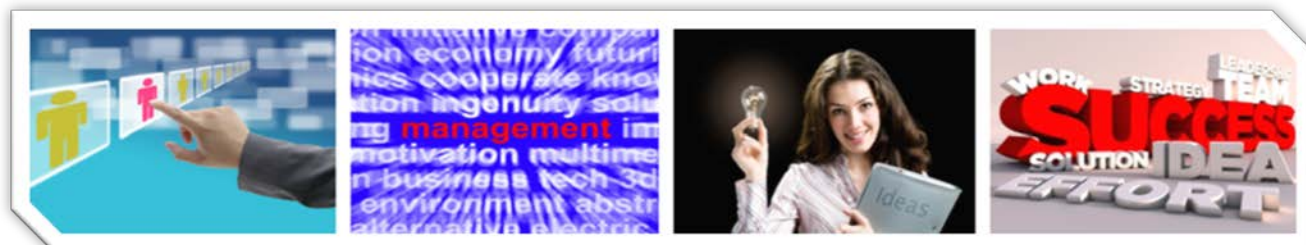


# Customer Service



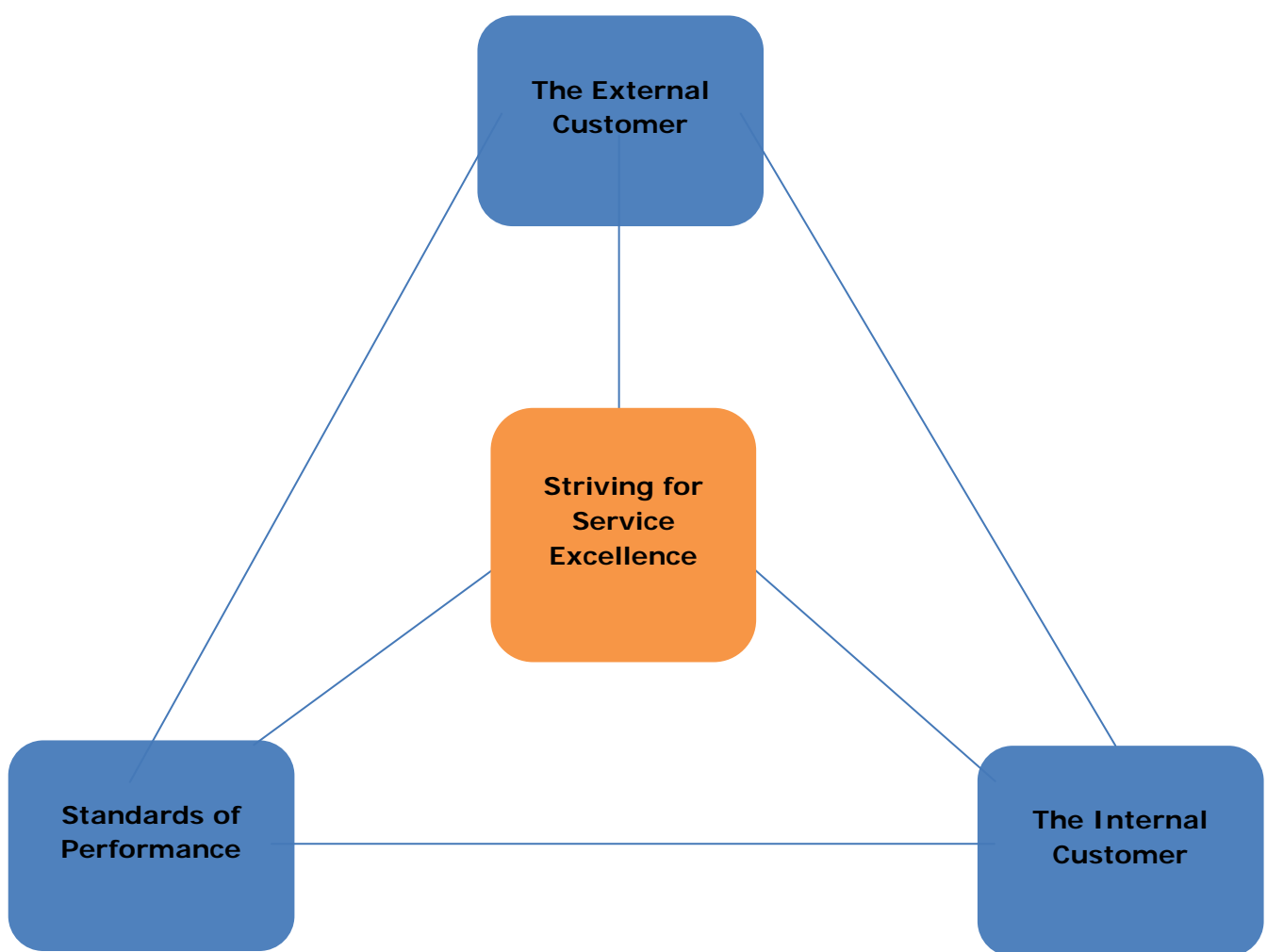
# Excellence Model

**A guide to help you simplify the route to service excellence in your business**

There are many models of service excellence but as a small business owner or manager you are likely to be interested in keeping things relatively simple, yet comprehensive enough to make a meaningful difference to service quality, and ultimately customer satisfaction levels, in your business. To help you achieve this goal, this streamlined framework can help to simplify the route to service excellence in your business.

# Customer Service Excellence Model

There are many models of service excellence but as a small business owner or manager you are likely to be interested in keeping things relatively simple, yet comprehensive enough to make a meaningful difference to service quality, and ultimately customer satisfaction levels, in your business. To help you achieve this goal, one streamlined framework can help to simplify the route to service excellence in your business and requires you to focus upon three interlinked processes:



Whilst this is undoubtedly a simple model of service excellence, it is far from simplistic in the sense that it addresses all critical elements that combine to deliver really great service.

# The External Customer

Of course, if you are truly serious about service excellence, then everything you do must be centered upon your customers. Addressing this part of the model requires you to define and communicate your commitment to achieving service excellence so that your customers and employees know what it is you are trying to achieve. Then you need to translate that commitment into action through a range of activities including:

- ✓ Get as close to your customers as possible so that you fully understand their needs and expectations; those which are common to all, and those specific to each segment.
- ✓ Design your products and services around those needs and expectations and continuously modify and enhance them as customer needs and expectations change.
- ✓ Deliver those products and services in a way that consistently exceeds expectations.
- ✓ Introduce informal and formal feedback systems so that you always know how you are performing in terms of service quality to enable you to continuously improve.



# The Internal Customer

You cannot deliver for your external customers without the support and commitment of your internal customers, i.e. your employees. Focusing on the internal customer requires you to:

- ✓ Clearly define roles and responsibilities around customer service in your business so that there are no 'grey areas' and all play a defined, and supportive, role in the effort.
- ✓ Help employees to recognise the internal customer concept whereby they are all inter-dependent on each other to do their jobs efficiently.
- ✓ Provide appropriate and continuous training for all employees on relevant aspects of service quality, including how to handle complaints.
- ✓ Create a working environment which engages employees to the fullest extent so they see customers as 'theirs' and not just 'yours'.
- ✓ Get all employees actively involved in the service excellence effort including the active solicitation of ideas and suggestions.
- ✓ Measure employee satisfaction at regular intervals and address blockages which are reducing engagement levels.

