

## ➤ The importance of excellent customer service

### What is customer service?

A business cannot exist unless it has customers to buy the products it wants to sell. Customer service is the term used to describe what happens at the points at which the customer comes into contact with the business. Usually it is split into four parts:

Information	Advice
This could be given by staff or be provided in other formats (such as leaflets) with the product.	This could be about the best or safest way to use a product, or specialist advice that might be needed. For Portakabin this could be the ability to provide all the services that make a quality working environment and full technical support.
Convenience	After-sales
This means providing handy and secure ways for the customer to pay, a local service and ease of contact.	In the case of Portakabin, this includes delivery of modules, levelling, the installation of fixtures and fittings, subsequent advice on future building requirements.

At Portakabin, customer service is key during the process of buying or hiring a building, from a single office building to a complete school or medical centre. The importance of good customer service can be seen at all stages, beginning with the initial customer's enquiry, followed by a quotation and the drawing up of contracts.

It continues with the delivery of the product and the after-sales service. Portakabin has unique Customer Charters for its sales and hire customers. These set out, in detail, the high levels of service that customers can expect. These include:

- \* completion of every project on time and to the agreed contract sum
- \* a service response within 24 hours from the customer services team
- \* picking up the phone within four 'rings' - and by a person, not an automated system
- \* a response or visit within 24 hours of a request
- \* to be included in the customer care programme.