

BUSINESS FIT
FOR THE FUTURE



make it count

Putting customers first in every interaction

This guide is designed for pharmacy managers. It offers new insights into the customers of today, and explores how you and your teams can adapt your sales approach to emerging customer groups in order to grow your business.

Understanding your pharmacy customers

The retail aspect of pharmacy is an important part of business and can help drive profitability and commercial success. Pharmacists and their teams should ensure they are offering the right support to customers so they leave their pharmacy with the right products, having been given the advice that best meets their needs.

Just as the world of pharmacy has been evolving, so too have its customers. Their approach to their health, the things they worry about and what they expect from healthcare professionals have all shifted in recent years.

In-depth research of 4,000 consumers¹ has identified two groups in particular that are driving this change and who are likely to be regular pharmacy customers of the future. Pharmacists that tune into these developments and adapt to the new needs of customers *now* will be the ones to thrive further down the line.

Assured quick-fixers Aged 18-34



These people:

- Are career focused, financially secure
- Are independent minded, follow a non-stop lifestyle
- Use online information and advice, e.g. NHS 111, health apps
- Want a quick, effective solution
- Often shop online

What might they be thinking?

- If I'm not well, I look online first and self-diagnose
- I like to pick up what I want quickly
- I don't have time to wait to see the GP and want to purchase effective medicines right away

Anxious investors Aged 35-54



These people:

- Are focused on their personal health and wellbeing
- Use online information to inform and educate themselves
- Take a holistic approach to health, and have an active interest in natural products
- Are into fitness, healthy eating and supplements
- Invest in health outcomes

What might they be thinking?

- I know how important taking care of my health is
- I am sometimes worried about symptoms but can't always get to see my GP
- I want to know what products are suitable for vegetarians

Produced by
Bayer Consumer Health

¹: Research conducted by Bayer Consumer Health (data on file) 2018



Why is this important for *my pharmacy?*

What works for your customers, works for your business. Customers whose needs have been met, who are assured of your expertise and leave with an effective product are far more likely to return. **To help your team focus on this, remind them to think about the following factors that will influence each customer's decision to return to your pharmacy:**



Reflection:

What is the appeal of your pharmacy?
Is there room for improvement in any of these areas?

Adding value

Value is about how a service or product meets a customer's individual needs. For example, if someone doesn't have much disposable income, the cost of an item will be their priority. By contrast, those who are more financially secure, such as the quick-fixer group, will prioritise product effectiveness to avoid any symptoms interfering with their day-to-day lives. An anxious investor is more likely to take preventative measures, so the value to them comes from investing in the right supplements that meet their specific health concerns before they take hold.

Pharmacy teams can add real value to a customer's experience through:

- Tuning in to their specific needs
- Demonstrating expert knowledge
- Making effective recommendations
- Providing holistic healthcare advice



Pharmacy vs. web: your USP

Increasing competition from online experts (and other less reliable sources) might be seen as a threat. However, it is you and your team's ability to take your knowledge and apply it to the person in front of you with confidence and empathy that will demonstrate real value – even giving personalised recommendations, a growing need from customers.

Focus on the person standing in front of you

It is important to create a good shopping experience for the customer and to do your utmost to meet their expectations. Not all customers complain – many simply vote with their feet and shop elsewhere. A good first impression will encourage customers to return again and again, establishing a loyal customer base.



Follow the **FIRST** approach:

F

Friendly welcome - make the customer feel valued and important

I

Identify the needs of the customer through listening carefully and asking relevant questions

R

Choose the **Right solution** with the customer in mind

S

Support your recommendation by explaining the benefits in customer-appropriate language and giving opportunities for questions

T

Transaction close - remember to ask if they found everything they came for and provide advice accordingly

Action:

- Listen to your team interacting with customers. How well do they follow the **FIRST** approach? Do they have preconceptions of what they think their customer will want, which may be unhelpful?
- Consider your own approach. What could you do differently?
- Do you see examples of these emerging customer types? Are you and the team effectively meeting their needs?
- Information on other customer types can be accessed in the e-module that accompanies this learning series (see back page)



Reflection: Put yourself in their shoes! What influences where you shop? What positive experiences have you had? What negative experiences have you had?



Activity:

Think about all the different types of customer that visit your pharmacy and answer the following questions in relation to each customer type. We have included some initial examples below, but note that there are further areas to consider.

Customer	What are their needs?	Why would they choose my pharmacy?	How do my competitors do this better?	How can we improve to better meet their needs?
Anxious investor	Full range of vitamins Advice on keeping healthy	We offer a good range Well trained team	Health food shop has a bigger range	Review range that is stocked
Assured quick-fixer				
Prescription customer				

A template for this exercise can be downloaded from the accompanying e-module (details below).

Action plan:

On completing this training, consider making an action plan to ensure all of your team are giving customers a positive experience. Note down the desired outcome and make sure you set a date to achieve this.

More resources available online!

This guide forms part of the 'Business Fit for the Future' programme. Produced by Bayer Consumer Health, this comprehensive support package is designed to build commercial confidence and business acumen. The multi-faceted programme of activity offers training resources that aim to positively impact the bottom line as well as upskill pharmacy teams' capabilities to retain customers for the future.

Now visit our website!

Take a look at our e-learning module: *Make it Count* on The Pharmacy Network. There are two versions of the e-module, one for pharmacy managers and one for the pharmacy team. Building on this guide, the training offers practical steps for evaluating your OTC offering, being attuned to your customers' needs and includes animations to help you develop your pharmacy team's selling skills. You can use this training to **develop your knowledge and develop the skills of your team as part of your CPD and revalidation.**

The e-learning can be accessed via The Pharmacy Network:

- www.pharmacy-network.co.uk/bayer-business-programme

The module can also be accessed in the following systems:

Log in and search for Bayer business programme

- Boots Unscripted Learning Extra
- Celesio My Learn +
- Day Lewis Learning Academy +
- Well Pharmacy
- Avicenna Academy
- NPA CPD Hub
- Numark Training
- APT UK
- BPSA EduZone



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to go straight to the e-learning!

