



KIIKSTART NOTES FOR SA TOURISM AWARDS PRESENTATION – JUNE 2017

I won't be referring to necessarily customer service today but in fact customer offering, experience and delivery.

Today's session focusing on how modern, successful tourism businesses need to focus on experiential development and successful delivery to ensure not only continued growth but the growth of the entire region in which they operate.

In order to have impact within your submission it is vital that you can express the following from the perspective of question 4 customer service:

- Genuine passion, enjoyment, care and interest in your business and what it means to truly indulge and serve your customer.
- Examples of real creativity and innovation across all touch points with your business and on a consistent basis.
- Evidence around strategy (what you are doing) but also detail and examples around the tactics (how you are delivering on strategies in order to achieve the defined objectives).
- An entrepreneurial mindset – willingness to challenge past approaches and evolve these.
- Real evidence that shows a commitment to go above and beyond what a tourist might expect from your product and service.
- Examples of taking new products and experiences to the market as part of ongoing business evolution.
- Succinct and impactful responses that stay on point.
- Utilise stories and testimonials to support your claims about your business and its value. Are their local legends attached to your own enterprising business story that are worthwhile promoting?
- Show how your style of customer interaction works towards making a connection and showing gratitude.
- Create responses that show creativity but also simplicity – stay focused with your responses. The expected needs to become exceptional.



UNDERTAKE A SWOT BEFORE PLANNING TO ANSWER QUESTION 4

I would encourage you to undertake a SWOT to identify the following key areas:

STRENGTHS – WHAT DO YOU NEED TO LEVERAGE TO A GREATER DEGREE

WEAKNESSES (OR AS I REFER TO THESE SKILL GAPS) WHAT DO AND YOUR TEAM NEED TO UP-SKILL IN?

OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE YOUR SERVICE DELIVERY

THREATS – EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT WILL IMPACT ON YOUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE EXCELLENT AND IMAGINATIVE SERVICE EXPERIENCES

QUESTION 4 – PART A DESCRIBE YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE PHILOSOPHY/VALUES

To make it easier to define break your experiential delivery into before, during and after.

As part of this question consider the following;

- What processes and tactics do you employ at the time of the guest making a booking to really understand their needs?
- How do you make suggestions to the guests so they can experience the best of the region and fully immerse themselves in the region before arriving – to help with planning of activity once in the region?
- What questions do you ask so you can provide an experience or make suggestions that are on point?
- Do you ask guests before they arrive if they are interested in being kept up to date with relevant events or experiences – so they can plan ahead?

If yes, how do you communicate with guests in advance and do you ask them how they want to be kept up to date with relevant offerings in the region?

- Explain how you welcome people to ensure they are made to feel at ease and gain a positive impression of yourself and the region?



QUESTION 4 – PART A DESCRIBE YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE PHILOSOPHY/ VALUES CONTINUED

- Describe your brand personality and the characteristics associated with it. What are the most favourable traits and characteristics associated with your business and how do you express these within customer interaction?
- Be clear on what outstanding customer service and a memorable experience is to your business.
- What is truly different about how you deliver the customer experience – make sure you paint a visual picture for the Judges.
- What means are in place to deliver on outstanding customer service on a **consistent** basis within the business?
- What do you do different to surprise and delight tourists prior, during and post stay. Provide the best examples that convey the WOW factor.
- What ongoing learning and development do you and your team undertake to continually improve how you serve and interact with tourists? How is this utilised to continually improve tourist experiences and add to the bottom line?
- How do you make a connection with tourists and show gratitude for their business during and post stay? What do you do to add value to their experience – this is the action you take that they were not expecting but pleasantly surprises them. It is the unexpected add ons.
- Any links to tourism accreditation and other relevant associations you are actively involved in and add value to.
- Other strategic partnerships developed that have allowed you to create new product and service experiences that would not exist without such relationships.



QUESTION 4 – PART B EXPLAIN HOW YOU PROVIDE FOR VISITORS WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS – ALSO CONSIDER THOSE WITH DIVERSE NEEDS

- Provide examples of the type of specific needs that tourists will have – what are some of the diverse requests and the solutions you have come up with to ensure satisfaction.

Specific needs can relate to the following:

- Physical and health considerations
 - Family set up as opposed to solos/single and couple travellers
 - Dietary requirements
 - Cultural factors
 - Religious factors
- Identify common, specific needs against your key target markets. Consider some of the most challenging or out of the box needs– how did you find an answer? Provide detail into the steps, action and processes undertaken.
 - Identify when you have worked with other regional businesses to help find a solution to specific needs you are alone could not fulfil (if relevant). How did the relationship with the other business come about and what has been the benefit to the tourist?
 - Be specific about the approach you take to ensure people’s specific needs can be met or an alternative solution can be provided. Ability to think creatively.
 - What communication methods do you use before arriving to be able to gain an insight into their specific needs? How do you encourage visitor buy in and co-creation during the before stages of interaction?
 - Provide examples of any relevant questions you may ask to identify specific needs at the time of booking.
 - Note the awards need to provide insight into HOW you do business and not just WHAT you provide to the tourism industry.



QUESTION 4 – PART C DESCRIBE HOW YOU MEASURE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND IDENTIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Provide examples as to how you gain feedback and insight from guests both informally and formally. What other personalised methods of feedback do you utilise in addition to the common ones such as Trip Advisor?
- What type of questions are you asking to gain a real insight into what they enjoyed and also ideas for future improvement?
- Give an example when you implemented feedback– why did you chose to respond to it, what was the scenario and how did you respond to it. What was the outcome to the business?
- What measures do you use to gain insights and feedback from your customer? Are there any relevant data and stats you can include about the process and some of the key trends?
- Give examples of how you use the results of certain feedback and results to improve on your current business practices and respond to the evolving needs of your market.
- How many people found you through word of mouth? Why did they select you and how are you using these insights to build a more personal and memorable customer experience?
- How do you ensure there is a level of consistency in recognising and responding to feedback across the team – even if you are a sole operator you will need to have clear processes and frameworks.
- Detail how you have embraced creativity across people, place, infrastructure and product. Note innovation is not just about technology, innovation and apps.



QUESTION 4 – D WHAT PROCESSES DO YOU HAVE IN PLACE TO RESPOND TO CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS?

- What are company protocols in regards to responding to guest complaints?
- What means do you use to receive feedback and how do you promote the fact you welcome feedback during and after the stay?
- Provide an example when you needed to respond to a dissatisfied customer – how did you respond in order to minimise negative fallout and poor word of mouth – not just for your business but the region as a whole.
- What pro- active action did you take to respond in real time and with genuine care and consideration?
- What are your processes for responding to all feedback and ensuring each staff member follows standards and protocols in regards to this area? What information is contained within this process?