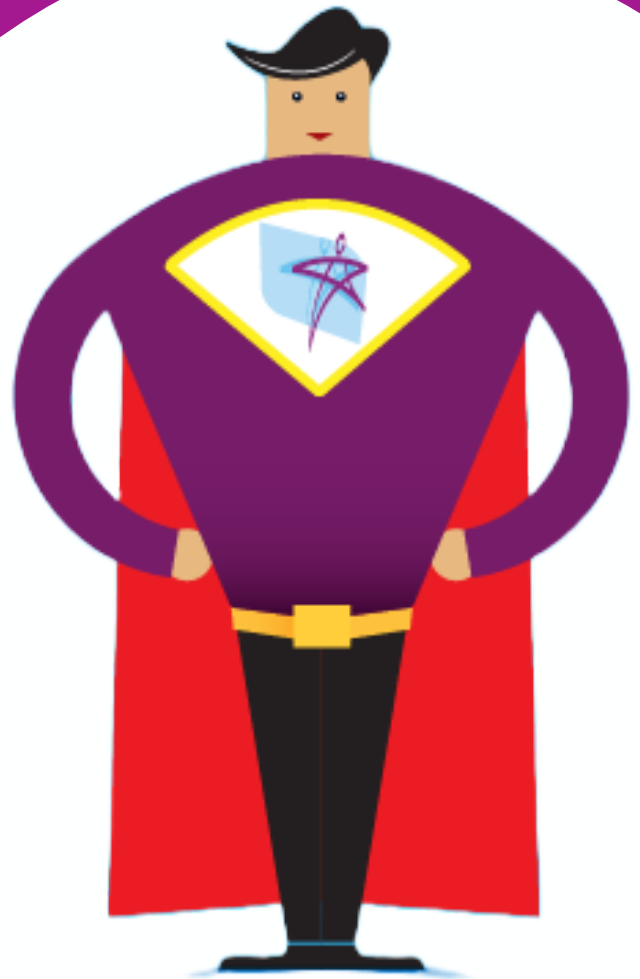


# Your Key To "Putting The Customer First"

Accelerate Your Customer Service Strategy



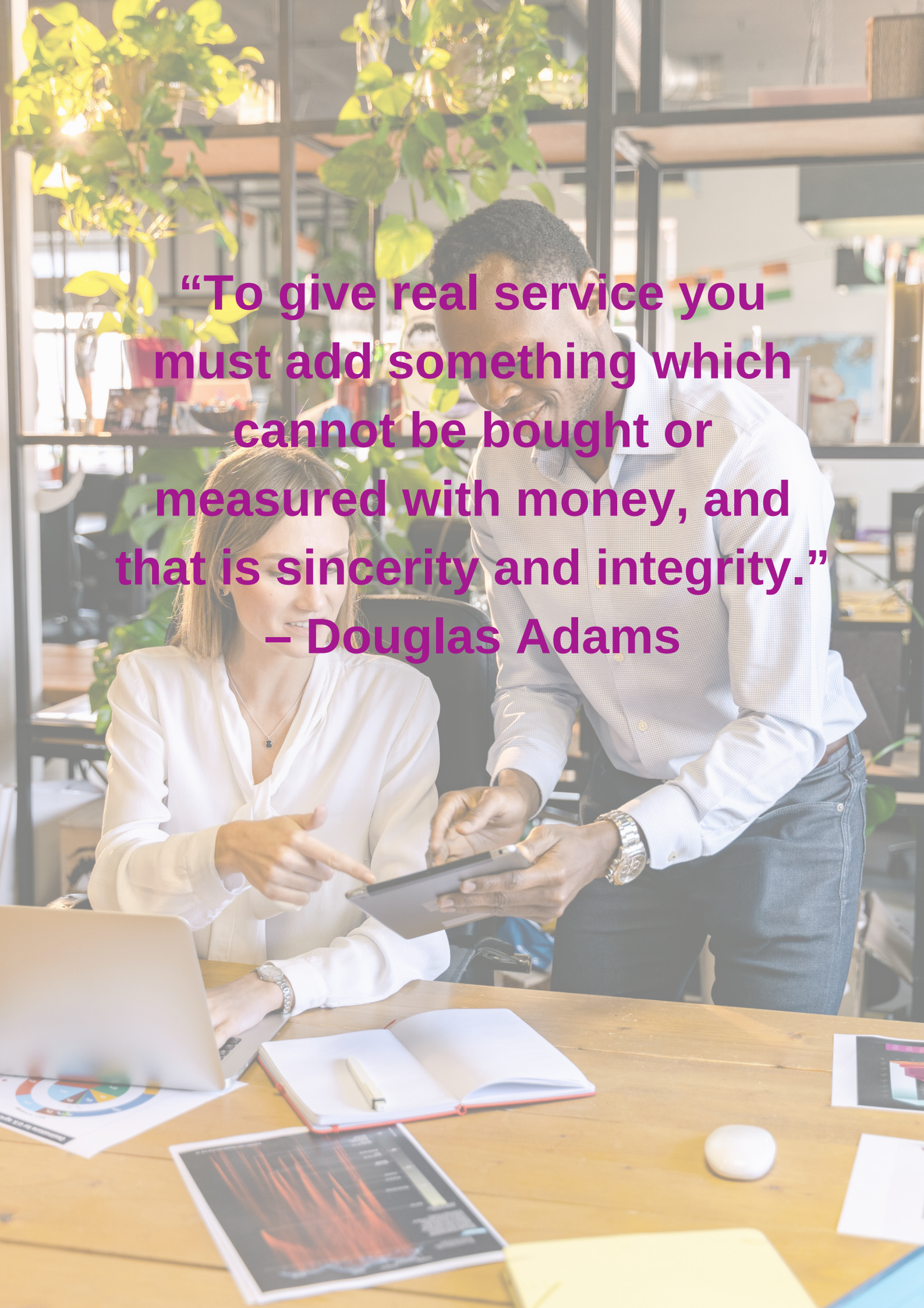
## OUR SERVICES

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A man and a woman are in a modern office setting. The man, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and dark jeans, is standing and holding a tablet. The woman, wearing a white blouse, is sitting at a wooden desk with a laptop and pointing at the tablet. The desk also has an open notebook, a mouse, and some papers. In the background, there are shelves with plants and office supplies.

**“To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity.”  
– Douglas Adams**



## Introduction

Barely a week goes by when customer service is not making the headlines. Organisations are having to refocus on their customer relationships, look at how to retain existing customers and win new ones by building trust, understanding their customers' needs and ultimately securing customer loyalty.

If improving customer service is your priority. "Putting the Customer First", the National Standard for Customer Service, will make a measurable and positive impact on your organisation, your people and your customers.

## Who Has Achieved The Customer First Standard?

There are thousands of organisations already benefiting from achieving the Customer First Standard, spanning both the public and private sectors. They include:

- Utilities
- Hospitality & Leisure
- Financial Services
- Healthcare
- Universities & Colleges
- Business Support services
- Law Firms
- The community and voluntary sector
- Call centres

## How Do I Know If The Customer First Standard Is Right For My Organisation?

Whether you deliver products, services or both, the Customer First Standard is ideal for you if your organisation:

- Is committed to providing outstanding customer service
- Wants to improve its customer relationships to improve customer loyalty and retention rates
- Wants to understand what your customers really want and need
- Seeks to achieve a competitive edge through enhanced customer service

**“Thank your customer for complaining and mean it. Most will never bother to complain. They’ll just walk away.” – Marilyn Suttle**



## Just What Is The Customer First Standard?

This is explained in greater detail below, but in summary the Customer First Standard focuses on your customers and their interface with and experience of your organisation's service delivery, It has three key parts for you to work through, each encompassing a series of specific quality Statements.