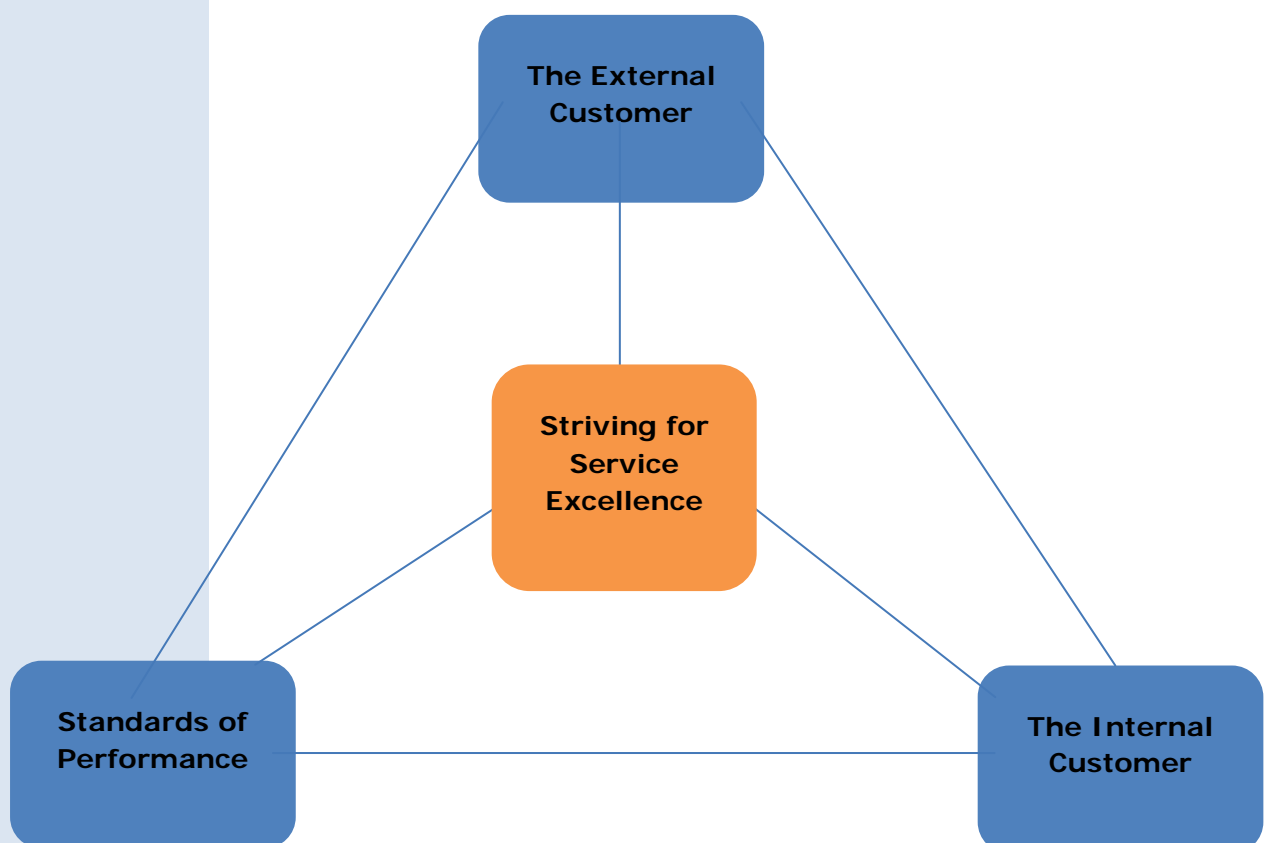


# Standards of Performance

Achieving consistency of service is perhaps the Holy Grail for any tourism business and that goal can only be achieved if you:

- ✓ Identify key contact points and interactions with your customers.
- ✓ Devise standards of performance (SOPs) to guide how service should be delivered across all those interactions.
- ✓ Train and regularly coach all your employees on how to deliver the standards.
- ✓ Constantly monitor and measure your ability to deliver the standards of performance consistently across the service experience.
- ✓ Devise mechanisms which enable you to continuously improve.

So, as you can see, the basic model of service excellence presented above can provide you with a comprehensive framework for managing service quality in your business. For further tips on what must be done to fully apply this model, go to the [How to Provide Customer Service Excellence guide](#).





This guide has been provided to you as part of Fáilte Ireland's suite of guides and templates in the Business Tools resource.

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