



Chapter 2 - HOW TO MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS

2.1 CUSTOMER ORIENTATION



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Customer Orientation

Customer orientation should be reflected, first of all, in the mission of your business. It is essential to always keep in mind that the mission of your business must meet **your customers' needs**. For this reason, it is very important to **formulate your company mission** in terms of meeting your customers' needs.

Understanding your customers' needs is a key factor to the success of your business. In order to make your business customer-oriented, it is indispensable to ensure that the satisfier (your products and/or services) you will be offering genuinely meets a need and is attractive to your potential customers. You must also remember that different types of customers may have different needs or find different satisfiers attractive. This should lead you to 'segment' your potential customers with the objective of clarifying their possible relationships with your business.



Carrying out this market analysis does not require a great outlay of resources. Following are some examples of the methods you can use:

- Give demonstrations of your services or organise a sampling of your products to see how they are received.
- Search the internet for statistical data on consumption of similar products.
- Observe what other businesses like yours sell, by approaching them as customers.
- Most importantly, you can talk to people in the place where you will be setting up your business or people you consider to have characteristics in common with the customers you will be targeting.

Once you have established whether the satisfier or satisfiers considered are adequate, you should take another step to ensure your customer orientation. Precisely identifying your **strengths** and those of your business plan and identifying your **weaknesses** and those of your plan will enable you to perceive with greater clarity how to overcome these, or how to minimise their impact on the development of the business.

You need to sound out your customers periodically to find out if their needs have changed and whether the satisfiers you are offering them adequately meet their needs. A flexible approach is probably one that will most favour the success of your business: your business must change and be capable of adapting.

