

TOOL DESCRIPTION

Customer Conference



Open and constructive feedback from external or internal customers as drivers for the further development of the current situation and future needs.







A Customer Conference is a well-structured dialogue. Customers and, respectively, process partners or internal customers reflect on questions regarding services delivered by the hosting organization.

In this way, it is possible to gather and process insights and input about positive aspects of and problems with the current cooperation and about upcoming customer developments, as well as their possible effects.

Unlike traditional focus groups, selected employees/leaders of the host organization listen to the customer dialogue as observers and evaluate their insights immediately afterwards. Hosts get real feedback from customers and witness their emotions, which gives a lot of positive energy to change processes within the host organization. This is often a good step that enables an even stronger partnership to form between the organization and its customers.

Duration 4–6 h	Participants 8–20 internal or external customers 4–10 selected executives and key persons from the host organization	Facilitation no special material needed
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Customer Conference | Process

Preparation 	First round: current situation 45–60 min 	Second round: future 30–45 min 	Dialogue in mixed groups 30–60 min 	Debriefing by observers 60–180 min 
<p>Preparation with hosts: invite customers, share the relevant questions with them and inform them of the design of the conference and of the timetable</p> <p>Setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5–8 customers and 1 host sit together. • 1–3 tables can be managed simultaneously in one conference. • Each table is facilitated. • Observers from home organization sit in an outer circle around the table(s). <div data-bbox="107 1005 497 1103">  <p> ○ Observer ○ Facilitator ● Host ● Customer ○ Open chair </p> </div>	<p>Short introduction of participants and agenda. First dialogue about the current situation: What do the customers like and what don't they like? Sharing customer stories.</p> <p>Observers make their own notes, the facilitator keeps the dialogue flowing and makes notes of important topics on flipchart, and the host can ask questions to collect more detailed information.</p>	<p>The next dialogue round is about the future. Questions to customers include: What are your future developments, what are expectations, and what are the future needs from your side. The host can ask more questions to collect more detailed information. The facilitator writes important topics on flipchart.</p> <p>Optional: The observer can use an "open chair" to ask deepening questions – no comments.</p>	<p>Small mixed groups (3–4) are formed from observers and customers. Participants are invited to reflect on both dialogue rounds and given the opportunity to deepen the dialogue. Thank you by inviting host and transparency about how the results will be used.</p> <p>Informal chat with customers: coffee/snack.</p>	<p>Observers reflect on their observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional reflection/feelings. • Content reflection – what did we hear, our learnings. • Potential conclusions for our developments. • First activities. <p>Agreements on how to proceed and how to share what they have learned with the customers.</p>