**“The best customer service is if the customer doesn't need to call you, doesn't need to talk to you. It just works.” – Jeff Bezos**

**“Customer service shouldn't just be a department, it should be the entire company.” – Tony Hsieh**

## The 3 Key Areas Of Focus Are:

### Building Customer Relationships:

- How do you identify and then meet your customers' needs?
- How do you follow up your customers?
- Do you add value by working with and referring to other service providers to better meet your customers' needs?
- What practices are in place to deal effectively with customer complaints and queries?

### Maximising Market Awareness:

- What is your approach to understanding the market?
- How is the target market identified?
- How are your services improved and new ones developed to better meet your customers' needs?
- How do you market your services?

### Developing your People:

- Are your recruitment methods ensuring you have the best person for each position?
- How do your people understand and assess customers' requirements?
- Can they broker relationships with other service organisations to add value to your overall service?
- How do you ensure that your people are continually developing their skills so they can provide the best service to your customers?



## What Is The Impact Of The Customer First Standard?

There are many significant ways in which Customer First can positively affect your organisation, your people and your customers.

Here are just some of the key benefits of achieving the Customer First Standard:

### For your customers:

- Assurance of a positive and professional service
- Better access to the full range of services they want and need
- High quality services that will deliver what was agreed and required

### For your organisation:

- Increased customer loyalty
- Win new customers
- Improved services
- Greater staff morale and productivity
- Competitive differentiation
- Increased financial turnover

**“Exceed your customer’s expectations. If you do, they’ll come back over and over. Give them what they want – and a little more.” – Sam Walton**

**“The magic formula that successful businesses have discovered is to treat customers like guests and employees like people.” – Tom Peters**



## What Are The Steps To Achieving The Customer First Standard?

A series of distinct and simple steps will take you from enquiry to achievement.

At each stage along this journey we have specific resources to support you. Please contact Customer First UK for more information about how we can support you.

Input to the assessment is invited from people throughout your organisation, from those developing strategy to those customer-facing on the front line. This approach helps:

- Establish a truly customer focused culture
- Build teams within and across departments
- Ensure real commitment throughout your organisation to the 'Customer First' journey and outcomes

Evidence of current practice is essentially verbal rather than document-driven - you will not be asked to produce a portfolio of paperwork!

The assessor who appraises your organisation against the Standard is a key part of the assessment process. He or she:

