 · Empower employees — Ritz-Carlton & Jumeirah fix issues on the spot.
- ◆ 6 · Listen continuously (NPS, CSAT); 7 · Build emotional quality — Disney, Emirates, Careem.

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friction, people, listening, emotion

PROBLEM → SOLUTION → RESULT

The giants all designed quality around a problem

- ◆ Apple: tech too complicated → simple ecosystem → deep loyalty.
- ◆ Amazon: shopping takes time → one-click, fast delivery, easy returns → time saved.
- ◆ Netflix: hard to choose → AI recommendations. IKEA: costly furniture → flat-pack.

4 giants

Apple · Amazon · Netflix · IKEA

PROBLEM → SOLUTION → OUTCOME

UAE leaders solve real daily problems

- ◆ Emirates: travel anxiety → biometric boarding, app, lounges → reassurance.
- ◆ Careem: many daily needs → one super-app. Talabat: no time to cook → fast, tracked delivery.
- ◆ Dubai Airports: queues & uncertainty → Smart Gates, biometrics → confidence.

4 UAE leaders

Emirates · Careem · Talabat · DXB

FIVE LEVELS OF QUALITY

Move customers upward, level by level

- ◆ Base → Solve the customer's problem → Functional performance → Reliability & trust.
- ◆ Then → Personalization → Delight (exceed expectations) at the top.
- ◆ Sustainable advantage comes from moving customers up the pyramid.

5 levels

from solving problems to delight

20 MINUTES · GROUPS

“Become the Customer”

- ◆ Each group takes a company: Apple, Emirates, Careem, Amazon, Talabat or IKEA.
- ◆ Who is the target customer? Their biggest problem? How is it solved? What creates quality?
- ◆ What could AI improve — and as CEO, what problem would you solve next?

20
min

6 companies, one lens

DISCUSSION

Anticipate problems before customers see them

- ◆ If the customer defines quality, how do you get ahead of their next problem?
- ◆ Move from reactive quality management to proactive innovation.
- ◆ The best companies solve problems customers haven't yet named.

Anticipate

proactive, not reactive quality

THE TAKEAWAY

Quality is measured by the customer's outcome

- ◆ Quality = the customer's ability to achieve their desired outcome — not internal specs.
- ◆ Value comes from solving functional, emotional and future problems.
- ◆ Feedback, personalization, technology and empowered staff are the methods that deliver it.

Outcome

the true measure of quality

QUALITY IS THE CUSTOMER'S OUTCOME

If quality is defined by the customer, how can you anticipate future customer problems before customers themselves recognise them?

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