



Customer-centred communication

From customer insights to messaging that connects

Learn how to connect what you heard in the interviews about customer needs, with how you present what your business offers.

Time needed: allow an hour or two to work through the questions in this resource.

There's an extra optional (and fun!) activity at the end.

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Communication and your business

In your business, you'll be conveying different types of information, for example:

- What you have to offer (eg which products, services)
- Who you are
- Who your customers are,
- And sometimes, the difference or “why” behind your business (eg “expanding your world with a range of inspiring flavours”)

Communication channels

Think about how this information is expressed in your business:

- By the store layout, style and atmosphere
- In signage and product information in store
- On your socials
- On your website
- In your interactions with customers – in person, as well as calls, emails and messaging.

In the next section we'll look into how well these channels align with your customer's needs.



Design makes it intentional

As people encounter and interact with your business, they'll be thinking about what's going on for them, and at the same time learning about what your business offers.

Applying a design process or mindset helps you to **identify where to make changes**, in order to optimise your customers experience and that of your team.

Design means thinking about things like:

When to follow conventions?

A standard menu structure, layout, etc might be the default (but will also imply what's "normal", so be aware of what's being conveyed about who is included)

Where to highlight points of difference?

Making your niche (both what you offer and who it's for) clear so that new customers can find you.



Unpacking the customer's experience

Two key elements to reflect on

1. Questions that customers have

Everyone who engages with your business will have questions like:

- What's on offer here?
- Is this practical for me? (eg price, location, hours, meets my need or solves my problem, is it accessible for me)
- Do I prefer it over other options, will I choose to stay?
- Do I belong here?

Most people, most of the time - won't ask (or if they do, might do their own research online or using your website, rather than ask for help in store).

2. Decisions customers make

Whether they're browsing or needing to buy, they'll also be deciding:

- Will I explore further, or leave?
- Whether to buy, and what specifically
- Whether to try something (like a sample, or an experience)
- Whether or not to engage with the staff or others there



Mapping your customers experience

Step 1: What customers described

Think back to what you heard in the interviews and map out:

The need, problem, reason or trigger	Steps in their journey	Outcomes / results
<i>[What caused the customer to approach your business?]</i>	For each step, identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Who did what- What was the action- Channels used (eg in store, website) <p>Include all the steps that were discussed (these might include browsing and comparing options before the customer chose your service)</p>	This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Practical outcomes (eg fixed a leak)- Life-enhancing outcomes (eg social, learning)



Step 2: Customers critique / reflection

Add notes to your map to show where the customer described:

- The **positives** eg “this was great”
- Any **pain points** - spots of confusion or frustration
- Any **unmet needs** - if the customer described not completely fulfilling their initial goal
- **Next steps** - if the customer described what they’re interested in doing or trying next, now that they’ve completed their initial goal

Step 3: Your critique / reflection

Thinking about what you heard, plus your knowledge of your business, add to your notes:

- What questions were customers considering at each step?
- What were the **deciding factors** in people choosing your business, and their purchases?
- Which factors were **must haves**, and which were **preferences**?
- In your opinion, did any fail to find an item that may have suited them better than what they purchased?
- How does the experience compare on different channels? (store, online etc)



Wrapping up

To close this section and identify what's actionable, reflect on:

What's working well <i>Things to keep or highlight</i>	Opportunities <i>Things to explore</i>
Quick fixes <i>Improvements that would be easy to make</i>	Areas to consider changing <i>Things that could be improved but it's not obvious how</i>



Extra activity

If you enjoyed the customer interviews and are finding this process of unpacking information and communication useful - you might like to run a Card Sorting activity.

Briefly, this involves:

- Choosing a selection of items/products that your business offers (15 - 25 items works well, choose things that can be a purchase or part of a purchase, rather than categories)
- Making a set of physical “cards” one for each, with enough information for someone to know what it is (but avoid adding descriptive information)
- Invite a small group of your customer interviewees (say 2-3) to a session where they’ll arrange the cards.
- At the session, ask them to group, sort, or arrange the items in a way that’s sensible to them, and chat about their thinking as they go (then stay quiet, and listen - don’t help!)
- At the end, ask the group to walk you through their arrangement .

Make sure you photograph the result, and note down anything interesting that you learn.



Your feedback welcome

I'd love to hear how this went for you - please send any questions and feedback to:

hello@designforwellbeing.nz

This resource is the second in a series (to be published through July 2026):

[Connect with your customers](#)

[Customer experience interviews](#)

[Customer-centred communication](#)

[From customer insights to messaging that connects](#)

Usability for business

The methods behind making your service easy to use

Become discoverable

Share information about what you offer



Customer service as prototyping

How great service and information can help you build positive, ongoing relationships with your customers