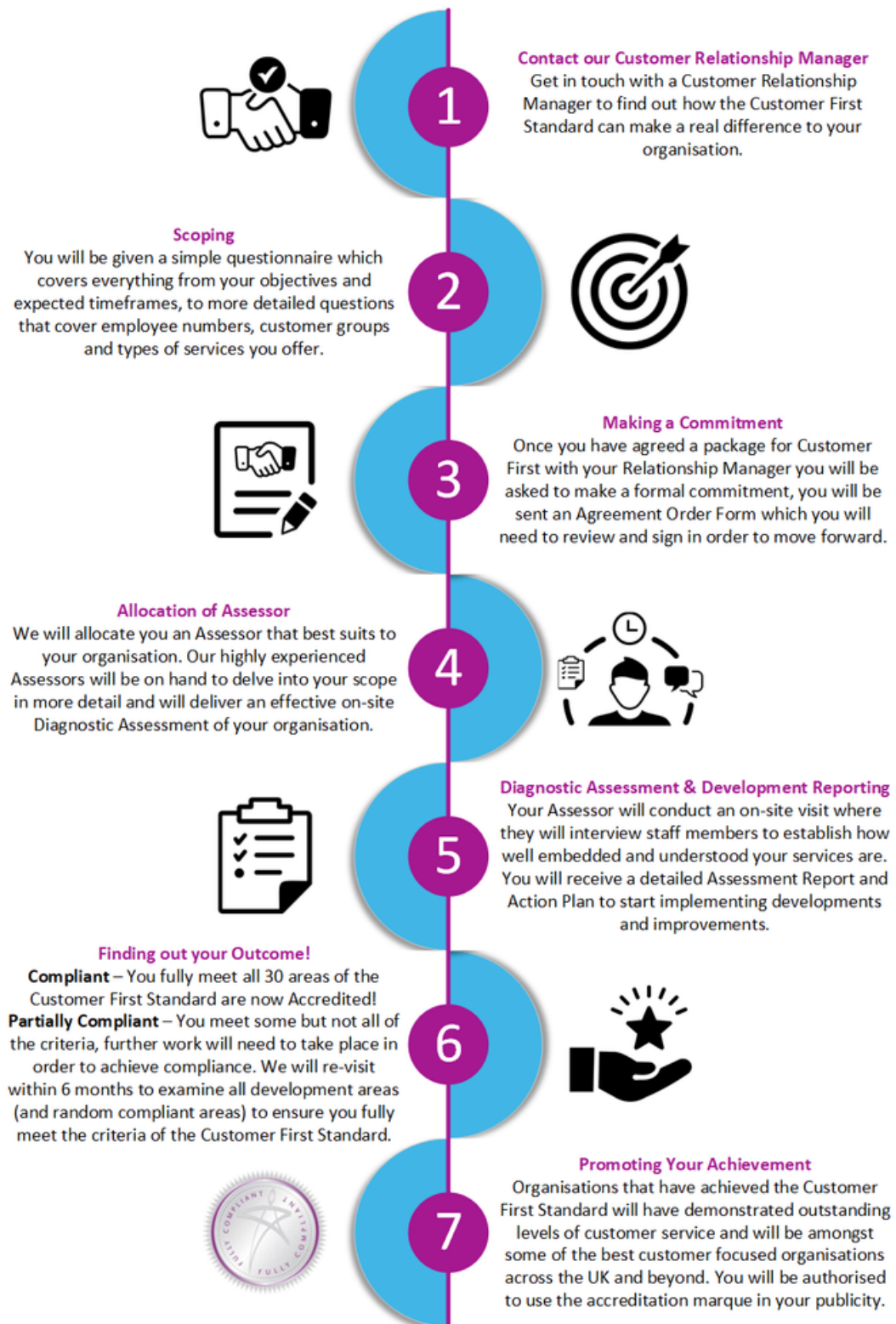
- Is both trained and highly experienced in the Customer First Standard
- Is interested to hear about your approach to customer service
- Wishes to work with you to help you reap maximum benefit from every aspect of 'Customer First' and continually improve your service delivery

The financial investment in assessment is linked to the size and complexity of your organisation and the range of support you require.

For more information, **please contact Customer First UK on 01302 910105**



## What Are The Steps To Achieving Customer First?





## What Are The Possible Outcomes From The Assessment?

It should be noted that whilst certainly achievable, the Customer First Standard is challenging. As a consequence, not all achieve the 30 Statements within the Standard on first assessment, however, of those who are subsequently monitored and/or reassessed the vast majority then succeed.

There are 3 possible outcomes from the assessment:

**Compliance** - You fully meet all the 30 Statements and so can:

- Retain this status for 2 years
- Use your achievement to help build your credibility and competitiveness
- Use the Putting the Customer First registered Certification Mark on all communications to your customers to highlight their position at the very heart of your organisation

**Partial Compliance** - You have made significant progress and meet a number of the Statements.

You can now:


- Have 6 months to make some further changes and improvements before an assessor reviews the progress made at the Monitoring Visit

**Non-Compliance** - You have some way to go before you will meet all the Statements. You have the opportunity to:

- Take 12 months to put in place major actions and developments to improve Customer Service
- Then undergo a full re-assessment





A background image showing a group of business professionals in a meeting. In the foreground, two people are shaking hands. In the background, another person has their hands clasped. The scene is set around a table with documents and a pen. The text is overlaid in a bold, purple font.

**“Good customer service begins at the top. If your senior people don’t get it, even the strongest links further down the line can become compromised.” – Richard Branson**



## Want To Find Out More?

Visit our website:

[www.customerfirst.org](http://www.customerfirst.org)

Email us:

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